Md. Shahidul Haque

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND HUMAN SECURITY: EXPLORING THE NEXUS

==

Abstract

Migration has been shaping human civilization since the beginning of time though it is only recently that migration has appeared as a major issue in the development agenda. Migration in all its forms is often intricately linked with other phenomena including the emerging issue of human security. The linkage between the two phenomena is complex and historically rooted. While migration impacts on security both positively and negatively, it is also true that security is a major factor affecting the migration dynamics of the world. This paper attempts to look at this complex relationship exploring how migration is both enhancing human security and also threatening it some times. Migration has also been looked at in the context of terrorism and national security. Finally, the paper concludes highlighting the notion that the complexities of the migration-human security nexus only reconfirms the

need to manage migration in a balanced and programmatic approach.

Introduction

The nexus between migration and security is historically rooted and complex in nature. There is a strong causal relation between the two phenomena. Human security is both a cause and a consequence of population movement, regular or irregular. Since the dawn of civilization, people have been migrating across geographical or state frontiers in search of livelihood, safety and security. Before settling down, people had been practicing a nomadic way of life for ages. Though most of the people subsequently adopted a sedentary lifestyle, people still continue to be mobile as an option for maintaining and sustaining a balanced life. Along with military threats, non-military security threats remain a major factor shaping the migratory behavior of people. People move because of some threats to their security or to improve their security. In doing so, they are often seen as a threat to the security of the destination country, especially if the movement is large[1] and not managed. The processes have influenced evolution of states, societies, economics and institutions. In fact, the pursuit of human security and consequent human mobility has guided the nature of the production systems and the development process, which, in turn, have shaped global labour market and labour migration.[2]

Md. Shahidul Haque is the Regional Representative for South Asia and the Chief of Mission for Iran (a.i.), International Organization for Migration (IOM). His e-mail: shaquatdy@ion.int

[1]   David T, Graham, "The people paradox: Human movements and human security in a globalized world" in David T. Graham, & Nana K. Poku, edited *Migration, Globalisation and Human Security*, London: Routledge, 2000

[2]   M. Allam, Findlay, "International Migration and Globalization: An Investigation of Migration Systems in Pacific Asia with Particular Reference to Hong Kong " in M. A. B., Siddique, ed.. *International Migration into the 21st Century: Essays in Honour of Reginald Appleyard*. 2001

The rapid changes in the mode of communications and transportation combined with forces of globalization play an important role in providing people with means to maintain and sustain life. In the process, migration not only provides livelihood strategy to the people in peace time, but also in conflict and post-conflict situations. Migration helps people gather resources and accumulate wealth in conflict situations by moving out of their regular place of habitat to address security challenges. On the other hand, a large number of people voluntarily or under compulsion are forced to migrate to secure life and livelihood. There are numerous factors behind forced movement such as persecution, human rights violation, repression, conflict, military aggression, natural and human made disasters. The reasons behind population movement, whether forced or involuntary, are primarily related to absence or lack of human security. Similarly, a large flow of refugees or migrants can challenge human security by disrupting economy and creating political unrest in the place of destination. In addition, irregular migration adds to the insecurities, both at state and individual level.

This paper looks at the process and the outcome of migration from a human security perspective. It will also conceptualize the interface between the various types of international migration and human security. The paper explores the potentials of orderly and humane migration as a means for ensuring human security.

Defining Migration

International Migration is the movement of persons who leave their country of origin or the country of habitual residence, to establish themselves either permanently or temporarily in another country.[3] International migrants do not include tourists, business travelers, religious pilgrims and persons seeking medical treatment and visitors. The term "migration" as a broad descriptive process of the movement of people, includes movement of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people, trafficking in persons as well as labour and economic migrant. On the other hand, the term "migrant" should be understood as covering all cases where the decision to migrate is taken freely by the individual concerned, for reason of "personal convenience" and without intervention of an external compelling factor.[4] The definition does not refer to refugees, exiles or people who leave their homes under compulsion. There are numerous causes of international migration such as poverty, lack of employment and livelihood opportunity, economic instability, environmental degradation, armed conflict and natural disasters. The rapid movements of capital, goods and services accompanied by unprecedented growth in communication and transportation technologies across the world have accelerated movement across borders, especially temporary migration. Economic disparities as well as demographic changes have also been powerful push and pull factors affecting the movement of people.

Forced Migration is a process in which people in large numbers move out of their home in situations of conflict. They flee or are obliged to leave their home or places of habitual residence out of fear of persecution or events threatening to their lives or safety.[5] Terms such as "forced migration" and "involuntary movements" are used interchangeably with forced population movement. There are numerous reasons behind forced movement such as persecution, human rights violations, repression, conflict, military aggression, natural and man-made disasters. Those forced to leave their home,

---

[3] . IOM, *Glossary of Migration*, Geneva, 2004

[4]   IOM, *Overview of International Migration*, Migration Management Training Program, April 1997.

[5]   Susan F. Martin, "Forced Migration and the evolving humanitarian regime", *UNHCR Working Paper No. 20*, Geneva, July 2000.

either cross international borders in search of refuge or move to another place within the state-borders. The first group is known as refugees, whereas the second group is termed as "internally displaced people" (lDPs). An alarming aspect of the forced movement today is that the refugees and lDPs often join a larger stream of migrants, who leave home in search of economic opportunities abroad. The forced migrants increasingly use the irregular migration channels for leaving their home countries and eventually get into a "harm" and exploitative situation.

