4ᵀᴴ GLOBAL MAYORAL FORUM ON HUMAN MOBILITY, MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT
BERLIN, 26-27 JUNE 2017

POLICY BRIEF
Policy Coherence in Migration and Development at the Local Level

Summary

Policy coherence in migration and development is crucial since migration is affected by and affects all governance sectors from health to education and from housing to social security. Thus, specific migration related policies may be rendered ineffective if education, labour and other such policies do not effectively respond to the specific needs and rights of migrants and displaced persons. While less explored, policy coherence in migration and development at the local level is particularly poignant given that migration and displacement is now mainly an urban phenomenon. Thus cities are increasingly at the forefront of responding to migration and displacement. This Policy Brief will therefore highlight the lessons learnt and recommendations that have arisen from the UN Joint Migration and Development's (JMDI) efforts to support cities foster policy coherence in migration and development at the local level.

Context

Policy coherence for migration and development can be defined as policies that "pursue synergies to advance shared objectives, actively seek to minimise or eliminate negative side effects of policies, (and) prevent policies from detracting from one another or from the achievement of agreed-upon development goals".[1] Thus, policy *in*coherence occurs when there is either a lack of awareness of how a policy fits into the existing portfolio of policies, or when there is a lack of understanding of the causal relations leading to faulty assumptions regarding what the policy can achieve.[2]
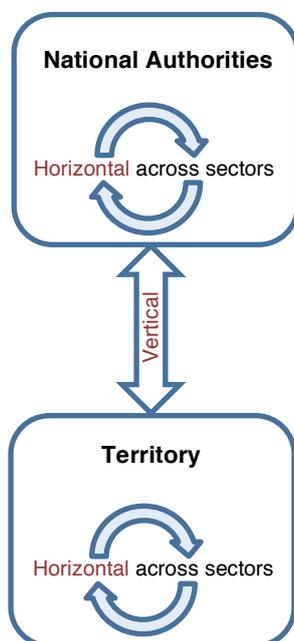
Policy incoherence in migration and development can be **horizontal,** i.e. within the policy areas of one administration, or **vertical**, between different levels of governance. This is reflected in the below Figure. With regards to **vertical policy incoherence**, at the sub-national level, cities are expected to implement or adhere to national law. However, when there is a lack of coordination between the national and local levels, or a lack of transfer of competencies, support and allocation of sufficient resources, these may often be incoherent with or not adequately respond to the needs and realities at the local level. For example, it is common practice to ensure all children attend primary and secondary school and which is enforced at local level. However, national migration policy can also require cities to report any irregular migrants. Children whose' parents are irregular migrants may therefore risk deportation by enrolling their children in school. **Horizontal incoherence** can occur, for example, between policies on gender equality and access to justice when migrant women, particularly irregular migrant women, are unaware of or unable to access support and justice when suffering from domestic abuse or other forms of gender discrimination. A further example occurs when employment and anti-discrimination policies exist to promote fair and equal access to work, yet displaced persons, refugees or irregular migrants are legally not entitled to such opportunities. This forces such persons to seek work in the

[1] HONG, A. & KNOLL, A. 2016. Strengthening the Migration-Development Nexus through Improved Policy and Institutional Coherence. KNOMAD Working Paper.
[2] PICCIOTTO, R. 2005. The Evaluation of Policy Coherence for Development. Evaluation, 11, 311-330.

informal sector and lead to exploitation, severely hindering their ability to successfully integrate and contribute to society.

Figure 1: Illustration of types of policy incoherence

While several recent initiatives, such as the IOM's Migration Governance Index[3] and the KNOMAD Thematic Working Group's Dashboard of Indicators on Policy Coherence for Migration and Development[4] and the UNDP-IOM programme on Mainstreaming Migration into National Development Policies[5] have examined and fostered policy coherence in relation to migration and development at the national level, evidence from the UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative shows that policy coherence in migration and development is also crucial at the local level (horizontal), between the local and national levels (vertical) and can lead to enhanced development impact.

This is particularly important given that cities often lack the competencies, know-how, human and financial resources to respond to migration yet are at the forefront of doing so. Thus, while a national response is crucial, this must be aligned with local realities since persisting inequalities, one of the identified drivers of migration, exist not only among different countries, but also within countries, thus necessitating an integral and bottom up approach from the local level.[6] When this alignment and coordination does take place, this allows for **multi-level coherence** whereby cities can feed their expertise and knowledge into national policy making for more responsive and pertinent national policies that can, in turn, be successfully implemented at the local level.

To support cities enhance their policy coherence in migration and development, the JMDI has developed a **Dashboard of Indicators on Policy Coherence in Migration and Development at the Local Level**.[7] This provides cities with an understanding of the linkages between migration and development and a set of indicators on how to measure

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[3] https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration_governance_index_2016.pdf

[4] http://www.oecd.org/dev/migration-development/knomad-dashboard.htm

[5] https://www.iom.int/mainstreaming-migration-national-development-strategies

[6] JMDI (2015) White Paper: Mainstreaming Migration into Local Development Planning and Beyond. Geneva, International Organization for Migration. http://www.migration4development.org/sites/default/files/final_mainstreaming_white_paper_www_2.pdf

[7] For more information on the JMDI and access to all its tools and publications, see here: www.migration4development.org

policy coherence and suggestions, examples and resources on how to enhance this. This will be an important tool for cities to monitor their contributions to the migration-related elements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Main Findings

Mitigating policy incoherence therefore necessitates a solid understanding of how all policies affect and are affected by migration and displacement. The experience of the JMDI shows that by inserting or mainstreaming[8] migration as a parameter across different local policy areas, **horizontal policy coherence** can be enhanced and will thus strengthen the local development impact of any migration and development policies.[9] Such a multi-*sector* approach necessitates a multi-*stakeholder* approach that brings together all the variety of actors that are affected by or involved in migration and displacement issues. Successful practices in achieving this have seen the creation of special units within city administrations. These tend to be in charge of ensuring coherence and coordination across various sectors, and oftentimes, directly overseeing and providing explicit services for migrants and displaced persons.

