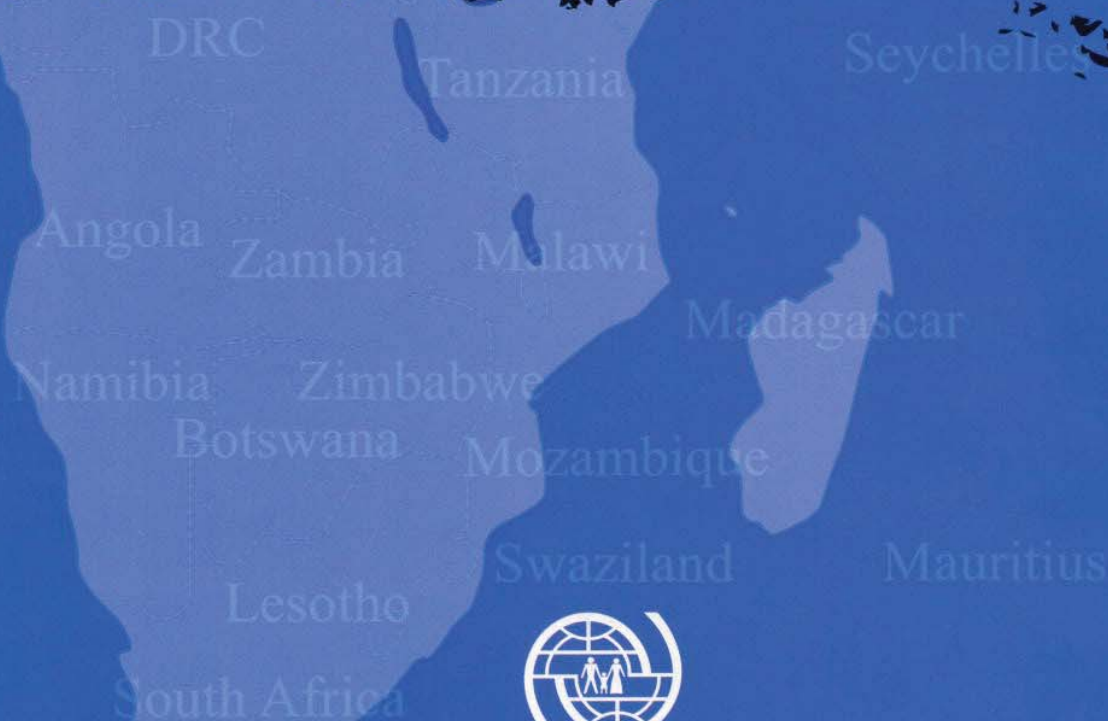


# **Data Assessment of Labour Migration Statistics in the SADC Region: South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe**



IOM International Organization for Migration

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BOP: Balance of Payments  
CSO: Central Statistical Office  
DHA: Department of Home Affairs  
DHS: Demographic Health Survey  
DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo  
ILO: International Labour Organization  
IMF: International Monetary Fund  
IOM: International Organization for Migration  
LCS: Living Conditions Survey  
LSMS: Living Standards and Measurement Survey  
MTO: Money Transfer Organization  
NSDS: the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics  
NSS: National Statistical Systems  
RSD: Refugee Status Determination  
SADC: Southern African Development Community  
SSA: Statistics South Africa  
TRP: Temporary Residence Permits  
UN: United Nations  
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund  
UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
USAID: United States Agency for International Development

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Principal Persons Interviewed (in most cases, the principal interviewee was accompanied by one or more persons)

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UNFPA, Mr. Mlambo  
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## **Executive Summary**

This pilot study assesses existing statistical infrastructures and systems for the collection, analysis, and sharing of international labour migration data in the countries of South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, with particular attention to topics like brain drain and remittance flows. A number of data sources and limitations were found, and recommendations made to improve existing data sources, develop new data sources, and improve communications between country stakeholders and between neighbouring countries. The establishment of regionally coherent and coordinated data collection and sharing mechanisms are critical for these endeavors.

## **INTRODUCTION**

International migration continues to become increasingly important across the globe, having a particular impact on many countries in terms of redistribution of population and loss of skilled labour. This increase in magnitude has been combined with general weaknesses in collection and measurement of migration data, including incomplete data sources, difficulty accepting common definitions of migration, which contribute to lack of data comparability, data collection issues (e.g. migration is a relatively rare event), difficulty measuring the true size of migration, as well as lack of information to measure impact of migration for both receiving and sending countries. Migration data issues are particularly pertinent in the southern African region, where good data are critical for improving regional migration management and to better understand how migration and other policies affecting migration impact one another.

The movement of people across international borders is a controversial topic in the Southern Africa region. Some have called for Southern African countries to harmonize regional migration policies to ensure free movement of labour across the region. However, with high levels of regional economic disparity, many people in countries like South Africa and Botswana worry the free movement of people would inundate them with a flood of migrants from their less developed neighbours. Migration of highly skilled individuals within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and overseas is of real concern to most SADC countries, resulting in shortages of national skilled workers, and is believed to have an adverse affect on overall long-term national economic growth, despite benefits from remittances. However, informed policy and decision making related to these issues is hampered by lack of quality migration data, making it difficult to assess labour migration in the SADC region. One example of this lack of data is in the form of migrant remittances, with limited information on the total amount of money sent, methods of sending, and the impact remittances have on life in migrant sending countries.

SADC is comprised of fifteen countries in the Southern African region, and has a goal of fostering regional socio-economic cooperation and integration, as well as political and security cooperation. Creation of a regionally coherent data collection/sharing mechanism on labour migration would help further these goals. IOM, with support from the SADC Statistics Committee, is conducting a pilot study in three selected countries (South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) to assess existing statistical infrastructure and systems for the collection, analysis, and sharing of basic statistical data relevant to the issue of labour migration, particularly for topics like brain drain and remittance flows. This study hopes to enhance the capacity of National Statistical Systems (NSS) to collect, manage, and disseminate official statistics on migration, and provide a basis for sound policy and decision making in the region.