Refugees are a subset of forced migrants who have a special status in international law. Refugees are persons who are forcibly displaced due to direct threats of danger to their lives ("well founded fear of persecution"). The tangibility of the threat is such that persons feel the necessity to flee their country and being outside such country, is unable or unwilling to return or avail oneself of its protection.[6] Although the notion of "IDPs" is now widely used by humanitarian agencies, there seems to be no general acceptance of its precise meaning. According to the UN Guidelines, IDPs are often defined as persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. This definition is the broadest one in use at the international or regional level.

Irregular migration has not been defined in a clear or universally accepted manner. It is generally understood as a movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries.[7] Irregular migration is often broken down in two broad categories, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.[8] Trafficking in persons, as a subset of irregular migration, is the "dark-side" of migration which places people in a "harm" situation. It is the movement (either internally or internationally) of a person under a situation of deceit, force, threat, debt bondage etc. involving exploitation and violation of human rights of the person. Trafficking in persons could include smuggling[9] plus abusive exploitation and human rights violations. Studies suggest that a person by placing himself/herself in the hands of traffickers loses control of his/her fate and freedom[10] and ends up in a "harm"[11] situation.

Migration-Trafficking-Smuggling Interfaces: It is often difficult to differentiate between regular migration and irregular

---

6   UNHCR, Convention relating to the Status of Refugee of 1951 (Article 1.2).

7   For a conceptual discussion, see IOM, *Glossary on Migration*, Geneva 2004

8   There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration. While the concept often includes illegal entry, stay or work in a country, this paper focuses on the forms of irregular migration that impacts most directly on reducing human security.

9   Smuggling is a situation when a person places himself/herself to facilitate his/her border crossing in a irregular manner in exchange of financial or other material benefits.

10   IOM, Migrant Trafficking and Human Smuggling in Europe: A review of the evidence with case studies from Hungary, Poland and Ukraine, Geneva, 2000.

11   "Harm" is the undesirable outcome that places a person in a situation whereby, the person finds him/herself in an exploitative and dehumanizing condition. Often beaten up, sexually and psychologically abused, made to work long hours without any remuneration. Freedom of mobility and choice are non-existent. The 'harm' results from a situation of forced labour, servitude and slavery-like practices in which a person is trapped/held in place through force, manipulation or coercion for a given period of time.

migration as the demarcation between the two phenomena is not often obvious. It is a question of perception. An attempt to draw a clear line between the two concepts is described as working in a "terminological minefield".[12] Any generalization in identifying the difference between the two concepts can be misleading because both the concepts are overlapping, contextual and time bound. In simple terms, the difference could be as follows:

- A trafficked person is deceived or forced (actual or threat) to move. Whereas, a migrant (even domestic worker) is not usually deceived or forced to leave his/her place of residence. But, sometimes, it could be difficult to draw a line between the two concepts as there are gray areas in between, blurring the clear distinction.

- Trafficking is a development-retarding phenomenon, whereas migration is an integral component of economic and social development.

- Trafficking is viewed as an anti-social and morally degrading heinous event. But, migration is widely considered as a process that enhances social progress in both the origin and destination countries and it could be an empowering process. Exploitation, profit and illegality are all central to the idea of trafficking in persons.[13] That is certainly not the case in the migration process.

In order to better understand migration-trafficking nexus, we need to address the linkages between the concepts of trafficking and

---

[12] Ronald, Skeldon, "Trafficking: A perspective from Asia" in Reginald Appleyard and John Salt edited, *Perspectives on Trafficking of Migrants*, 2000, IOM, Geneva.
[13] *Ibid*

smuggling.[14] The Palermo Protocol clearly draws a distinction between trafficking and smuggling.[15] Trafficking occurs when a migrant is illicitly engaged (recruited, kidnapped, sold, etc.) and/or moved, either within national or across international borders. The intermediaries (traffickers) during any part of this process obtain economic or other profit by means of deception, coercion and/or other forms of exploitation, under conditions that violate the fundamental human rights of migrants[16]. On the other hand, smuggling occurs when there is only facilitation of illegal border crossing[17]. The differences between smuggling and trafficking could be as follows:

- Normally, smuggled migrants are aware of the conditions of the travel and voluntarily engage themselves in the process of illegal border crossing. Victims of trafficking are seldom aware

---

[14] John Salt, "Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective" in Reginald Appleyard and John Salt (eds.), *Perspective on Trafficking of Migrants*, 2000, IOM, Geneva.
[15] According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (popularly known as Palermo Protocol), trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, either by the threat or use of abduction, force, fraud, deception or coercion, or by the giving or receiving of unlawful payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, with the aim of submitting them to any form of exploitation. On the other hand, according to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea (other part of Palermo protocol), "Smuggling of migrants shall mean the procurement of the illegal entry into or illegal residence of a person in (a) (any) State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident in order to obtain directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit".
[16] IOM, "The Concepts of Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants" a discussion paper, October 2000, Geneva.
[17] *Ibid*

of the entire process. Even if they submit themselves freely to the trafficker, they cannot consent to the human rights violations they will be subjected to.

- While smuggling of persons indisputably involves international cross-border movements, trafficking could also occur within national borders, although the vast majority happens across international borders.

