Global Need for Better Data on International Migration and the Special Potential of Household Surveys

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Recognition of Importance of international migration in the world by international organizations, etc.

- UN GA Resolution on Intl Mig & Dev, Dec 2014
- Reports of Secretary Generals of UN, 2006 … 2016
- High level dialogues on Migration, 2011, 2013,
- Reflected in UN Sustainable Development Goals
- UN Declaration on Financing for Development, Addis Ababa, 2015
- UN General Assembly: New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, Sept. 19, 2016
- Etc.

Recommendations for improving data of Center for Global Development, 2009, *Migrants Count*

- Expand census data on the 3 key dimensions of migration, this is ongoing

- Better exploit existing administrative data, requires *first* convincing Ministries to share data with National Statisti Office (NSO)

- Compile data on IM from Labor Force Surveys in a harmonized, centralized data base

- Make micro files of above and below publicly available, progress being made in some countries but way too little

- Create *modules* on IM for household surveys (adapt) or conduct new specialized surveys

Purpose of data collection: is it to

- *Measure*/count international migrants—immigrants, emigrants, return migrants
- Over some fixed recent time period (cut-off of 1, 2, 5, 10….years)
- *Characterize* migrants: age, sex, education, work experience, assets….
- Collect data on *remittances* sent/received
- OR *Study determinants* and/or *consequences* of migration

Focus is on developing countries of emigration

- Data on individuals who have left (emigrated) from households can be obtained from household members remaining behind (proxy respondents)
- Limitations in data that can be obtained
- Data on whole households that emigrated usually obtainable only in country of destination, indicating major limitation of survey carried out only in origin country

Types of existing surveys to think of adapting by adding questions

- Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)
- Household budget, income or expenditure surveys
- Living Standard Measurement Surveys
- Labor force surveys
- Other large (e.g., multi-purpose) surveys

5 Questions to ask before adapting existing survey to collect more/better data on International Migrants

1. What is the **sample size** and prevalence of the type(s) of migrants of interest in the country?

Issue of "rare elements", especially if focus is on *recent* migrants vs. lifetime migrants

Example, survey of 10,000 households in country with 10% foreign born, 2% arriving in past 5 years, 1 in 60 households, yields around 167 hhs with 1+ migrants, very small for desired disaggregations

Most useful are surveys which already have some relevant information, e.g., previous place of residence or birth, employment status, etc.

The longer the questionnaire already in use, the more limited new questions can be in general

(Cont.)

2. What is the *focus of the survey*?

This defines the availability of *other* data that may be relevant to migration, such as the main demographic characteristics of the population…employment/occupation or wages/income, which makes labor force or other economic surveys potentially more useful.

3. Are any data already being collected in the survey that identify international migrants?

E.g., country of birth, citizenship, previous residence, …or key events that may trigger migration, such as [dates of] marriage/divorce, education…

Last 2…

4. Are any *retrospective data* collected on individuals in the household and on the household relating to migration?

What is needed is data on migrants around the time just before the migration, to study the factors affecting the migration decision to study its *determinants*. But the same is needed to study the consequences *for the migrants, not* only data at the time of the survey.

5. Ideally, data should be collected on the *situation of non-migrants* in migrant households and in non-migrant households at the same time, to statistically study the factors affecting migration vs. non-migration decisions, and consequences for the migrants and their households.

DHS: usual samples of 10-30K; example of Ecuador 2004

- Explosion of emigration since 1995
- ENDEMAIN IV 2004 covered 28,908 households (CEPAR), with module on emigration
- Asks if anyone left in previous 5 years, when, characteristics of person when left, work in year before leaving, why left, current residence, remittances sent in past 12 months, frequency, amount, use
- Shows about 7% of households (over 1500) had an emigrant in previous 5 years, 62% of which reported receiving remittances in past 12 months
- Could have asked about residence of absent children, migration intentions, economic questions….

LSMS surveys

- Advantage: Rich economic data sets, so can use to better measure economic situation of migrants and non-migrants

- Flexibility: Countries can add modules

- Examples of Albania, Tajikistan

- But disadvantages: Small sample size, long questionnaires already so hard to add to, leads to respondent fatigue

- Examples of Ghana, Peru, Ecuador, Armenia, Albania

Labor force surveys—usually the best prospects

- Most universal across countries, and regular
- Administered by National Statistics Office
- Relatively large sample sizes: 30-100K
- National coverage and representation
- Already collect some key data re. international migrants: age, sex, education, employment, etc.
- Often already ask place of birth, identifying foreign born, some also ask previous place of residence x years ago

Labor force surveys (cont.)