## BACKGROUND FOR THREE PILOT COUNTRIES

The three countries chosen for this project are representative of differing economic and political situations in the SADC region, yet all share similarities and are intimately connected with one another. Given the colonial roots of nation-building in Africa, many ancient communities found themselves divided and governed by different European nations, while others who had neither ethnic nor linguistic connections were combined into nation states. These artificially created borders have resulted in regular cross-border movement, particularly when they separated a community who lived together before colonialism, which is often not considered to be international movement in the minds of those living along and monitoring these permeable borders. These post-colonial borders have also contributed to conflicts between and within countries on the continent, which have resulted in large numbers of refugees seeking political and economic stability in neighbouring countries, including the SADC region. Weak economic conditions have also contributed to movement of highly skilled workers, both within and outside of the SADC region, adversely impacting all countries in this study. While South Africa has historically been, and continues to be, a magnet for migrants in the region, even they have experienced significant outmigration of their highly educated population.

### South Africa

South Africa, with a population of almost 50 million, has had comparatively strong economic and political stability, making it a leading destination for migrants from neighbouring countries, as well as the African continent as a whole. Since the collapse of the white-dominated apartheid government in the 1990s, the number of migrants to South Africa has increased significantly. Until 1991, an official immigrant was one who could assimilate into the White population, resulting in most authorized migration coming from Europe and neighbouring countries. Since the 1990s, traditional movement of organized labour across borders has expanded to include the cross-border trading sector, as well as irregular migrants taking advantage of porous borders to flee economic or political instability in their home countries (Crush 2008).

South Africa has had a long-standing migration relationship with neighbouring countries, dating back to the formalization of the diamond and gold industries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the turn of the twentieth century, a highly regulated and formalized mine contract-labour system was established, which still endures in some form today. Post-apartheid policy changes resulted in migrants becoming a larger proportion of the mine workforce, particularly from Mozambique, though since 2002 laws were enacted to make it more difficult for mining companies to hire foreign workers. These types of formal migration movements have been combined with decades of informal and unregulated movements across borders, particularly in the agricultural sector, who rely heavily on undocumented external labour (Crush 2008). Irregular migration has also increased in recent years, particularly as a result of internal strife in neighbouring countries, including Mozambicans fleeing civil war in the 1980s and more recently, economic collapse in Zimbabwe. As in most countries, it is virtually impossible to accurately measure the number of undocumented migrants in South Africa, but estimates range between 1 and 8 million persons.<sup>1</sup>

South Africa did not officially recognize refugees until 1993, but has since become a destination for refugees from all over Africa. Pre-1990 refugees from Mozambique became regularized in 2000, but while those from Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Angola have had high acceptance rates, most others are denied refugee status on the

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<sup>1</sup> A 2004 UN report put the estimate between 3 and 8 million, but other estimates vary.

claim they are really looking for economic opportunities within South Africa (once a claim is rejected, if the person does not leave the country, they become an unauthorized migrant). Despite this, the number of asylum applications in South Africa has continued to grow, particularly from the aforementioned Zimbabwe and Mozambique (Department of Home Affairs, South Africa, 2008). Though many refugees return home after a crisis has abated in their country of origin, most remain in their country of destination, often integrating into border communities.

Increases in irregular migration have also contributed to a heightened atmosphere of xenophobia in South Africa, of which incidents have been frequently reported by the media, particularly against Zimbabwean migrants. Migrants have come to be stereotyped as social, economic, and criminal threats to South Africans. Finally, despite increased levels of immigration, South Africa has also experienced high levels of outward migration of its highly educated population, who often cite high-crime rates as motivation for leaving, especially in the industrial, medical, and education fields. Though there is little formal policy regarding labour migration, the South African government does identify critical skill-need areas, and recruits medical doctors from Cuba to serve rural areas, and South Asians in fields like engineering and math sciences, to replace skills which have left (Philips 2006).

## **Zambia**

Zambia, with a population of about 12 million, is an example of peace and stability in the region, and despite a poor economy, draws migrants from all over the region, while at the same time loses a significant number of skilled and highly educated professionals. Zambia's geographic position, with eight neighbouring countries (DRC, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola), makes it susceptible to migration, particularly when there is economic and political instability in the region. Achieving independence in 1964, Zambia was once a middle-income country but began to slide into poverty during the 1970s when copper prices declined (Ammassari 2005). Currently, Zambia is one of the most highly urbanized countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with high levels of unemployment and underemployment. Rural areas are particularly lacking in social services and health care.

Before independence, the size of the European population depended on the fortune of the mining industry, with many leaving during political upheavals of the mid-1960s. Once a destination for work in the copper mines, Zambia is currently not a haven for economic migrants, but as mentioned previously, has received a large number of refugees in recent years, particularly from Angola and the DRC.<sup>2</sup> Many of these persons are repatriated to their country of origin, but many also remain as refugees and undocumented migrants.

On the other hand, though not high by regional standards, Zambia has experienced a significant loss of highly skilled and educated professional due to the steady deterioration of socio-economic conditions in the country. These migrants have moved to more advanced economies in the region, like South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, or more recently to Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. These migrants tend to be focused in particular industries, e.g. health care workers, which has created a serious short-fall for the country in these professions, particularly in rural areas. Interviews of health care workers in Lusaka suggest the reason behind this migration are low salaries and poor working conditions (Ammassari 2005). Despite the adverse affect this has had on a country with already limited human capital, the Zambian government lacks a policy regarding labour migration. Though it was included as part of the official Poverty Reduction plan of 2002, no strategy has yet to be developed to retain or attract highly educated workers or workers in specific industries.

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<sup>2</sup> According to UNHCR\_Zambia, the total number of refugees in Zambia was 86,349 in 2008, 90 per cent of whom were from Angola and the DRC.



## Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe, with a reported population of about 13 million persons, borders South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia, and Botswana, and attained independence in 1980. Zimbabwe currently faces a number of economic problems, including a shortage of foreign exchange, astronomical inflation, and supply shortages. Agricultural production has declined dramatically since implementation of a controversial land reform programme in 2000, as mining and tourism have gained more prominence in the country's economy (World Bank 2008).

Zimbabwe experiences high levels of emigration, particularly to neighbouring countries like South Africa and Botswana, which have only been exacerbated by the country's ongoing economic and political crises. High numbers of irregular migrants and refugees from Zimbabwe have caused a strain in the region, while out-migration of highly skilled and educated professionals continues at a staggering rate (Tevera 2003). However, there is a popular belief that most migration away from Zimbabwe is only temporary and "Zimbabweans always come back home." Indeed, remittances flows, particularly from South Africa, are credited for keeping the economy afloat during their current economic turmoil. Though there are no estimates for remittances to Zimbabwe, according to World Bank estimates remittance flows out of South Africa exceeded one-billion US\$, though much of this also went to Lesotho and Mozambique (World Bank 2008).