Experts opined that clear distinction between regular migration, smuggling and trafficking could be difficult to establish particularly in analyzing causes, process and outcomes in the globalized world. There are often gray areas in between these processes. To avoid confusion, the concept of "regular migration" will be used in this paper as, in general, a positive and development enhancing phenomenon. However, there is no doubt that all these processes influence, positively or negatively, the human security environment. While regular migration enhances human security by providing livelihood options for people, irregular migration (trafficking and smuggling) threaten human security as well as state security[18]. Irregular migration is often likened to organized crime. The threat emanating from irregular migration to challenging state security simultaneously also poses challenges to the human security of the citizens. Sometimes, individual citizens are under more severe security threat than the state entity. Therefore, states have to provide protection to both the victims of smuggling and trafficking in persons in terms of return and reintegration, medical, psychological, counseling and legal support.

Diaspora: The approximately 2500 year old concept of "diaspora" in the present context is used to describe a group of people who have "deterritorialized" and/or "transnationalized"

themselves. As an evolving concept, present day diaspora connotes a group of people who have left their homeland due to traumatic events and/or in search of livelihoods and are living in the host country permanently but hold a collective memory about the homeland as well as maintain some kind of relations with the homeland. Over centuries, the diaspora concept has evolved and undergone many changes. It has now acquired metaphoric implications and used for people outside their homeland who feel, maintain, invent or revive connections with their prior homeland. Critical components are a history of dispersal, myths/memories of the homeland and a collective identity defined by the above relationship. In general, diaspora means communities of migrants sealed permanently in countries other than their birth but aware of their country of origin and identify with that country. They continue to maintain varying degrees of linkages with their home countries.

Defining Human Security

Human security is a contested and evolving concept. The emergence of the territorial state in Europe and later during the Cold War era encouraged the growth of the doctrine of state-centered security.[19] Subsequently, at the end of Cold War, the concept was broadened by including non-military issues such as economic growth, societal cohesion, environment and human rights. The human security is a multi-dimensional, inclusive and people-centered concept. It attempts to protect individuals and their communities through joint efforts and cooperation[20].One of the leading proponents

---

[18] Security has been used in its broadest possible term including both military and non-military dimensions.

[19] P.R. Chari and Sonika Gupta, (eds.) *Human Security in South Asia: Gender, Energy, Migration and Globalization,* New Delhi, Social Science Press, 2003

[20] Karina Batthyany, "Obstacles to Human Security: Analysis of the 2004 Social Watch National Reports", *Social Watch Report 2004 "Fear and Want: Obstacles to Human Security",* Social Watch, Uruguay.

of human security concept, Amartya Sen, has promoted a new human security perspective which suggested not only economic growth, but also people's choice, freedom and dignity.

During 1990s, the traditional concept of security was radically revisited by introducing the idea of "human security" (as opposed to "national security"). In 1994, UNDP built its Human Development Report focusing the concept of "human security".[21] The report suggests that the core of human security is vulnerability which could be placed in seven categories such as economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political.[22] The conceptualization was a transition from the narrow state-centric militaristic concept of national security to the comprehensive individual-centered human security. In Kofi Annan's view, human security "..... in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and healthcare and ensuring to fulfill his or her potential .... Freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment – these are interrelated building blocks of human and therefore national security".[23]

According to the Commission on Human Security, human security could be defined as "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspiration. It seems enacting political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.[24] The *Social Watch Report 2004* highlights three broad obstacles[25] to human security, those are, firstly, threats to the security of individuals and communities, in particular to the most vulnerable sector of society, secondly, conflicts, threats and different kinds of violence and thirdly, poverty and economic exclusion.

Migration and Human Security Nexus

Migration and Human Security phenomena are multi-dimensional and organic in nature. Neither migration is nearly a movement of people from one place to another, nor is human security a simple endeavor to ensure welfare of the people. Both the phenomena are outcome of complex socio-economic and political undertakings. Human security is as much an issue for migrants choosing to migrate as it is for those forced to migrate. But, migration is primarily a process which enhances human security in multiple ways. Migration has economic, cultural, and social values which add to the ensuing well-being of people. The interfaces between migration and human security are somewhat ambiguous, less explored and understood. The causal relationship between migration and human security is not very clear. However, linkages could be identified primarily in three ways:

First: migration ensures human security by providing livelihood options including for the poorer sections of people. By enhancing other developmental impacts, in countries of

---

[21] UNDP, *New Dimensions of Human Security*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1994.

[22] For detailed discussion, see *Human Development Report 1994*, *op.cit*.

[23] Kofi Annan, "Secretary General Salutes International Workshop on Human Security in Mongolia", Ulaanbaatar, 8 – 10 May 2000. Press Release SG/SM/7382 www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2000.

---

[24] Human Security Commission, "Final Report" at www.humansecurity-chs.org/finalreport/.

[25] Ibid

origin, strong diaspora linkages also enhances the non-economic aspect of human security. Migration holds potential for community development and can contribute to poverty reduction, if managed properly.

Second: international migration can adversely influence the development of migrant origin countries through loss of human resources and various challenges to human security encountered by migrants in the process of migration. The loss in human resources is often offset by the gains made through circulation of human resources.

Third: lack of human security is a root cause of migration, both regular and irregular but especially forced migration. Inadequate human security often compels people and acts as a "push-factor" in the migratory process.

