



# GFMD Thematic Meeting

## Addressing Irregular Migration Through Coherent Migration and Development Strategies

***Factors Impacting Irregular Migration:  
Globalization, Transnationalism, Global Disparities, Demand for Cheap  
Labour, Social Networks***

**Maureen Achieng, IOM HQs**  
*Istanbul, October 13 and 14, 2011*



# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: DRIVERS & INFLUENCES

## (a) Drivers

- Globalisation & Global Economic **D**isparities
- Global **D**emographic Transition
- **D**emand for cheap labour
- Natural and Man-made **D**isasters

## (b) Facilitators

- Transnationalism
- Social networks: The **D**igital Revolution
- Shrinking **D**istances: Improved, more affordable telecommunication costs



# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: DRIVERS

**GLOBALISATION**: The process by which regional economies, societies, and cultures have become integrated through communication, transportation, and trade.

- **Economic impact**: Increased disparity b/w developed and developing countries AND global and regional economic integration
- **Non-economic**: Increased *transnational* circulation of ideas, languages, popular culture
- **Impact on Migration**: Direct impact on prospects for the movement of people
- **Result**: Most migrants today NOT fleeing persecution -- looking for a better life (employment -- temporary or permanent opportunities in a different place, education, training)



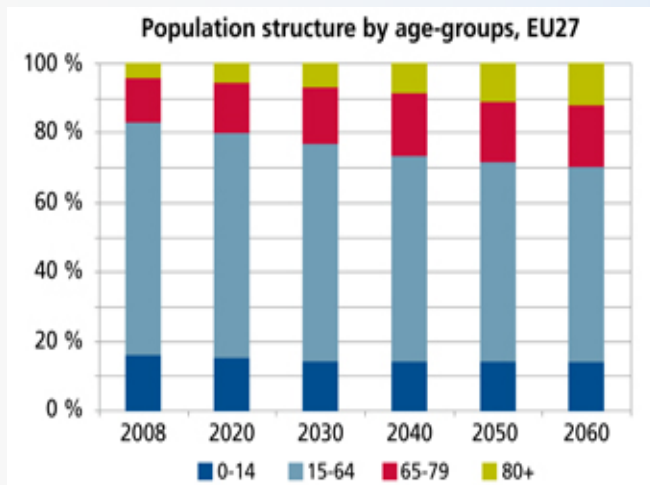
# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: DRIVERS

## DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION

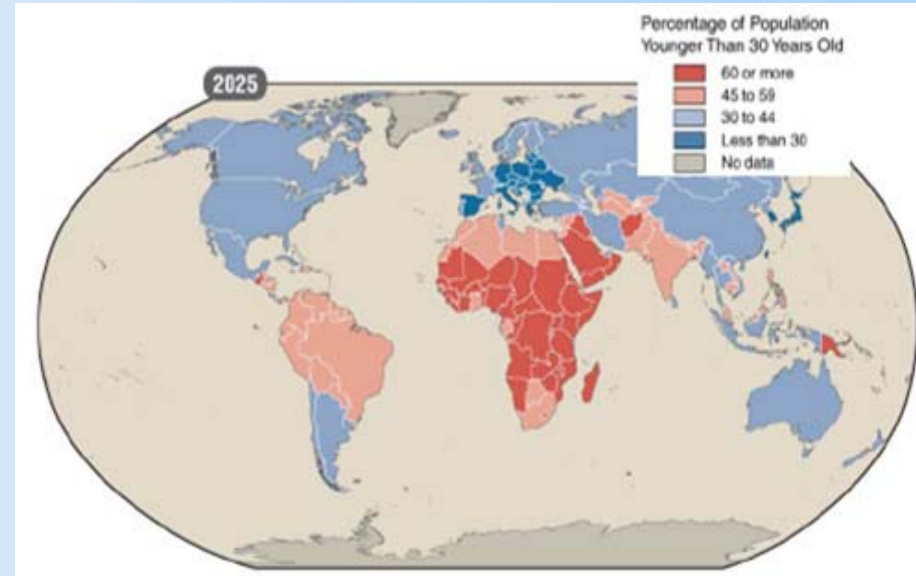
- Demographic transition/population ageing is unprecedented, pervasive, profound & enduring
- Disparity b/w developed and developing world
  - North: decline in labour force
  - South: labour force expanding (temporary youth bulge)
- **EU Projections for 27 MSs over the next 50 years: Retiree boom** – support ratio for retirees to working population to change from the **4:1** to **2:1** by 2060
- **15% drop** in the working age population expected by 2060 (*European Commission, 2009*)

# Future Migration: DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

**Ageing populations and decline in working age population in most industrialized countries**



Source: EC, 2009 Ageing Report.



Source: Atlantic Council, 2008.

**Growing labour surplus in many developing countries**



# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: DRIVERS

## DEMAND FOR LABOUR

- Global mismatches in labour supply – move for work that is not permitted through legal channels
- Inadequate channels for regular migration (particularly in low skilled sectors)
- Labour market segmentation - formal and informal economy
- National policy incoherence
  - policies governing entry and stay of skilled migrants vs broader sectors of public administration e.g. labour market management, HR development, education



# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: DRIVERS

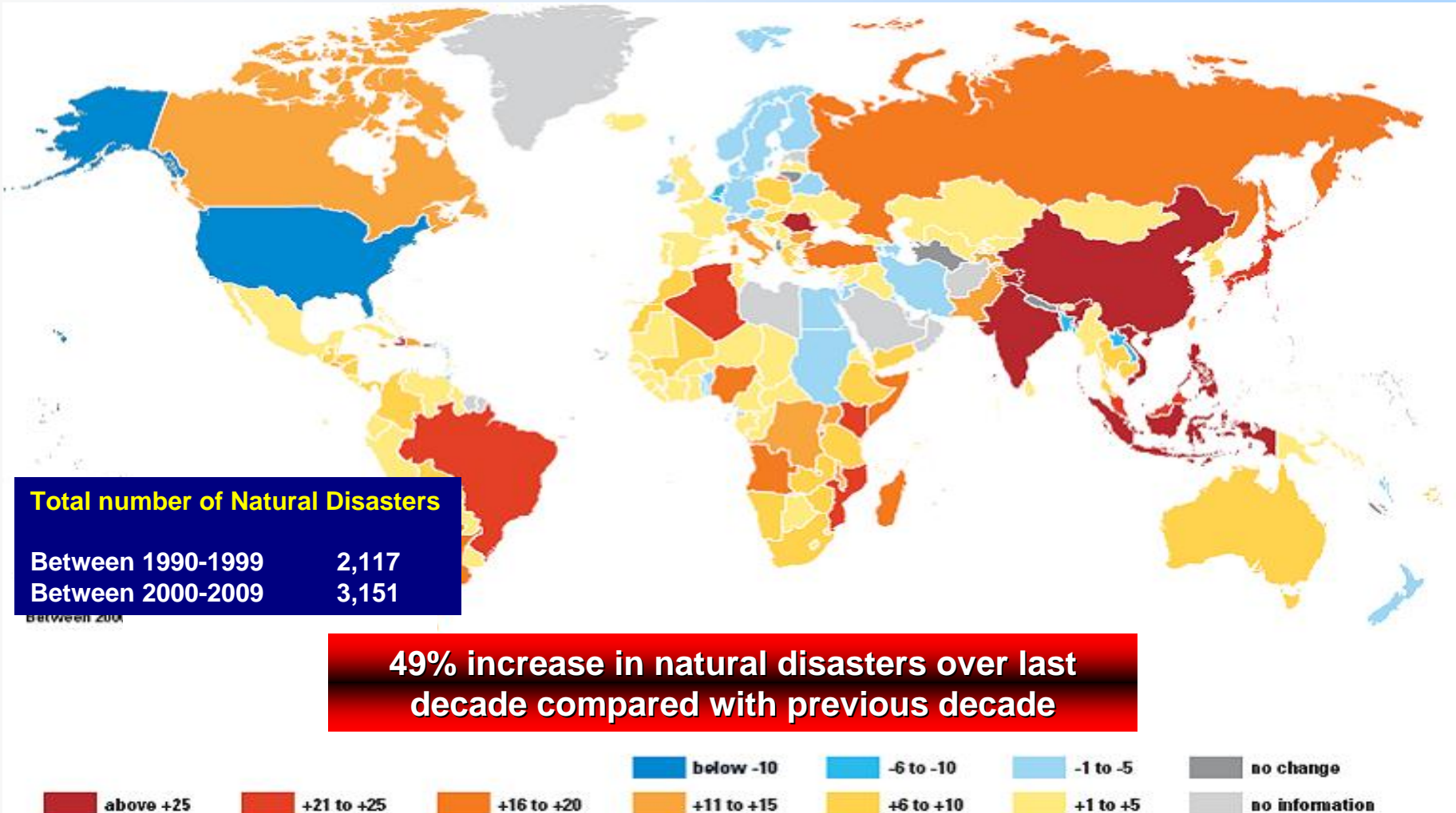
## **DISASTERS (Natural & Man-Made):**

### **Mobility related consequences**

- Haiti 2010: 3 million people were affected; risk of a massive exodus was enormous
- Pakistan 2011: Floods devastated 78 out of a total of 141 districts. 18 million people affected
- Large displacement-inducing events were also recorded in Colombia and Sri Lanka
- Recent evolving developments in North Africa: Huge displacement potential

# Future Migration: ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Change in the number of natural disasters between 1990-1999 and 2000-2009



Sources: Based on EM DAT, OFDA/CRED, 2010.





# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: FACILITATORS

## TRANSNATIONALISM

### SOCIAL NETWORKS/DIGITAL REVOLUTION

- Transnationalism: exchanges, connections & practices across borders – transcend national space as the primary reference point for activities and identities
- Strengthened degree of connectivity between different places and realities



# IRREGULAR MIGRATION: FACILITATORS

## **SOCIAL NETWORKS/DIGITAL REVOLUTION**

- Reaching across borders more possible & more commonplace due to accelerated global development in the realm of communication technologies and transportation
- Reduction in associated costs -- proliferation of use of the telephone, internet, mobile phone, global media and transport mediums
- Contact with COO (vary depending on category of migrant: temporary, circular, permanent)



# IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

- **IRREGULAR MIGRATION:** develop policies that channel migration into safe, orderly, humane and productive avenues which benefit individuals and the societies to which they are connected
- **IRREGULAR MIGRATION DRIVERS & FACILITATORS:** better understanding of these factors
- **Transnationalism in migration is a reality: opportunities and challenges** (*policy needs to think more transnationally*)
- **Transnationalism: No conflict with state sovereignty: utilize it to better manage transnational phenomena – comprehensive approaches**
- **Reduce national policy incoherence: key driver of irregular migration**



# IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

## Irregular Migration: Policy Considerations

- Impact on the family unit
- Political participation and membership
- Social welfare policies
- Regardless of status migrants do contribute back home and at destination
- Remittances: informal channels, higher cost less sent
- Reduced opportunity for return
- Irregular status does not allow for free movement; impact on skills transfer and mobility



- General consensus irregular migration is on the increase, despite temporary dip during the economic crisis
- Of the 214 million international migrants, 10-15% estimated to be in an irregular situation (UNDESA 2009, IOM 2010)
- Up to 1/3 of migrants from developing countries may migrate irregularly (UNDP 2009)