Zimbabwe has historically been both a migration sending and receiving country, with many going to South Africa to work, while at the same time receiving labour migrants from neighbouring countries like Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique. Migration patterns have changed since achieving independence in 1980, as Zimbabwe is no longer a major recipient of migrant workers, and has experienced increasingly high levels of outmigration as economic conditions have deteriorated, particularly since the late 1980s. This out-migration has occurred in two racially distinct waves, first immediately after independence when Whites moved to South Africa, and then again during the 1990s, with a growing number of black Zimbabweans moving to other countries (Crush 2002).

Irregular migration from Zimbabwe takes on two forms. First, are those who enter neighbouring countries like Botswana and South Africa through official means, but then overstay their visas. Second, are those who leave Zimbabwe without valid travel documents and/or use unofficial border crossing points. Both men and women participate in increased informal cross-border trade, purchasing items in one country and then reselling them in Zimbabwe, where goods are scarce. However, most of these cross-border traders are only outside the country for brief periods of times, thus would not be considered long-term migrants per United Nations (UN) definitions. Though the total number of Zimbabweans in South Africa is unknown, estimates range between 500,000 and 3 million (Crush 2008).

South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe face challenges related to labour migration, and all are in need of improved data on the phenomenon to better policy formulation. There are several stakeholders in each country, all of whom are involved in these processes and are impacted by migration to and from their countries.

## Stakeholders

Accurate measurement of migration is critical for making sound policy decisions. There are a number of different stakeholders who are involved with production of labour migration data and policy formulation. These stakeholders tended to be similar for all countries in this study, even if specific ministry names and bureaucratic placement may differ. The following entities were identified as stakeholders in each country, and most were interviewed while carrying out this report (see Acknowledgments for a complete list of interviewees). Each plays a different role in the production of data and policy formulation, as denoted in parentheses.

Ministry of Labour/Department of Labour (employment statistics, labour force surveys, labour migration policy)  
 Central Statistical Office (Census and household surveys, analysis of administrative/border control data, dissemination of data)  
 Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Immigration (administrative data/residence permit data collection and processing, policy formulation)  
 Ministry of Home Affairs, Border Control/Police Services (border control data collection and processing)  
 Refugee Affairs/Unit (data collection/analysis/dissemination in South Africa only)  
 Central Bank/Reserve Bank/African Development Bank (remittance data)  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs (consular data)  
 Ministry of Economic Development (economic data, policy formulation)  
 Tourism Authority/Ministry of Tourism (analysis of administrative data/border exit surveys)  
 Minister of Commerce  
 Ministry of Health and Education/Higher and Tertiary Education (brain-drain issues/policy formulation)  
 SADC, Statistics Committee  
 International Organizations:  
 UNHCR (refugee data in Zambia and Zimbabwe), IOM, ILO, UNFPA, UNECA

Some private institutions may also collect data or work towards influencing policy on labour migration and/or emigration issues.

Worker Recruitment Agencies (e.g. Mine Workers Development Agency- South Africa)  
 Diaspora Organizations (e.g. Homecoming Revolution, South Africa)

## **MIGRATION TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

The first step towards establishing a regional network of comparable migration statistics is to come to agreement on common terms and definitions. Lack of uniform definitions on migration is an important reason for inconsistency in migration statistics between countries. Even within countries, data comparability issues exist, as individual systems are set up to respond to specific administrative objectives, not for measurement of international migration. The following section outlines terms and definitions as set forth by the international statistical community.

### **International Migrant Stocks and Flows**

Migration, both internal and international, is often studied by looking at its size, characteristics of migrants, and the impact migration has on both migrants themselves and areas from which they come and to where they go. In 1998, the United Nations released their "Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration" which have served as the international standard for classification of migration statistics. According to these recommendations, an *international migrant* is defined as "any person who changes his or her country of usual residence." *Long-term migrants* are defined as those who move to a country other than their country of usual residence for a period of at least a year, while *short-term migrants* are people who move to a country for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year.

Size of international migration, as well as labour migration, is measured using two concepts: stocks and flows. International migrant *stock* is the total number of international migrants living in a country at a particular point in time. Stock of international migrants is normally measured

by number of “foreign born” or number of “foreigners” living in the country. The *foreign born* are defined as those born outside their current country of residence. *Foreigners* are defined as those without citizenship of their current country of residence thus -depending on how international migrants are defined- this category can include people who live in their country of birth (non-citizens who have never moved away from their country of birth). People born outside their country of residence, but citizens of this country at birth (e.g. born abroad of national parents living abroad), are often excluded from “foreign-born” tabulations. Depending on available data sources, as well as political climate, some countries collect information on the “foreign born,” some collect information on “foreigners,” while others use a combination of both, to measure their stock of international migrants. The stock of international migrants can decrease over time due to deaths in population, naturalization of foreigners, or net out-migration, though it is much more common for stock of international migrants to increase due to net in-migration. According to the UN's 1998 recommendations, a country's stock of international migrants (either foreigners or foreign born) is defined as all persons who have that country as their country of usual residence and who are citizens of another country or whose place of birth is located in another country.

Net international migration is the difference between the total number of migrants entering (in-migrants) and leaving (out-migrants) a country. The number of migrants entering or leaving a country over the course of a specific time period (e.g. one year) is measured by migration *flow*. Migration flows occur between two geographic areas, consisting of both an origin and a destination. In-flows are the number moving into a given geographic area (e.g. country of destination), while out-flows are the number moving away from that same area (e.g. country of origin). For any given area, the difference between in-flows and out-flows is net migration, which can be either positive or negative. In relation, the balance of net migration between any two geographic areas is always “0” (number of in-migrants from area-one is equal to number of out-migrants from area-two, and vice versa). Most countries collect migration flow data on a yearly (12-month) basis, though some survey based questions use a five-year period. International migration flow data are more typically reported for “foreigners” rather than “foreign born.” In terms of international migration data availability, in-flow data are much more common than out-flow data.

