MIGRATION, URBANIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Daniel Schensul, Ph.D.
Population and Development Branch
Outline of the talk

1. Urbanization and migration
2. Urbanization and sustainable development
3. Migration and sustainable development
4. Census data for local urban vulnerability
5. Conclusions
We commit to work towards improving the quality of human settlements, including the living and working conditions of both urban and rural dwellers in the context of poverty eradication so that all people have access to basic services, housing and mobility.

...improved urban planning and slum upgrading

We underline the importance of considering disaster risk reduction, resilience and climate risks in urban planning.

We commit to systematically consider population trends and projections in our national, rural and urban development strategies and policies. Through forward looking planning, we can seize the opportunities and address the challenges associated with demographic change, including migration.

We emphasize the importance of increasing the number of metropolitan regions, cities and towns that are implementing policies for sustainable urban planning and design in order to respond effectively to the expected growth of urban populations in the coming decades.

We note that sustainable urban planning benefits from the involvement of multiple stakeholders as well as from full use of information and sex-disaggregated data, including on demographic trends, income distribution and informal settlements.

International migration paragraph: We call upon States to promote and protect effectively the human rights and fundamental freedom of all migrants regardless of migration status, especially those of women and children, and to address international migration through international, regional or bilateral cooperation and dialogue and a comprehensive and balanced approach, recognizing the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting and protecting the human rights of all migrants, and avoiding approaches that might aggravate their vulnerability.
Building on Rio

- Limits of the outcome document should not be mistaken for limited links
- Substantively, critical connections between migration, urbanization and sustainable development
  - Understanding/projecting urban growth or changes in population location and planning for them
  - Labor markets, for instance when the green economic transition coincides with the urban transition
  - Environmental exposure and adaptive capacity
Fears of urbanization and migration

- Common concerns about climate change producing waves of international migrants (among many examples of international migration concerns)
- Still serious concerns about urbanization among many governments – ability to keep cities functioning
- Rural-urban migration resulting in rapid urban growth
  - Formal limits (e.g. hukou in China) are rare; however,
  - 72% of developing countries implement policies aimed at lowering rural to urban migration; 81% in Sub-Saharan Africa.
Implications

- Tendency to conflate poverty with rural areas, and to see rural people moving to the cities as causing urban poverty
- Efforts to limit rights to the city
- Resulting poor planning for urban growth
  - Heightened informality
  - Limited options for the urban poor
Urban growth and migration

- Common conception that migration is responsible for rapid urban growth
- In many places – where urban fertility levels remain high, or where countries are nearly fully urbanized – natural increase is the dominant factor
- Economic opportunities have driven shifts in perceptions of rural-urban migration
  - China relaxed the hukou system due to the links between urbanization and economic growth
- Urban growth is not the only kind of urban change
  - Declining urban growth in some Sub-Saharan African countries due to lack of economic opportunity
  - Stability in Mumbai population over the last two censuses
  - Big out-migrations in American cities like Detroit or Cleveland
Urbanization and sustainable development

- **Economic growth**
  - Powerful correlation between urbanization and economic growth, though the links are not always well understood

- **Emissions / energy use**
  - Oft quoted statistics: 70% of emissions come from urban areas
  - Locus of economy
  - Controlling for income, urban living is lower emissions – *depending on the urban plan*

- **Environmental vulnerability**
  - Prevalence of cities in LECZs, drylands, and other climate risk geographies
  - Local environmental degradation – pollution, resource use, etc.
Migration and sustainable development

- **Drivers of migration**
  - Economic
  - Social
  - Environmental

- **Lack of data on internal movements**
  - Basic numbers – levels, trends
  - Administrative data for analysis of duration of stay and reasons for migration
  - Access to micro-data on migration decisions

- **Climate migration**
  - Existing migration flows and related livelihoods will be *impacted by climate change*
  - Existing migration flows will *change people’s exposure*
  - Climate change hazards causing *mobility or displacement*
  - Migration as *adaptation*
Urban vulnerability in Malawi

- UNFPA project: small area analysis of census data for development and climate adaptation planning
  - Census data are the only comprehensive source for understanding how vulnerability varies locally
  - Malawi, Indonesia, expanding to more

- Malawi: 15% urban, rapidly urbanizing
  - 4.2% annual growth rate (doubling in 17 years)
  - Lilongwe – 4.4% annual growth

- To date, no urban component in government’s climate or sustainable development response

- Significant within-city variation in basic components of vulnerability and sustainable development
Population density in Malawi
Proportion of Households using Firewood and Charcoal for Cooking

Lilongwe

City Boundary
Conclusion

- In climate change responses, there is increasing awareness of both urbanization and migration, though often not in the right way.
- In sustainable development, particularly out of Rio, urbanization is not sufficiently incorporated, and migration barely at all.
- We are at a crossroads:
  - Urbanization provides an opportunity, with the right planning.
  - Migration provides and opportunity, with the right supports.
  - Urban areas will increasingly be the terrain of sustainable development — we need to act.