This case study analyses the process of mainstreaming human mobility as a key parameter in the design of programmes and public policies for local development. This process, called mainstreaming integration of human mobility in local development planning, has the goal of mainstreaming migration into public policies, through a range of actors with differing levels of powers (national government, local government, NGOs, international cooperation bodies, community organizations and academia, among others). Bearing in mind that both the nature of migration and the context in which it takes place are very varied and complex, it is important to generate public policies that manage this context and allow the potential of migration to be developed. In this regard and given the multifaceted nature of the relationship between migration and development, any intervention needs to be systematic and inclusive, mainstreaming migration into public policy planning and development strategies. This perspective allows migration to be included in development in a coherent manner, avoiding disjointed actions. In addition, it boosts coordination between government agencies and other relevant actors, generating better public policies.

Although mainstreaming integration processes tend to take place at the national level, their integration and implementation at the local level is crucial to maximizing the potential of the relationship between migration and local development. This is especially relevant because it is the local and regional authorities (LRAs) that are in the front line of the fight to meet the needs, rights and complex situations of migrants, through the different services they offer for development of the community in general. This implies the need to mainstream migration as a cross-cutting element into legislation, policies and public programmes at local, regional and national levels, as well as in all sectors such as housing, education and social security. It also involves mainstreaming migration and development into every step of planning public policies, including

**INTRODUCTION**

This case study forms part of a series of case studies on good practices, lessons learnt and recommendations extracted from the projects supported by the UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI) to enhance migration management for local development. The experience of the JMDI shows that the most effective initiatives are anchored with local or regional authorities and carried out in a multi-stakeholder and participatory approach, including migrants and migrants’ associations or diaspora. This is increasingly important given global trends of increasing decentralization and urbanization with urban areas being the destination of choice for most migrants and displaced persons. Thus the series aims to provide local actors with tools and ideas to take on this role as many can lack the means, human and financial resources, know-how or necessary support to tap into the local development potential of migration.
their design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Indeed, migration and development need to be institutionalized at all levels of government, so that the mainstreaming of migration becomes standard practice in the planning of local public policies.

First of all, it is important to highlight the conceptualization of “human mobility” adopted by Ecuador and the provincial Governments. This comprehensive vision includes anyone who experiences mobility, thus promoting non-discrimination against internal or international migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, etc. This conceptualization is also a reflection of the human-rights-based approach used by Ecuador in general and in its management of migration, which recognizes and promotes the equal application of rights to all citizens regardless of their social or migratory status.

In line with this approach, in 2014, the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Province of Imbabura (GADPI) and its Provincial Trust (Patronato Provincial) recognized the need to mainstreaming human mobility into its territorial planning and service management model, to address the complex dynamics of migration and refuge in the province, generating opportunities for people experiencing human mobility to make the most of their different abilities and become agents of change in the province, from the moment when they became part of the community. Implementation of this model was carried out with the support of the Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI) within the framework of the project Strengthening the Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GADs) of the Northern Zone of Ecuador on Human Mobility Issues, the objective of which is to contribute to the generation of synergies and institutional capacity for local authorities to meet the challenges presented by the various human mobility dynamics on Ecuador’s northern border.

This area is marked by an extremely high presence of Colombians in need of international protection (approximately 49% of the total number of Colombian refugees in Ecuador), by a high number of immigrants, also from Colombia but without refugee status, and by an Ecuadorian population that has returned to the northern border after migration (especially from Spain and the United States).

The capacity of GADPI to mainstreaming human mobility into local development plans was facilitated by the adoption in 2008 of the Political Constitution of Ecuador, which strengthens the processes of decentralization of administrative powers and public policy management to the decentralized autonomous governments, especially those specific to priority attention groups, including people in mobility.

**OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICE**

The mainstreaming process adopted by the Trust responds both to the mainstreaming of migration and refuge into the different areas of public policies and to the need to provide specific services and policies for people in mobility, on a par with those for other citizens.

In order to determine the services and public policies designed with a human mobility focus, GADPI undertook a specific needs assessment in 2013, through a consultancy that determined the main critical nodes for the exercise of the rights of persons experiencing human mobility in the
province. Then, in 2015, it undertook a direct public consultation through the convening of participatory assemblies to which GADPI invited the people of Imbabura Province in order to gather their needs and issues. The meetings included working groups on programmes and projects for priority attention groups, such as children, young people, the elderly and people experiencing human mobility.