### Labour Migration and Migrant Workers

International “labour migration” is a sub-set of total international migration, thus stocks and flows (ins and outs) of migrant workers will always be smaller than those of all international migrants. There are several methods to measure and define labour migration, which can yield different results. The broadest definition counts all international migrants who are currently in labour force (both employed and unemployed) as migrant workers. This method is often used when measuring total stock of migrant workers. A more restrictive definition counts migrant workers as only those who entered a country for the explicit purpose of employment. This can be measured in two ways, either through legal documents used to enter or live in a country (e.g. visa types or residence permits), or by asking the migrant why they moved to a country, thus getting their subjective reason. Most labour migration flow data are reported based on legal reason for admittance using visa or residence permit data. However, this method often misses “irregular” migrants who enter a country without legal permission. Methods which measure migrants in terms of usual residency often fail to capture temporary migrant groups like seasonal workers.

Per the 1998 UN recommendations, *foreign migrant workers* are defined as “foreigners admitted by the receiving State for the specific purpose of exercising an economic activity remunerated from within the receiving country. Their length of stay is usually restricted as is the type of employment they can hold.” In addition, the UN's migrant typology also includes a category called *employment based settlers*, who are “foreigners selected for long-term

settlement because of their qualifications and prospects in the receiving country's labour market. However, they are not admitted expressly to exercise a particular economic activity.”

Over the years, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has published several definitions for migrant workers. The earliest, and still official, definition comes from ILO Migrant Workers Conventions Nos. 97 (1949), which states a *migrant worker* is “a person who migrates or has migrated from one country to another with a view to being employed otherwise than on his own account and includes any person regularly admitted as a migrant for employment/migrant worker.” This definition is quite broad, thus a more operational definition was set forth in 1996 (Hoffman and Lawrence 1996). Per this definition, migrant workers are considered “all persons who, at a particular reference date or for a particular reference period, seek to work or were working in a country other than that of their citizenship.” The inflow of migrant workers was defined as “those foreign citizens who during a particular reference period arrived in the country with the objective to take employment there,” while the stock of foreign-workers are “those foreign citizens who at a particular date or during a specific reference period would be counted as economically active in the country, as employed or unemployed, according to the ILO guidelines for measurement of the economically active population.” These definitions are based solely on citizenship (not country of birth) thus can include 2<sup>nd</sup> generation migrants born in their country of residence (if not citizens of that country). No change of residence is required for measuring stock of migrant workers nor is there a minimum period of stay. Similar to the UN recommendations, there is no direct relationship between stock and flow of migrant workers using this definition.

### **Irregular Migrants and Asylum Seekers/Refugees**

Of particular importance to migration systems in the SADC region are irregular migrants and refugees. Irregular migrants (also sometimes referred to as “illegal” or “unauthorized” migrants) are not legally residing in their country of residence. Many entered the country through legal means, but have overstayed visas (or had refugee status rejected) and remained in the country to live and work. Others have by-passed formal methods altogether and entered via invalid travel documents or through non-controlled borders. Because they often use informal methods of entry, it is extremely difficult to measure this population of concern. This is especially true of seasonal migrant workers and others who are moving back and forth between two or more countries. These problems tend to lead to an undercount of irregular migrants when using regular sources of measurement.

Some make a distinction between voluntary and involuntary migrants, though it is often difficult to separate the two. In general, involuntary migrants are those who are forced to move due to events like war or environmental disasters. Refugees are generally considered to be a form of involuntary migration. To become a refugee (which has certain rights and privileges associated with it), one must first apply as an asylum seeker, though in some cases refugees en masse are granted refugee status via *prima facie* means.<sup>3</sup>

Asylum seekers are people looking for refuge in a foreign country because of war, extreme poverty, famine and/or persecution. After applying for official refugee status, asylum seekers are either granted or denied refugee status. Refugee status is an official designation and comes with specific legal rights (including, in most cases, the right to work in the destination country). Because of legal rights associated with being an asylum seeker, and the large backlog of cases which often cause delays in refugee status determination (RSD), many economic migrants apply for refugee status. Asylum seekers who applied for refugee status are not considered “irregular” until their application for refugee status is rejected, and they then remain

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<sup>3</sup> *Prima facie* refers to a mass outflow of refugees in response to catastrophic events like war or famine though South Africa has yet to recognize Zimbabweans as such, and rather deems them to be economic migrants.

in their country of destination. There is debate as to whether or not refugees should be considered to be migrants, since in theory they are only temporarily residing in a host country (when in reality many stay indefinitely). However, for statistical purposes, UN recommendations on classification of migrants are based on change of usual residence and duration of stay, not legal status, thus both irregular migrants and refugees would be considered migrants if those criteria are met.

### Migrant Remittances

As a measure of the impact of international migration, “migrant remittances” are of great interest in the study of labour migration. At the most basic level, remittances are all household income obtained from or sent abroad (between resident and non-resident households), regardless of relationship between sender and receiver. “Household income” not only includes money, but also remittances made in-kind. Monetary remittances include cash sent or given to other people, as well as payment made through money transfers, cheques, etc., through either formal or informal channels. “In-Kind” remittances include a number of things, such as goods, donations, and payments made on behalf of others. Remittances are typically measured using “balance of payment” data compiled by relevant statistical authorities in member countries (typically the central bank or national statistical office). Balance of payments (BOP) are a record of a country's economic transactions with the rest of the world. However, BOP data excludes information about “informal” (e.g. hand-carried) or “in-kind” remittances, as well as many transactions made at money transfer centers, severely underestimating total flow of remittances.

When discussing or utilizing migration data, it is important to clearly understand the population of concern. How countries define migrant stocks and flows, migrant workers, and whether or not refugees or irregular migrants are included in migration figures, can dramatically change reported figures. Harmonization of terms and definitions are of paramount importance for creating reliable and comparable data across the SADC region. It needs to be noted that most countries in the world do not follow all of the UN's recommendations, and this is also true of the SADC region, though usual residence is a commonly applied concept. All three countries in this study use similar data sources for measuring migration, thus applying similar terms and definitions is not outside the realm of possibility. In fact, the SADC Statistical Committee has already lead a regional initiative to harmonize migration-related questions on the 2010 round of Censuses, which will be an important first step towards improving regional data comparability.