The nexus could be better understood by examining the extent to which human security is enhanced or influenced by the various types of migration. The analysis should equally focus on the process of migration i.e. causes, motivations, vulnerabilities and the outcome of the mobility, consequences i.e. benefits and harm.

Migration as a Mechanism for Enhancing Human Security

Despite the fact that, the history of migration is an account of society's attempt to survive prosper and escape insecurity,[26] less attention has been given to explore the linkages between migration and human security. Works on migration have focused on underdevelopment as a cause of migration rather on the positive impact of migration on the development of individuals and societies.

In the 21st century, changes in the geo-political as well as geo-economic landscapes and emergence of the "knowledge-economy" are fundamentally changing the migration and globalization processes leading to emergence of new development thinking and strategies. The profound changes in scope, nature and structure of global finance, trade and commerce in the WTO-centric trading regime are influencing both migration and human security discourse adding further dynamism to the process of evolution of the civilization. The relationship between globally mobile capital and territorially tied labour is adding complexities to the process of ensuring human security. It is now acknowledged that, despite generating huge global wealth, the existing trade regime has failed to benefit the poorer section primarily because of the inherent "limitations" of the global trade system. It is accentuating the inequalities both within and among countries. Trade specialists are struggling to find ways to bring down the widening inequalities and disparities. It is now suggested that international mobility of labours, if managed properly, could perhaps help reducing poverty and inequality. The global output may increase if people are free to move across the globe, particularly from areas of lower labor productivity to areas of higher productivity. According to Noble Laureate Professor Amartya Sen, trade along with migration can help to break the dominance of rampant poverty.[27] A recent Commonwealth study suggests that if quotas were fixed within the WTO member countries by an amount equal to 3% of developed countries' labour forces, there would be an increase in world welfare of US$156 billion per

---

[26] UK House of Commons, "Migration and Development: How to make migration work for poverty reduction", Sixth Report of Session 2003 – 4, volume 1, UK June 2004.

[27] Oxfam, Rigged Rules and Double Standards; trade, globalization and fight against poverty, Oxfam International,2002.

year.[28] Similarly, the World Institute for Development Economies Research (WIDER) study findings indicate that the elimination of global restrictions to labour mobility generates worldwide efficiency gains that could be of considerable magnitude, ranging from 15% to 67% of world GDP. But, when only skilled labour is allowed to migrate, welfare gains are much smaller from 3% to 11% of world GDP. In the recent World Bank publication, it is also suggested that migration has lead to the reduction of poverty in many countries including Bangladesh.[29] Despite the evidences of substantive contribution of migration in the development of both origin and destination countries, conceptual clarity regarding dynamics of the process and the roles of actors of migration are limited. The understanding of migration as an integral component of economic development or migration as a livelihood option for poor people are least explored. Though migration is not a substitute for development, properly managed migration can deliver benefits in terms of development and poverty reduction and contribute to enhancing the human security. Migration can reduce the uncertainty of family income, provide resources for investment and enhance livelihood opportunities. The impact of migration would largely depend on socio-economic conditions in the origin and destination countries. The impacts of migration or of human security could be better understood by exploring relations between various aspects/outcomes of migration in the context of development.

Financial remittance: One of the most direct impacts of migration and link to development is through remittances. In 2005, global remittance flows reached 232 billion US dollars from which the amount flowing from developed to developing countries exceeded 167 billion US dollars[30]. The volume of this flow indicates the potentially important role that remittance could have on the economy and society of the receiving countries. There are two extreme views on the beneficial impacts of remittances on the development process.[31] First, (*"developmentalist" perspective.)* It argues that provided there is an enabling environment promoted by states, remittances have the potential to set in motion a development process in the migrant's origin countries. It can help removing production and investment constraints and can raise income level. Remittances have also positive impacts on the balance of payments of countries of origin as they help to narrow the trade gap, control external debt, facilitate debt servicing and produce much needed foreign exchange. Second, *"migrant syndrome" perspective.* It argues that migration drains countries of origin of their labour and capital by crowding out local production of tradable goods. It suggests that remittances are not put to productive use but mostly wasted for unproductive purposes such as housing, land purchase, transport etc. Remittances can cause inflation as they create a demand without concomitant production capacity.

There is, however, a general understanding among the experts and policy makers that remittances have far greater positive impact on communities in the developing countries than previously acknowledged.[32] The multiplier effect of remittance can be substantial, with each dollar producing additional dollars in

[28] For details, see, L. Alan Winters *et.al.*, *Negotiating the Liberalization of the Temporary Movement of Natural Persons*, Commonwealth, March 2002.

[29] *Global Economic Perspective 2006*, World Bank

[30] *Ibid*

[31] Edward Taylor, "The new economics of labour migration and the role of remittances in the migration process", paper presented at the Technical Symposium on International Migration and Development held in the Hague, Netherlands, 29 June – 3 July 1998.

[32] F. Susan Martin, "Remittances as a development tool", paper presented at a conference organized by the Inter-American Development Bank, 2001.

economic growth for the business that produces and supply the products bought with these resources. Remittances can promote development if an enabling economic environment for use of remittances, institutional arrangements for money transfer and availability of investment and business opportunities in the origin countries exist. It has further been revealed that migrants, especially the permanent emigrants, sometimes use their earning to finance social and economic development projects in their home country.