Based on this needs assessment, the Trust constructed its Annual Operating Plan (AOP), containing specific actions for people experiencing mobility and actions that, as they were universal, also included immigrants, refugees and returnees.

The plan included the allocation of a budget and the formation of teams through the delegation of technicians and leaders to ensure the sustainability and institutionalization of the mainstreaming process.

In early 2015, the budget and human resources mentioned led to the creation of the Human Mobility Unit within the Trust, to implement the JMDI-supported project, whose principal goal was set in accordance with identified priorities: to increase access to social and economic inclusion for people experiencing human mobility. To achieve this objective, and as part of the mainstreaming of migration exercise, others of the Trust’s units (Food Sovereignty, Health Services, Cycles of Life, Domestic Violence and Disability) included people experiencing mobility as beneficiaries, integrating targets related to refugees, immigrants and returned emigrants within their objectives and operational actions. These units work with people experiencing mobility as part of their day-to-day work, regardless of their national origin or migrant status.

As a reflection of GADPI’s institutional commitment to mainstreaming and institutionalizing the issue of human mobility within its management model, the Human Mobility Unit (UMH) technical team was taken onto the Trust’s payroll and now also carries out a support and complementary role to other Trust units. This team is made up of a management technician and a leader expert in project management, human mobility and local development who, in addition to ensuring compliance with the actions contained in the AOP, is required to promote inter-institutional coordination (especially with national Government agencies with a presence in the territory). In addition, the UMH team constantly coordinates with the other teams in the Trust’s units.

In order to analyse which proposals could be implemented through inter-institutional coordination, the Trust conducted a mapping exercise of public and private actors working in the province with the different priority attention groups, including people experiencing mobility. This made it possible to know what resources (economic, human, information and network) and working models were deployed in the territory, for the Trust to identify strategic allies. This analysis led to coordination with other national actors working at territorial level, such as The Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, in order to achieve the effective protection and effective guarantee of rights, through the specific powers of each body and parallel powers.

To underpin the process of mainstreaming human mobility, The Provincial Trust promoted the institutionalization of the GADPI management model, generating and approving, with the support of the Provincial Human Mobility Working Group, the Ordinance for the
Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Persons experiencing Human Mobility and their Family Members in the Province of Imbabura, which declares as public policy the promotion and protection of the rights of people experiencing mobility.

This ordinance establishes the Trust’s Human Mobility Unit as the agency responsible for the coordination and implementation of actions, as well as for coordination with the different levels of government and with those public and private institutions with territorial powers in the field of human mobility. In this way, the management of migration in GADPI has involved national actors, trying to influence their local development planning policies through the inclusion of the parameter of human mobility.

Also, the coordination that the UMH has established with the Provincial Human Mobility Working Group has generated synergies with the more than seventy public and private actors that compose it. This has allowed joint and complementary work, reducing costs and optimizing human and financial resources.

To ensure the accessibility of the actions it carries out, the Provincial Trust implements a mechanism to reach out to the communities of the cantons and parishes of the province, through brigades comprising all the Trust’s units, given the name of “Rights Caravans”. In this way, professionals in the units, including the UMH, make direct contact with the people experiencing mobility and thus get to know first-hand the needs and living conditions of these groups, in order to include them within the Trust’s services.

With the aim of mainstreaming migration into local development, the Provincial Trust carries out various initiatives supported by the JMDI and institutionalized in the AOP. One priority is to ensure the protection of the rights of people experiencing mobility, through including them in the provision of public health, education and housing services, among others.

In addition, activities have been launched to create economic opportunities, such as enterprise fairs, training in craft trades and techniques and support for the management of micro-enterprises.

The Trust also promotes participation as a mechanism to generate the political inclusion of people experiencing mobility and the construction of a more democratic Provincial community. In this regard, people experiencing mobility were encouraged to actively participate in GADPI’s decision-making spaces. In 2015, the Trust held the presidency of the Violence Network, one of the thematic areas through which the Human Mobility Working Group implements its inter-institutional management.