## **INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION DATA SOURCES**

A number of different data sources can be used to measure the stock and flow of international migrants and migrant workers in the SADC region, including administrative sources (such as residence permits, work permits, or asylum applications), border collection data (visa types, at entry or exit from a country), and national surveys (such as population censuses or household surveys). Migration data from different sources are not comparable in all cases, due to differences in coverage, measurement, and purpose behind each data source. Administrative records and border collection data are available in all three countries, but there have been several problems related to the collection, coverage, and dissemination of these data for migration measurement purposes. A number of household surveys are collected in the region, but these are generally underutilized for measuring migration.

### ***Administrative Records and Border Control Data***

Administrative records and border data come from government departments which collect data for a particular function, which is normally not measurement of migration.



Residence and work permit data, as well as visa-types, are often used to measure migration flows. These data can provide counts on the number of foreigners who were granted an entry permit for permanent residence, the number departing from a permanent residence, and the number of nationals receiving permits for permanent residence outside their country of residence. Stock of international migrants can be measured by total number of people (usually foreigners) holding current residence permits. This source is popular for measuring labour migration, since residence and work permits are often issued on basis of employment. Asylum applications and new grants of refugee status can also be used in measurement of labour migration, as many pending asylum cases become economically active while awaiting decisions. Administrative data are limited in that it is difficult to capture international migrant outflows, since these statistics require an accounting of the number of expired permits, knowledge of whether or not that person has remained in the country, as well as missing many nationals who leave the country without formal declaration. Administrative sources are also unlikely to measure irregular migrants, who are living and working in the country through informal means. Further, these data are not collected to measure migration statistics, but rather for administrative reasons, hence there is little effort to abide by recommended international standards regarding migration statistics.

### ***Visa and Border Data***

These data sources include information collected for or at international borders, such as visa-types issued (both before and after entry into the country), or entry and exit cards. Visa-types allow migrants (both in and out) to be categorized, for example, as student-based, employment-based or family-reunification based, and are often used to measure labour migration flows. Exit visas can be used by some countries to measure out-migration, including that of nationals. Unauthorized migrants apprehended at borders are often registered, thus become the source for estimating irregular migration into a country.

One problem using these data to measure labour migration is work must be held at time of entry to be determined a migrant worker. Those who enter on tourist visas or via family reunification, but then later enter the labour force, are not counted as migrant workers with these sources. Similarly, those issued temporary work visas, who then overstay their visa, are also not counted in statistics from these sources, as is the case with other types of “irregular” migrants.

Unfortunately there are huge gaps in these sorts of data. Entry and exit are collected at air, sea (in the case of South Africa), and terrestrial frontiers, though there are often several unofficial points of entry into a country, which limits coverage.<sup>4</sup> In general, better coverage is given to those entering than exiting a country, which can cause discrepancies in data collection. Also, countries with fewer borders or points of entry (e.g. an island) are more likely to have better quality data in this regard (Shitundu 2006). While our three countries have differing capacity for collecting and processing border data, all three have had trouble collecting, processing, and disseminating this data, particularly for those leaving the country.

### **South Africa**

South Africa uses residence permits, work permits, and border collection data (entry/exit forms) to measure migration. Data are collected and processed by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), and then a sub-set of variables are sent to Statistic South Africa (SSA) for analysis. South Africa is the only country in this study with a central computerized administrative records system. However, this computerized system is a recent development, and there have been a number of growing pains associated with its implementation, which have caused delays in migration data production from these sources.

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<sup>4</sup> For many African countries terrestrial borders are permeable, particularly when they separate a community who was living together before colonialism.



Immigration is measured by analyzing those who have been granted residence permits. For permanent residents, data are available by sex, age, occupation, country of birth and citizenship, and country of previous residence. In addition, inflow and outflow of foreigners and non-nationals is tabulated using transit visas and temporary residence permits (TRPs). There are many different types of permanent and TRP, including work, study, and asylum permits. Using these data, foreigners can be categorized as employment-based or permanent migrants. Country of birth and citizenship data are used by SSA to measure international migrant stock, but place of usual residence and duration of stay are not used. Migrants are not categorized as long-term or short-term, since duration of stay information (based on date of permit expiration) is deemed unreliable, though there have been proposals to measure this directly using individual arrival and departure data (Philips 2006).

Data are captured for arrivals and departures at border posts via electronically scanned passports. While South Africa has a number of bilateral or regional agreements with SADC countries to facilitate movement between countries (e.g. passports from Mozambique are visa exempt), and even though in many cases no entry form is completed, travellers information is still scanned electronically. In 2003, South Africa stopped issuing departure cards for those exiting the country, which included questions on final destination and purpose of departure, which eliminated the possibility of using these to measure emigration of nationals. A few years ago, SSA asked DHA to re-institute collection of information on purpose of departure, and though data were collected at three international airports from 2005-7, none of these data have been processed or analysed.

SSA receives a sub-set of variables from DHA, including port of entry, date of entry, type of visitor, purpose of visit, manner of entry, country issuing passport, country of residence, sex, occupation, date of birth, and expiration date of permit. SSA is not provided with unique permits numbers which would allow them to link individuals with date of entry and date of actual departure. However, no data has been submitted to SSA since 2005, a result of moving to a new computer-based system and staff shortages. Thus no migration data has been released since 2003. However, once the system is operating smoothly (hopefully by the end of 2008), data will be available to SSA on a monthly basis, greatly improving accuracy and ease of data collection, processing, and analysis.

As with any administrative-records based system a number of problems exist for measuring migration. The most basic problem is that administrative records data are not collected for purposes of measuring migration, including the fact that the organization collecting the data is not the same as the organization analyzing the data. It is admittedly more important to keep lines short than collect data at border points. Improved communication and cooperation between DHA and SSA is critical for improving these processes. Other problems include incomplete coverage, especially with regards to irregular migrants (or those who use unofficial entry points), inaccurate responses, and staff workload issues. However, once the new centralized computerized system is functioning properly, quality of migration data from these sources should be much improved.

## **Zambia**

Zambia uses data sources similar to South Africa, but does not have a centralized computer-based system, though one has been pilot tested. Data are collected and processed by their DHA and supplied to the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and Ministry of Tourism for analysis.

Zambia's CSO recently redesigned their border entry and exit cards, which it hopes will improve collection and accuracy of these data. These cards were updated to include nationality as a variable. Other variables include place of birth, nationality, age, sex, country of usual residence, occupation, and duration of visit (or length of stay). Exit cards also include "reason for leaving Zambia."