- Some developing countries already include modules on international migration

- Examples include Pakistan, Costa Rica, Mexico, Poland, Philippines, Armenia, Egypt, Thailand, Ecuador, on emigrants and/or immigrants

- Most ask motives for migration, date of departure/arrival, remittances received

- Only a few ask about household composition and characteristics, migrant's work, education, etc., *before* departure (or arrival), e.g., the last 4 countries in ILO experiment circa 2006. since then, possibly Moldova & Ukraine in 2012.

Experimental module on IM used by Thailand in 4th quarter, 2006 (ILO/WB)

- 22 questions, for every household member, referring to previous 12 mos.

- Ask if x received any $/goods from elsewhere, # times, amount, relationship to head, usage, etc.

- Asks if x is citizen of T, if not, where

- When 1st came to T, last time, from where

- Asks education, occupation, industry, etc., at time of arrival (can compare with current)

The unfortunate truth?

- There has been strong resistance to include migration in DHS surveys, and the sample is rarely sufficient.

- LSMS in contrast has always collected some data on internal migration and has implemented special modules on international migration in Albania & Tajikistan, and a few others. But samples very small.

- Time to agree on optional modules for LFS, and push for their occasional, recurrent use.

- Nevertheless, "the unfortunate truth is that few existing surveys will yield an adequate # of recent migrants, and accommodate a module on retrospective data"..therefore specialized surveys on international migration r needed

Sampling Migrants in specialized surveys of international migration

- Absolute need for probability sampling
- Define survey purpose and hence appropriate comparison groups at outset (and countries!)
- Based on budget, define survey domain and target sample size and distribution
- Recognize that migrants are *rare* elements
- Find sampling frame—for migrants and non-migrants
- Calculate proportions of population which are migrants of interest in PSUs, form strata

Sampling rare elements: disproportionate sampling from strata, two-phase sampling

- Example of country of Origin, select migrants and non-migrants
- Sample Primary Sampling Units such as provinces using disproportionate sampling, oversampling from strata with high proportions of international migrants
- Continue in subsequent stages, oversampling
- In final sample Ultimate Area Units (UAUs), conduct screening operation, use 2-phase sampling, first listing occupied households to identify those with migrants
- Oversample those with migrants, but also select households without; conduct interviews

5 Recent/on-going multi-country projects of specialized international migration surveys

1. NIDI-Eurostat Push-Pulls Project,1997-98; collaborated with govt NSOs; 5 countries of origin to 2 destination countries of Europe; used common sampling pro-cedures (stratification + over-sampling), questionnaires; data on emigrants, return migrants, non-migrants; more social data, networks….

2. World Bank Africa Migration Project, 2009-11; funded private firms/universities; six Sub-Saharan countries; internal/international migration, remittances; more econ data including wages, income/expenditures,…

3. Migration from Africa to Europe (MAFE) project led by INED; 3 countries of origin to 5 destination: emigrants, return migrants, adaptation; networks, social data

Cont.

4. MIRPAL project on CIS countries, since 2010; funded by World Bank, intended to cover all countries of origin plus the one main destination country (Russian Federation); on emigration/immigration, return migration; some economic, social, novel on networks; Tajikistan to Russia surveys in 2014; Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan in 2017 (Marina).

5. Mediterranean Household International Migration Surveys (MEDHIMS), funded by EC, WB, UNFPA, UNHCR IOM, etc.; 8 low-income countries of Mediterranean; NSOs; methods (stratification, etc.) and questionnaires developed through multiple workshops with all countries; emigration & return migration; Farid developed excellent questionnaire format; Egypt and Jordan finished; next Tunisia, Morocco?

A World Migration Survey?

- Why? So many key policy questions cannot be answered with existing data:

- What are the detailed characteristics of expatriates from a country living abroad, of those emigrating, returning?

- The differences, the determinants (individual, household, contextual) of why some emigrate and others do not, and why some return? Of individuals vs. hhs migrating?

- What are the consequences of emigration/immigration for the migrants, origin and destination households and communities?

- How much short-term and temporary migration exists, circulation, and characteristics, and consequences?

- What affects the timing of migration—triggering events?

- How do government policies affect migration?

Obstacles

- 1. Agreement to do it by developed countries and international organizations, given their worried, mandates and priorities.

- 2. Funding, few developing countries will put up much monetary resources though many can provide key infrastructure.

- 3. Agreement on how to do it, who/what international organization (IOM?) should coordinate.

Conclusion

Third High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development to be by 2019, where will we be?

WFS/DHS led to data facilitating a quantum leap since 1967 in theory and the understanding of fertility and how policies can affect it to help countries achieve development goals. Meanwhile migration continues to limp (more than crawl perhaps, but not walk well) in the Middle Ages. With the current and growing interest in international migration and its linkages to development, is it not time to take a *step* in the same direction for migration, towards a Renaissance in the field, half a century after it has occurred with fertility?