Remittance directly or indirectly impacts on poverty, livelihoods and development of countries of origin. This impact is at individual/household levels, community levels, national levels and also at the international levels. At the household level, the majority of remittances are spent on consumption. However, significant portions are spent on health, education, nutrition and other investments important for human development including economic growth. At the community level, remittance has the potential to set in motion economic benefits which includes improved local physical infrastructure, growth of markets and services and above all, generate local employment opportunities. Remittance impacts on poverty alleviation not only by providing financial resources but also supporting private sector initiatives. It is important to remember, remittance alone cannot impact on the overall economy but if managed and harnessed, the interplay of remittances with other social and economic factors could set in motion development and economic growth that contribute to financial and economic solvency and sustainability. Remittances also have the potential to reduce inequality among counties. The impact of this equalization on migration patterns is still debated but the impact on human security is easy to comprehend. Countries are now focusing on how to enhance the benefits of remittances to further reduce the inequalities and for the overall improvement of the quality of life.

Diaspora as Development Agent: Diaspora, like temporary migrants, has been contributing to development of the home country by sending remittances, managing FDI and business in their home countries. Research findings suggest that diaspora, particularly, the highly skilled diaspora, may help overcoming barriers to trade in a world where reliable information is scarce.[33] Diaspora can provide information that could influence trade, investment and technology transfer. Moreover, diaspora through their networks can help the trade and developments in the origin countries significantly. Many diaspora members are working in skill sectors that are of critical importance to their home countries. Many accumulate knowledge to establish and manage their own enterprises and are conversant with the general situation and business cultures of both their home and host countries. Therefore, they are, for instance, able to contribute to private sector development in their home countries by establishing businesses, or by leading training courses in the country of origin. Their contacts with potential business partners in destination countries can facilitate the establishment of trade and production links and promote the market access of export goods from developing countries. Diaspora communities can also influence economic and political process of the host countries in favour of their home countries.

In addition to financial remittances, diasporas bring back, on return, knowledge and skills acquired while abroad which could be help supporting societies and economics of origin countries. They can contribute to the democratic process and effective governance by supporting programmes and networks. They can also add substantially to the developments of business and enterprises particularly by linking destination and origin countries. The process of international migration has also widespread social ramifications

---

[33] *Ibid.*

within the countries of origin[34]. Diasporas can also influence positively in the evolution of family, community, social norms, traditions and religious practices.

Diasporas offer many opportunities for enhanced security by providing bridges between cultures and politics which facilitate cultural, political and economic exchanges and understanding. Many diaspora groups play an important role in the democratization and development of their homelands, process which have tangible consequences in terms of national, regional and global security.[35] On the other hand, diaspora can also pose a threat to homeland regimes and attempts to destabilize them where the homeland regime fails to sustain friendly relations with its diaspora or becomes engaged in active confrontation with it, this may pose serious implication for its own security.[36] Governments of the origin countries have a crucial role in channeling diaspora initiatives and resources into the economies and societies which would otherwise remain dispersed. It is necessary to facilitate the diaspora participation linking them with the socio-economic activities of their home countries.

Returnee Migrants as Development Source: Return migration is another important dimension in the migration human security nexus. It may be defined as the process whereby people return to their countries or place of origin after staying a significant period in another country or region.[37] The return could be permanent, temporary or virtual. All kinds of return migration can contribute to enhancing human security. The voluntary return of migrants with financial or other types of capitals can benefit the countries of origin in various ways. The contribution of return migration on the development process depends on the aptitude and degree of preparation of the returning migrants, and the existing socio-economic and institutional conditions in the home country. They can act as change agents, economically, technologically and socially. The development implications of return migration can be analyzed in terms of capital formation – financial, human and social. *First, financial capital.* Apart from sending remittances, migrants also save some money while abroad, which they bring with them on return. The impact of financial capital also raised controversies similar to that surrounding remittance. However, it is widely recognized that financial capital can have multiplier effect on the development process. *Second, human capital:* It is defined as the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes combined in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. The migrants while living and working abroad gain considerable work experiences and skills. These new skills and ideas can have positive impact upon their return in the home country. In some cases, return migrants have set up businesses utilizing their newly acquired skilled which had triggered technical changes in the society. The return migrants can act as positive change agents in the economies and societies, provided there is a conducive environment. *Third, social capital.* It resides in social relationships rather than in individuals. It can be defined as trust, norms and networks that

---

[34] Robert E. B. Lucas, "International Migration regimes and economic development", paper submitted for the Third Coordination meeting on International Migration, Population Division, UN, New York, 27–28 October 2004

[35] Richard Davis, "Neither here nor there? The implications of global diasporas for (inter)national security" in David T. Graham and Nana K. Poku (eds.), *Migration, Globalization and Human Security*, London, 2000.

[36] *Ibid*.

[37] Russel King,"Generalizations from the History of Return Migration" in Bimal Ghosh (ed.) *Return Migration:Journey of Hope or Despair?* IOM,2000.

facilitate social coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.[38] Through tapping into networks of migrant communities with more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition, migrants can derive benefits from this form of social capital for both sending and receiving countries. The return of migrants, therefore, has a greater likelihood of positively influencing the human security situation as well as the development process in the home country.