The manual system collects data at eighteen border-crossing points. Each border control station sends data to their regional office, who in turn sends it to Head Quarters, where it is entered into their data base. Data are produced quarterly, and an internal report is produced annually by DHA. Each person is asked for purpose of visit, but analysis does not use intended duration of stay. A pilot study of using a computerized border-control system was tested at Lusaka international airport and four major border crossings from 2006-7, but funding expired, thus ending the pilot study.

Data from this manual system are not as reliable as they could be, and data has not been released since the redesign of the entry and exit cards. Given the local nature of data collection, harmonization of data collection and dissemination could be improved. Also, the manual data system is not updated regularly. These problems would be alleviated by an automated computerized system, as data would be entered directly at border-crossings and automatically sent to Head Quarters.

Each stakeholder (DHA, CSO, and Ministry of Tourism) tends to act autonomously and uses its own methodology for analyzing data, thus improved communication between agencies, as well as better defined roles, is necessary. Improved coverage and data capture is also needed, including training of border-control officers. A computerized system is also recommended to reduce errors in data collection and facilitate data processing and analysis.

## **Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe has administrative data sources similar to the other two countries, and uses a manual data system, though some testing of a computerized system was attempted (unsuccessfully). Given the country's current financial situation, there are not many additional resources to devote towards improvement of migration data at this time, though it is recognized as being extremely important.

Zimbabwe uses residence permits and border control data to measure migration. At borders, data are collected through an immigration control form, and manually entered into data entry and exit books. Data are directly sent from border posts to Head Quarters and weekly and monthly reports are issued (in theory). Coverage includes thirty border posts, including road, air, and rail, which are monitored 24-hours a day. Data are processed by Zimbabwe's DHA and sent to their CSO, who do final analysis on a monthly basis.

Exit cards are particularly challenging in the current economic environment, as they are currently not being issued due to paper shortages. In addition, the large volume of daily movement across borders (day passes are issued instead of visas) makes tabulation next to impossible. Data are disseminated via annual reports, though the last report to include emigration data was in 2003. Tabulations included variables like sex, age, occupation, and economic activity, though this level of detail is no longer provided.

For purposes of dissemination, immigrants are defined as new residents intending to remain in Zimbabwe for at least 12 months, temporary residents taking up employment for a limited period, and returning residents who had previously declared themselves emigrants who had remained away for more than one year. Emigrants are those residents, who on departure, declare they are leaving for more than twelve months, and those who reported themselves as visitors on arrival but stayed for more than 12 months. While these definitions do not match recommendations set forth by the UN, the potential for re-categorizing them as such does exist.

Use of administrative data for migration purposes in Zimbabwe is limited by lack of resources, a high number of informal border crossing points, the historical interrelation between people

living on borders, and irregular migration. The manual system is impeded by lack of paper, lack of training for border control agents (who experience high turnover), human error, and data loss. This all leads to an extreme undercount of persons leaving Zimbabwe. When figures for those leaving Zimbabwe for South Africa are compared to South African figures on those entering South Africa from Zimbabwe, they do not match. Again, immigration control is primarily focused on security, not collection of migration statistics. While a computerized system would theoretically improve matters, when tested at Harare airport, the computers broke down. There is also lack of power at many of the more remote border posts in the country.

### ***Administrative Registers***

Many European countries, and a few Asian countries, have comprehensive population registers or registers of foreigners, which are accounts of legal residents within a country. These registers can be used to measure total stock of international migrants in a country, as well as in-flows when new migrants are entered (in the case of population registers, usually after one-year), and out-flows when people leave the country. Registers also often collect information on characteristics (age, sex, citizenship, education, occupation, etc.) of migrants. Some problems can occur when people (both natives and immigrants) leave a country and fail to deregister from the system. Registers also miss many undocumented immigrants who may be living in the country, particularly those of a short-term nature. Finally, different countries have different criteria for including foreigners in flow data, which can make comparability across countries a problem. Given the high cost of implementing and maintaining a centralized population register system, these are not viable options in the countries under study.

While population registers are not used in the SADC region, South Africa does maintain a register for asylum-seekers, while UNHCR has a similar source for refugees in Zambia and Zimbabwe. While coverage of these registers are limited to asylum seekers and those granted refugee status, given the importance of these persons to migration streams in the region, and the number of variables collected, these are potentially useful sources of information.

South Africa's register of refugees/asylum seekers is maintained by their ministry of Home Affairs (Refugee Affairs), who then supply data to UNHCR. There are only five refugee reception offices in the country where asylum seekers can register, which limits coverage. Asylum seekers are granted temporary permits (extendable for one to three months) and if formally recognized as a refugee, a permit valid for two years (renewable for up to two years). The eligibility determination form for asylum seekers includes important variables like date of birth, sex, country of birth, nationality, previous nationalities, residency during the last ten years, previous visits to South Africa, educational attainment, profession, previous employment, route taken to arrive in South Africa, and duration of stay in each country along the way.

The old system was paper-based, as information was collected in the field, sent to regional offices, and then sent to Head Quarters. The new system is computerized and all data are instantly entered into a centralized database. Inclusion of biometric data will reduce the number of multiple registrations at different offices, thereby reducing incidents of double-counting. DHA releases an annual report on refugee data, but similar to other administrative records data in South Africa, the new computerized system has delayed the release of 2008 data.

UNHCR collects and manages databases of refugees in Zimbabwe and Zambia, and has also implemented a new computerized database system called "proGres." Registration is done at UNHCR offices, though criteria for being included in the database varies by country (e.g. some countries have a waiting period before becoming fully registered). Information collected is the

same as that collected by the South African system, including name, photo, and demographic information (age, sex, country of birth, nationality, occupation, education, etc.).

In Zambia, each refugee camp registers individuals differently, but this will be harmonized with the proGres database by 2009. The long-term plan is to have the database managed by the Zambian government, but this is still a ways away. Due to data protection issues, the Zambian government will not be including biometric data on this data base. Zimbabwe is currently undergoing a proGres verification exercise. How data are affected by the recent closure of the Harare registration office remains to be seen.

All three countries in this study use similar data sources to report migration, but all have differing levels of coverage and means of collection. While South Africa has the most advanced system, they still have many problems collecting and processing data on a timely basis. Zambia and Zimbabwe would both like to have computerized systems, with Zambia being further along in this regard. Given limitations of these administrative sources, household survey could be a potentially useful tool for collecting migration statistics in these countries.