On the basis of support and capacity-building provided by the “Leaving Tracks” (Dejando Huellas) Association (composed of refugee and Ecuadorian women in vulnerable situations) and recognizing the potential of its leaders, the Trust lobbied the Network to include the group as an active member. The Association’s contribution and commitment led to its being appointed as Technical Secretariat of the Violence Network. Thus, the women in
the Association have an opportunity to coordinate actions with corresponding bodies to prevent gender-based violence and discrimination and xenophobia against people experiencing mobility, to protect victims and restore their rights. Thanks to this, the local authority’s policies and actions have become more effective and have generated empowerment and increased confidence on the part of migrants.

Another of the initiatives centres on awareness-raising in the local community through communications products disseminated and broadcast in the Province by radio, television and social networks, to challenge the discrimination and xenophobia that slows down the processes of social and cultural inclusion into the Province's community of people experiencing mobility.

ALEJANDRA, refugee woman and leader of “Leaving Tracks” Association (Dejando Huellas), participating in the activities of handicrafts training given by the Provincial Trust

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

THE MAINSTREAMING OF THE ISSUE OF HUMAN MOBILITY TENDS TOWARDS A MORE HOLISTIC AND INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO PLANNING TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

When the human mobility approach is mainstreamed into the various phases of territorial planning and the design of public policy, this enables services and care to be offered to everyone in the province, regardless of their national origin or migration status. These services then complement one another in accordance with each individual’s specific needs, thus promoting comprehensive human development. Thus, in addition to countering exclusion, human mobility is identified as simply another dimension of development, and not as an isolated problem.

CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT DIRECTLY WITH THE TARGET POPULATION PROVIDES GREATER CLARITY FOR MAINSTREAMING HUMAN MOBILITY INTO PLANNING

The participation of people experiencing mobility in the needs assessment is key to identifying what specific actions are needed by people experiencing mobility and what universal services are not accessible to these groups.

On the basis of this first-hand assessment, it is possible to incorporate the human mobility focus into development plans and actions and ensure access to these services

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION IS A KEY COMPONENT OF MAINSTREAMING MAINSTREAMING HUMAN MOBILITY INTO PLANNING

Coordination promotes and strengthens the role of the local authority as the manager of public policies and local development; it allows better use of (often scarce) resources and different abilities and areas of expertise, broadening the scope of the local or regional authority's actions. Fundamentally, however, inter-institutional action brings an inter-disciplinary perspective that helps understanding of the influence that human mobility has on the different aspects of local development.
WHAT IS THE JOINT MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE?

The JMDI is a programme led by UNDP in partnership with IOM, ITC-ILO, UN Women, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNITAR. It focuses on the local dimension of migrants’ contribution to development. The JMDI supports civil society organizations and local authorities seeking to contribute to linking migration and development. To achieve this, the JMDI is currently supporting 16 on-going projects funded in eight target countries: Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Morocco, Nepal, Philippines, Senegal and Tunisia that all efficiently link migration to local development. This series of case studies seeks to highlight the challenges, good practices and lessons learnt from these projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRENGTHEN THE DIRECT PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING MOBILITY

Participation guarantees co-responsibility and the legitimacy of actions, and creates a basis for the sustainability of processes. This involves raising the awareness of the people experiencing mobility themselves, for them to take on this responsibility and strengthen their capacities and tools for active participation, leadership and lobbying, since spaces for participation are potentially mechanisms for pressure and influence, especially on future locally elected officials.

BUILD THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES (AND KEY ACTORS) IN MONITORING, EVALUATION AND PLANNING SO THAT THE EXERCISE OF MAINSTREAMING BECOMES PERMANENT

To sustain the process in the long term, there is a need to be alert to the changing dynamics of human mobility and local development, and to what impacts actions taken have on human mobility (and vice versa). This requires the exercise of incorporating human mobility to be permanent, but it is also essential that local authorities, local government, international organizations, civil society organizations, etc. use tools to monitor and evaluate their actions so that they have this feedback.

BUILD AWARENESS

It is vital to continue educating the population using tools and products that help them to properly conceptualize the dimensions and issues of the reality of human mobility and to transform it. Thus, creating public discussion and raising the public’s awareness leads to the breaking down of stereotypes and seeing the “other” as part of the community and promoting inclusion.

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