Regular Migration as Social Protection: Protection is fundamental to human security. The first key to human security is to provide protection to people.[39] It is often an emergency response by people faced with survival challenges as well as response by people attempting to cope with vulnerabilities. The interface between migration and social protection could be identified in two ways, first, migration as a social protection strategy and second, ensuring social protection for migrants who are in "harm"/ exploitative situation. Resources generated through migration of a family member supports meeting the basic needs of other family members and also helps building asset base by investments in education, health, housing etc. Ability to spend, more resources on health and education results in improved human resources of the family. In turn, this assets and better human resources base reduce vulnerability of the family members especially women and children.

Nevertheless, during the process of migration, migrants often encounter conditions that reduce their human security. By often working and living under harsh conditions with limited access to health and other social services as well as being separated from family members and their regular support groups, migrants become more vulnerable to a number of ills. In view of this, they are in need of special social protection measures.

For countries where migration forms a key economic sector, social protection for this group would make them more competitive in terms of production and on the labour market. As labour migrants often engage in circular migration with upgraded skills on each return, it is important to cater for the needs of those engaged in migration as it will further their efficiency and competitiveness. In addition, by providing social protection to migrants, their chances for successful integration is enhanced upon return, which ultimately contributes to the development of the national economy.

Migration Empowers Women: "Feminization" of migration is the most noteworthy trend in recent times. Today, women account for about half of the migrant population. For several countries of origin, they already constitute the majority. The most significant aspect of migration of women is that women migrate as independent workers and their roles now extend well beyond that of the spouse joining the husband in the destination countries. It is recognized that international migration is positively associated with the lifting of the status of women.

First, opportunities for women to go abroad for employment enhance their empowerment. Second, the gender relations also undergo changes in families where male family members migrate abroad. These changes are facilitated by much greater access to information by female members through television and contacts with the outside world. The empowerment in both of these cases, draws from changes of role of women in areas such as household decision making, division of labour, gender roles and community perception. In addition, empowered migrant women can develop their potentials which could lead to new opportunities for work. They are also better placed to demand respect for their dignity from others. As such, the

---

[38] Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 167.

[39] Human Security Report, *op.cit.*

empowering effect transcends the issue of "success" or "failure" of migration as measured by the economic and social indicators. It has a direct impact on human security and is mutually reinforcing by providing women with agency to act and decide for their wellbeing. Migration can also extend women's decision making power to spheres that were traditionally in men's domain such as the decisions regarding housing investment and the disciplining of children. Importantly, female heads of families tend to place priority on children's education including education for girls. The changes in the family and social norms brought about by the female migrants are significant and beneficial for the society.

Irregular Migration Threatens Human Security

Irregular migration taking place outside the regulatory norms of countries forces people into a "harm" or exploitative situations. It is a criminal activity in which perpetrators seek out the weakest and most vulnerable members of a society in order to exploit them for profits.[40] Irregular or involuntary migration is increasingly perceived as a security issue. The involuntary migration has often been considered as more of a security issue, as a by-product of the securitization of environmental, economic and societal concerns, rather than as a humanitarian or rights issue.[41] The "securitization of migration"[42] focuses on threats posed by irregular cross border movement of population which have impacts of securities of origin, transit and destination countries. Trafficking in human beings as a subset of irregular migration challenges human security by violating human rights of individuals and putting them in an exploitative situation. There are two primary causes behind trafficking, first, poverty and lack of livelihood options i.e. insecurity; and second, discrimination against women and children. Both these causes represent a human security deficiency. The lack of livelihood options, particularly for women and children in origin countries, constitute major threat to human security which force people to choose irregular means of migration. Similarly, gender inequalities, domestic violence, marginalization and powerlessness also erode human security and force people, particularly women and children, to migrate in unsafe and unsecured circumstances. Apart from economic and gender vulnerabilities, civil war and political unrest, social and cultural vulnerabilities also often compel people to take irregular means to migrate.

On the other hand, counter-trafficking interventions often lack a rights based approach or adequate consideration of human security perspectives.[43] A human security approach to addressing trafficking in persons is essentially development centered and gender sensitive. It recognizes discrimination as a denial of human rights. It presupposes that human rights should be at the core of all counter trafficking initiatives. It also recognizes that the counter trafficking initiatives should be aimed at an environment so that the survivors can integrate into the society.

There are efforts both international and national to protect the trafficking survivors through legal instruments. Some states have adopted legislations to extend special protection to the trafficking survivors including providing visa to remain in the country. Even granting refugee status to the trafficking survivors is contemplated

---

40   Michele Anne Clark, "Trafficking in Persons: An Issue of Human Security", paper presented to the Global Equity Initiative, October 2002.
41   Elizabath Abir, "Migration and security from a North-South perspective" in David T Graham and Nana K. Poku (eds), *op.cit*.
42   *Ibid*.

43   For further information, see Jean D'Cunta, "Gender Equality, Human Rights and Trafficking: A Framework of Analysis and Action" a paper presented at the seminar on *Promoting Gender Equality to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children,* Bangkok, October 2002.

by some countries. Arguments have been put forward for inclusion of women trafficking survivors in refugee-determination procedures on the grounds of a particular social group and as a victims of gender-based persecution.[44]

Forced Migration as a Human Security Threat

Forced migration is a subset of migration which has most direct links with human security as by definition, forced migrants are compelled to flee from their home because of events threatening to their lives and safety.[45] In general, human insecurity forces people out of their homes and homelands in search of safe places. On the other hand, human security of refugees could be under threat due to lack of assistance and protection. The issue is much more complex as it demands national security of host country at one level and human security of refugees at another. Perceptions (rightly/wrongly) of threats by the host country could lead to hostility towards refugees. There are five broad categories of situations, in which, forced migrants may be perceived as a threat to the host country.[46]

First: when forced migrants oppose the government of their home country.