### ***Censuses and Household Surveys***

Survey instruments can be a powerful tool for collecting data on migration. At the most fundamental level, surveys collect information by asking questions of people interviewed. The most popular example of a survey is a Census, which is typically conducted every ten years. Population and Housing Censuses typically survey the entire population of a country (though some people are inevitably missed, especially migrants with irregular status). Alternatively, some larger countries collect information via a sample of the population (e.g. U.S. and French rolling Censuses) and several others use population registers instead of Censuses (e.g. Sweden). Censuses tend to be a good source on the stock of migrants living in a country at a given point in time, and while some countries have used them in an attempt to measure emigration, are more limited in terms of measuring migrant flows (number entering or leaving in a given time period) given their relative infrequency. In addition to the problem of timeliness, Censuses are limited by the number of questions which can be asked, thus detailed information on migration processes is restricted. Censuses are also quite expensive to carry out, which further limits their usefulness as a data collection tool. SADC has spearheaded an initiative to harmonize Census questionnaires beginning in the 2010 round of Censuses, the Project on Development of a Common Method for National Censuses, which will help data comparability in the region.

Sample surveys are similar to a Census, but are rather administered to a limited number of persons (households) who represent the population as a whole. Because only a sample of the population is asked questions, sample surveys are much less costly than a population Census, and can be conducted more frequently. They also allow for more flexibility on the number and types of questions which can be asked. Surveys can be either cross-sectional (conducted at one point in time, like a Census) or longitudinal (follow a person or household members over time, e.g. panel data).

National household surveys sometimes ask migration-related questions like place of birth, citizenship, and previous residence, as well as other dimensions of international migration, like reason for moving or remittances. However, nationally representative surveys often suffer from relatively small sample sizes, particularly when measuring relatively rare populations like international migrants. This makes validity of data suspect, particularly with regard to international migrant stocks and flows, even if detailed labour force information is collected. Another drawback to household surveys is they usually do not collect information from collective housing or group-quarters, which are often occupied by recent international migrants.

In addition to national household surveys, like labour force surveys, other general-purpose household surveys often collect international migration information. For example, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has sponsored the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) in many countries. Ad-hoc, or one-time specialized, household surveys, as well as non-household surveys (e.g. enterprise surveys), have also been used to measure dimensions of international migration.

## **South Africa**

Statistics South Africa (SSA) has a well developed Census and household survey programme, which is not dependent on external funding. In addition to a Population Census, several regular household surveys are conducted, though these have been underutilized for measurement of migration-related topics.

South African population censuses have normally been conducted in 5-year intervals, the last being in 2001, though the next is now planned for 2011. SSA only uses the Census to measure the stock of immigrants. Their Census includes questions on country of birth, country of citizenship, usual place of residence (defined as where respondent spends 4 nights per week), residence 5 years ago, and year of move. Other important information for measuring labour migration, like employment status, occupation and industry, and educational attainment are also asked. No reason for move, emigration, or remittance questions are asked on their Census.

2001 Census data has been released over the Internet, and though there are no specific reports on international migration, migration data are accessible in tabular format by variables like country of birth and citizenship. A 10 per cent micro sample is also available for purchase for those who have need of more detailed data. The undercount for the last Census was between 10-17 per cent, and there is some concern over the extent to which irregular migrants gave truthful responses. One strategy to improve responses is to recruit enumerators from the local immigrant population, who tend to be concentrated in specific geographic areas.

Other household surveys regularly conducted by SSA include the Labour Force Survey, the General Household Survey, the Living Conditions Survey (LCS), the Household Income and Expenditure Survey, and the intercensal Community Survey. At present, most of these surveys do not ask many questions related to migration, and none ask any detailed questions beyond what is already collected on Census (except for a few remittance questions).

The only South African household survey to ask any migration-specific questions is the intercensal Community Survey (2007), which had a sample of 170,000 households. As a measure of intercensal activity, it not surprisingly included questions similar to the 2001 Census (though some question wording was different). It collected country of birth (but not country of citizenship), residence 5 years ago, and year and month of move into current dwelling, in addition to work-related and education questions. However, the irregular nature of this survey (every ten years, between Censuses) limits its usefulness.

South Africa's labour force survey is conducted quarterly, to an annual sample of 50,000 households, but there are currently no migration-related questions to link to the detailed labour force information it collects. Similarly, the General Household Survey also has an annual sample of 50,000 households, and while it too has no migration items on its survey instrument, the questionnaire is undergoing revision and thought is being given to adding some migration-related questions. The Household Income and Expenditure Survey, with a sample of 24,000 households, had been conducted every five years until 2000, but is now conducted every three years. It has a sample of 24,000 households, and except for a question on "regular allowances received from family members living elsewhere," the 2000 version did not contain any migration-related questions.



One new survey which does ask some migration-related questions is the LCS, specifically those related to remittances. First fielded in November 2008, the LCS's aim is to collect data to measure the extent of poverty in South Africa and has an annual sample of 30,000 households. Though remittances are not the focus of the survey, towards the end of the questionnaire there are questions on "remittances, gifts and maintenance in cash in the past 12" and 11 months. Total value of "maintenance of/remittance to family members and dependents living elsewhere," "gifts for persons who are not members of this household," and "tribal levies (not for housing)" are asked. Though there appear to be no questions on remittances received in sources of income (relevant to rural respondents with household members living in urban areas), and no distinction is made between internal and international remittances, these questions might yield some useful information, though their question wording and placement at the end of a long survey, as well as inability of the survey instrument to identify migrants (either internal or international) make this less likely.

In addition to surveys conducted and funded by SSA, several externally funded surveys (e.g. the World Bank, USAID, WHO, ILO) have been conducted in South Africa. These include the DHS in 1998 and 2004, the World Health Survey (2002), the Child Labour Survey (1999), and the Living Standards and Measurement Survey (LSMS) in 1993. In general, aside from the LSMS, the small sample size and limited amount of migration information provided on these surveys (e.g. the DHS had a sample of 10,000 persons and only asked about duration of residence and whether they had moved from a rural area) make them of less significance for countries who have alternative surveys which could be used to measure migration.