The Province of Pichincha's Human Mobility Unit (HMU) provides a pertinent example in this regard. This unit consists of trained officials that (i) promote the integration of migration and displacement issues across all governance and development policies and (ii) provide a one-stop orientation and service provision centre for migrants and displaced persons and (iii) work to raise the awareness of the general population on migrants and displaced persons' rights and how they contribute positively to local development in a bid to foster social cohesion and mitigate xenophobia. With regards to the former, the HMU regularly provides capacity building and awareness on migrants and displaced persons' rights and needs across all governance areas through workshops, training sessions and lobbying activities. This allows officials in sectors like health or education to understand how their policies may be negatively affecting this population and able to adapt and adjust policies in order to enhance coherence. Such information and understanding is collated through studies carried out in partnership with academia and the HMU's direct contact with migrants and displaced persons and their associations through the services and orientation it provides.

To ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of such units, dedicated human and financial resources are necessary. Moreover, specific ordinances, laws or policies can support the institutionalisation of their mandate. In Pichincha, the Provincial Government approved the Equal Rights and Social Development Ordinance which provides a legitimate and legal backbone to the mission of the HMU that allows for and promotes the adoption of public policies, programmes, and projects in all sectors that promote equal rights among all inhabitants of Pichincha, regardless of migratory status.

The work of the regions of Calabarzon and Bicol in the Philippines is an example of successful efforts to promote vertical policy coherence in migration and development between all levels of governance. This was achieved through the establishment of various coordination mechanisms at the different levels and coordinated from the regional level. Firstly, regional Committees on Migration and Development (CMD) were created and institutionalised within the Regional Development Councils' Social Development

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[8] For guidance on how to mainstream migration into local development planning, see JMDI (2015) White Paper: Mainstreaming Migration into Local Development Planning and Beyond. Geneva, International Organization for Migration. http://www.migration4development.org/sites/default/files/final_mainstreaming_white_paper_www_2.pdf

[9] JMDI (2015) White Paper: Mainstreaming Migration into Local Development Planning and Beyond. Geneva, International Organization for Migration. http://www.migration4development.org/sites/default/files/final_mainstreaming_white_paper_www_2.pdf

Committees which allow for migration and development issues to be integrated into all development plans and programmes. The CMDs consist of representatives from various government entities at the regional level as well as civil society, academia and very importantly, migrants and their families or organisations. The CMDs work to promote the integration of migration and displacement into all development planning in the region as well as support the cities in the region to localise these efforts at the municipal level.

At the local level, local centres and councils on migration and development were established with corresponding budget and personnel to lead the main activities in each municipality. Technical working groups were also established at the local level to bring in the expertise and support of various key actors to oversee the integration of migration into their local development planning. At the national level, the regional CMDs partnered with the state through the Commission for Filipinos Overseas and work to foster coordination, dialogue and mutual knowledge sharing and support between the local and national levels.

What also became clear was the essential need to **ensure that migrants, displaced persons and their associations and diasporas were crucial actors to involve and empower** throughout the entire development, implementation and evaluation of policy coherence efforts, as only by achieving this will policies be coherent with the realities and needs across the various sectors. They also play an extremely important role in fostering development themselves through their own initiatives, entrepreneurship, investment and support to integrate newcomers etc. When cities engage and empower migrants, displaced persons and their organisations, this legitimises and strengthens their efforts and allows for their alignment with local development priorities, further contributing to policy coherence. Moreover, particularly when diaspora and migrants' development initiatives are linked to decentralised cooperation[10] dynamics, this allows cities to foster policy coherence between territories and better address migration and development throughout the entire migratory cycle in both the host and origin territories. An example of this can be found between the regions of Kasserine and Tuscany in Tunisia and Italy respectively. To support cities build such cooperation dynamics or integrate migration into existing relationships, the JMDI has also elaborated a set of **Guidelines on Integrating Migration into Decentralised Cooperation**. This will be an important tool to support cities' enhance the effectiveness of their development initiatives and specifically contribute to achieving SDG 17 on global partnerships for sustainable development.

Recommendations

- National authorities need to recognise the importance of empowering cities in their endeavours to ensure horizontal policy coherence in migration and development at the local level through the adequate allocation of human and financial resources, transfer of competencies and support for decentralisation processes in accordance with national policies and standards;
- National authorities, together with cities, should create mechanisms to promote and support the dialogue on policy coherence on migration and development between the national and local levels for vertical policy coherence;
- Cities should engage in understanding the local/regional features of migration and development across all sectors through the participation and consultation with migrants and displaced persons in order to be able to develop evidence-based policies;

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[10] Decentralised cooperation can be understood as understood as international development cooperation carried out in partnership between local and regional governments and their territorial stakeholders

- Cities should promote the institutionalisation of policy coherence activities within agreements, laws and policies and ensure their implementation by setting up multi-stakeholder consultation and coordination mechanisms and providing the necessary capacity building and financial resources to achieve this;
- International organisations should continue to set up platforms of dialogue that gather and strengthen the voice of local actors and spread this voice into national and international Fora for enhanced vertical policy coherence up to the global level. The continued hosting of the Global Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development back to back with the Global Forum on Migration and Development would be a positive step in this direction;
- International organisations should build on their global experience to develop tools that are tailor made for local actors to support them in their policy coherence efforts. The forthcoming Dashboard of Indicators and Guidelines on Policy Coherence at the Local Level being developed by the JMDI will be of extreme importance in this regard.