Second: when forced migrants are perceived as a political threat or security risk to the government of the host country.

Third: when forced migrants are seen as a cultural threat.

Fourth: when forced migrants are social or economic problem for the host country.

Fifth: when the host country uses forced migrants as an instrument of threat against the home country.

In recent times, the mix of asylum-seekers economic migrants and irregular migrants often create insecurity for both the population. The insecurity emanates from states dilemma to control irregular migration and to ensure protection of forced migrants. Some states attach overwhelming priority on controlling irregular migration comprising with its responsibility to protect forced migrants and other migrants in need of protection.

Migration in the Context of Terrorism and National Security

International migration, is an inter-state phenomenon, beyond the capacity and reach of any individual country to independently manage. Migration, refugee issues and internal displacement are no longer considered as simple humanitarian subjects that can be solved by humanitarian action alone. Migration related security perception differs from country to country depending on the position of the country in the migration spectrum. It is recognized that while regular migration can help forge economic, social and cultural bonds between peoples and countries, irregular migration can cause harm to those relations. The costs of controlling borders, detaining and returning irregular migrants can be very high and it can place intolerable burdens on both the destination and origin countries.

The September 11 terrorist attack on America has added a new dimension to this debate. Prior to this, the discussion on migration focused on prevention of irregular migration and meeting labour market needs with migrant labour. "Whereas in post-11 September, the focus is on security and combating terrorism in relation to migration. Because of its cross-border dimensions, international

---

44 Jenna Shearer Demir, "Trafficking of Women for Sexual Exploitation: A Gender-based Well Founded Fear?: An examination of refugee status determination for trafficked prostituted women for CEE/CIS countries to Western Europe", a paper submitted to the University of Pavia, January 2003.

45 Susan F. Martin, "Forced Migration and the evolving humanitarian regime", working paper No. 20, UNHCR, July 2000.

46 For detail discussion, Myron Weiner, *The Global Migration Crisis: Challenges to States and to Human Rights,* Chapter 6, Harper Collins College Publishers, 1995.

terrorism is a migration issue"[47]. It overlaps on a range of matters directly affecting migration process and national security.

There is growing concern that legitimate security threats must not turn into excuses for xenophobic actions against migrants. In the wake of 11 September 2001, the issue has drawn greater attention of migration channels. In this context, UNHCR has stated that governments may automatically or improperly apply exclusion clauses (Article I (F) of the 1951 Refugee Convention) or their criteria to individual asylum seekers based on the assumption that they may be terrorists because of their religion, ethnicity, nationality or political affiliation.[48] UNHCR has voiced its concerns on the tendency to link asylum-seekers and refugees to crime and terrorism as such unwarranted links incite racism and xenophobia provoking serious protection worries[49]. Analyzing the links between migration and terrorism, IOM stated that state initiatives to combat terrorism should ensure that the minority phenomena of criminality or terrorism in the migration context do not compromise the integrity of regular migration or the right of persons to be mobile.[50]

While states have an obligation to protect and promote respect of human rights and fair treatment of migrants, their primary concern remains to ensure security, social stability, economic opportunity and general welfare of their citizens. Nevertheless, in a world, increasingly based on democratic principles, free market systems and rule of law, states may not unduly restrict cross-border movement of people. Hence, protecting the human security of individuals, presents

national security thinking with the challenge of a new strategy to facilitate regular migration and prevent irregular migration.

In this respect, restricting the movement of people in response to national security threats, risk further reducing human security for would-be regular migrants by preventing them from departing or opting for irregular channels. Hence, a strategy for addressing migration in the context of threats to national security should rather focus on the need to address the root cause of lack of human security in the origin countries as well as the perceived role of the developed world as upholding the conditions that cause human insecurity in these countries.

Conclusion

To ensure human security, regular migration flows should be manageable both in numbers and as a process. In order to reduce push factors of migration and thereby the total number of migrants, human security should be promoted in the country of origin. This would necessitate supportive state policies in terms of promoting development which could create jobs as well as other important aspects of human security by providing access to healthcare and education in addition to freedom from oppression. Furthermore, active policies need to be adopted to promote the flow and effective utilization of remittances as well as skills utilization by returnee migrants. In addition to this, national policies aimed at promoting the human security of migrants need to be in place, for origin countries and destination countries alike. National prioritization in this field is of particular importance for countries where migration forms an important part of the national development. In these circumstances, whether receiving or origin country, the promotion of human security of migrant workers will strengthen the human security at large and promote the wider social and economic development.

---

[47]   IOM, *International Terrorism and Migration,* March 2002

[48]   UNHCR Press Release of 23 October 2001, "Ten Refugee Protection Concerns in the Aftermath of September 11".

[49]   IMP, "Migration and Human Security" a paper submitted at the Consultation on International Migration, Berlin, 21 – 22 October 2002.

[50]   IOM, International Terrorism, *op .cit.*

Given that migration within manageable numbers is a desirable phenomena for generating human security as well as wider development, this flow should be managed within a framework of guiding principles This would require not only the implementing migration policies, but also reorientation of basic strategies and rationale for population movement based on the common understandings and practices for a planned, balanced and comprehensive approach.[51]

Acknowledging also that international migration, forced or voluntary, will continue to play a dominant role in the era of heightened concern for state-centric counter terrorism efforts, the absence of a global system or regime for security of mobile populations, forced migrants and irregular migrants in particular, will pose a great challenge for the international community. This challenge may further be compounded by the inadequate capacity of states to address the critical issue and the absence of a global regime. In response to this, the Commission on Human Security has suggested multilateral approaches as essential for promoting orderly and predictable movement of people.[52]

Exploring such a regime from a human security perspective, necessarily challenges traditional boundaries of "security", "sovereignty" and "immigration" as the gap between priorities, interests and power of states in the migration field are constraining their capacity to establish a mechanism to manage migration.

---

[51] The common understanding and practices has been developed through a global consultative process under "Berne Initiative" process. These have been elaborated in the "International Agenda for Migration Management" which is non-binding but a comprehensive system for managing migration through dialogue, cooperation and capacity building at the national regional and global level, for details, see www.iom.int/berneinitiative

[52] Final Report of Human Security Commission, *op .cit.*

Nevertheless, there is a gradual recognition of the need to establish a new migration regime in parallel to the economic regime. Such a regime would facilitate the process of migration acting as a "developmental force" and a force for softening the impact of adverse consequences of globalization and minimizing the impacts of sources of human insecurity.

In addition to supporting the above mentioned national policies, this would entail active state policies in multi- as well as bi-lateral fora to open up the free movement of regular migration ranging from unskilled to skilled migrants, as well as guaranteeing the rights of migrants by adopting international conventions, such as the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

In order to realize this, an alternative development paradigm, consistent with global economic and development trends and priorities, needs to evolve. The work towards developing a paradigm could begin by engaging the origin and destination countries into a dialogue at purely functional levels in order to create a platform for building a "global migration management paradigm". Global initiatives have been taken to bridge the gap in understanding the migration challenges and potentials between the origin and destination countries, for example, Berne Initiative and the UN initiated Global Commission on International Migration. The emerging regime may consider linking migration with human security redefining both the concepts. One of the ways to redefine these concepts is to implement the "International Agenda for Migration Management".[53] Management of migration may also incorporate the issues addressed in 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and their Families and

---

[53] Berne Initiative, op. cit.

other ILO Conventions.[54] At the national level, management of migration depends on good governance and realization of accountability, equality, participation, and empowerment in the migration process. The approach may be based on the following elements.[55]

- Migrants are at the centre of the migration management system.

- Non-discriminating policies and practices of state in managing migration

- Accountability of the State , the private sector and the civil society in ensuing well being and protecting rights of migrants

- Migration as a process of empowerment of migrants

- Special focus on vulnerability and the vulnerable migrant groups especially women.

The human security agenda offers a new perspective including recasting discussions of the motivations underlying global migration, directly challenging the perceived "inevitability" of migration and focusing on the centrality of reducing inequality as a policy prerequisite rather than a delayed outcome of aggregate economic growth[56]. It should help shaping clear and comprehensive policies, laws and administrative arrangements to ensure that population management occur to the mutual benefit of migrants, societies and governments. The new multilateral management structure should help minimize "cost" of migration and preserve the integrity of migration as a development process.

New ideas such as "circular migration", "virtual migration" and "temporary labor migration" have to be incorporated in the human security debate. Partnership and cooperation among the origin and destination countries will be essential, for developing a more creative space for movement of people. Human security issues should take a stronger role in shaping migration policies and actions. In the UN MDG programs, initially migration did not feature and the links between MDG goals and migration were not explored. But, increasingly it is recognized that international migration can make a difference in achieving MDG either by creating impediments or if managed well, can positively contributing to their realization .[57]

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a globally mandated intergovernmental organization to set and deal with migration and migration related issues can play a leading role in the migration-human security debate and can assist the governments to adopt to the migration realities by adopting appropriate migration management policies and programs. During the past 50 years, IOM has shown its ability to assist governments in the management of complex population flows, both regular and irregular. IOM has been exploring ways and means to ensure that migration remains beneficial to all. Its main objective is to maximize value to migration by facilitating regular migration and reducing irregular migration. It believes that, if migration is managed in a planned manner, the benefits will outweigh the costs for individuals as well as countries of origin and destination.[58]

---

[54] Nicola Piper, " Rights of Foreign Workers and the Policies of Migration in South-East Asia" in *International Migration,* Vol.42(5)2004.

[55] Based on discussion in the "Workshop on Rights Based Approach" held in Stockholm for February 13-14, 2003 organized by Save the Children Sweden.

[56] Robert L Bach, "Global Mobility, Inequality and Society" in *Journal of Human Development*, Vol 4, No 2, July 2003.

[57] For detailed discussion, see, paper presented at the seminar on "Relevance of Population Aspects for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals" particularly, the paper by IOM, New York, 19 December 2004.

[58] IOM, "Valuing Migration: Costs, Benefits, Opportunities, and challenges" a document presented at the Council in November2004 (MC/INF/276)