## **Zambia**

Zambia's CSO has a relatively well developed household survey programme, and like South Africa, is not dependent on outside funding to conduct surveys, though this means they are conducted somewhat irregularly. They too have underutilized household surveys to measure migration, though to a lesser extent than South Africa.

The last Zambian Census of Population and Housing was conducted in 2000, with the next planned for 2010. Their Census includes several migration-related questions, such as country of birth and citizenship, where the respondent was living one year previously, and number of years and months of living continuously in their current district of residence. The questionnaire also includes questions on highest level of completed education, employment status, economic activity, occupation, and industry, allowing for identification of migrant workers (per ILO stock definition). No questions on emigration (persons living in other countries), or remittances are asked, but a purpose of stay question (reason for move) is asked of non-Zambian residents (employment, family reunification/formation, education/training, settlement, refugee/asylum, other), which allows for the identification of migrant workers (per ILO flow definition).

Census 2000 migration results were released in the *Migration and Urbanization 2000 Census Report*. Though primarily concerned with internal migration, the report did include chapters on international migration (stock only) and the characteristics of immigrants. Migrants were defined as "a person who changes his usual place of residence by crossing an administrative boundary and residing in a new area for a period of not less than six months or intends to stay in the new area for a period of not less than six months."<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, about half of all immigrants gave refugee/asylum seekers as their reason for move, while only about 10 per cent gave employment as their reason. In 1990 the Census undercount was less than 4 per cent, which means population coverage was good.

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<sup>5</sup> Note the UN definition calls for a 12 month period to define long-term migrants and 3 months for short term migrants.



Zambia conducts a Labour Force Survey irregularly, though it plans to conduct one every two years starting in 2009 (it was previously conducted in 1986 and 2005) with a sample size of 30,000 households (the 2005 survey only had 8,000 households). This survey does not currently include any migration questions, though Zambia's CSO was contemplating adding some to next year's version. Foreigners are included on the survey.

Zambia also conducts a LCS every two years, which includes several migration-related questions. Administered to 18,000 households, it asks questions on place of residence 12 months ago, duration of residence in current residence, and reasons for moving, though these questions are primarily used to measure internal migration. Of note is place of residence refers to actual place of interview rather than place of usual residence. As coding procedures were unavailable, it is unclear how much detail is available for international migrants' previous country of residence.

Finally, a Demographic Health Survey (1992, 1996, 2001, and 2007) is also conducted in Zambia. This survey asks a minimal number of questions related to migration, and given its small sample size (13,000 persons in 2007) is generally not an effective tool for migration measurement, though it does provide useful data about health-related issues. Other externally funded surveys in Zambia have included the Child Labour Survey (1996 and 2006), the World Health Survey (2002), and the Multiple Indicators Survey (1995), but these too are very limited in the migration information they supply.

## **Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe's CSO has a relatively well developed household survey programme, though given the current financial situation of the country, future administration of these surveys will be difficult. Like the other two countries in our study, Zimbabwe underutilizes their household surveys to measure migration, particularly on the topic of emigration, which given its high magnitude could (and should) be collected.

The Zimbabwean Census is conducted every 10 years, the last being in 2002. The 2002 Census included questions on country of birth, place of usual residence, where respondent lived in 1992 (time of last Census), and country of citizenship. The Census also included questions on educational attainment, main economic activity over the last 12 months, occupation, and field of specialization. It should be noted, countries of birth, citizenship, and previous residence are limited by coding choices, and only include "Zimbabwe, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, other African, UK, other European countries, American countries, Asian countries, and Other countries." Though this should be enough details for a majority of respondents, it does limit the amount of detail which can be provided by open-ended questions.

Zimbabwe has several other national household surveys, including the Intercensal Demographic Survey, the Labour Force Survey, and the Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey. The Intercensal Demographic Survey was last conducted in 1997 (though planned for 2007) and included migration-related questions almost identical to the population Census: country of birth and citizenship, place of usual residence, and where living at time of last Census.<sup>6</sup> The Zimbabwean Labour Force Survey was last conducted in 2004 (and prior to this in 1985) to a sample of 10,000 households, but only asked place of usual residence 5-years previously, as well as many detailed work-related questions. The planned 2009 survey will ask the same migration question as in 2004.

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<sup>6</sup> I was not able to find the sample size for this survey, nor whether or not it was conducted in 2007.

Zimbabwe's Income, Consumption, and Expenditure Survey has a few questions on remittances sent and received. Conducted in 1995 and 2007, this survey has a sample of about 30,000 households. The survey asks questions on whether anyone in the household during the last month had "received any income, transfers, or remittances in cash or kind" (which person and how much) and if any transfers or other payments were given out. However, like South Africa's LCS, it does not identify migrants nor does it distinguish between internal and international remittances sent or received.

Like South Africa and Zambia, there have also been several externally funded surveys in Zimbabwe, such as the DHS (every 5 years, last in 2005), the World Health Survey (2002), the Multiple Indicators Survey (1995), and a Child Labour Survey (1999 and 2006), though again, these are very limited in terms of migration information they can provide.

In general, the three countries in this study are underutilizing household surveys to measure labour migration. Household surveys work best for measuring characteristics and impact of migrants and migration, and less so for measuring size of migration flows or stocks. However, there are a number of advantages to using household sample surveys to measure migration, particularly in countries which lack alternative data sources. In particular, household surveys have flexibility in terms of which questions can be asked, thus one can measure specific topics related to migration. Though there are limits to the number of questions which can be asked (depending on many factors, usually cost), questions can be tailored to specific research needs or policy concerns, which is extremely important. There are also other advantages when compared to a decennial Census, in that using a representative sample of the population reduces cost and increases frequency of data collection. However, household surveys are faced with their own limitations, including cost of conducting household surveys, need for large sample sizes to measure flows, difficulty finding migrants in regular sampling frames (coverage and non-response), question sensitivity (particularly money-related, e.g. remittances), respondent recall and respondent burden, and other data quality concerns exacerbated by use of proxy respondents (question for all household member are answered by one person in the household).

Another advantage of household surveys and decennial Censuses over other data sources are that in theory they include irregular migrants in their universe (unless collective housing is not included in sample). While many irregular migrants will be hesitant to respond (have higher non-response) and might not answer questions about their origins truthfully, the potential exists to overcome these problems. SADC is in the process of harmonizing Census questionnaires in its region for 2010. This is extremely important, since even among the three countries in our study, each used a different migration interval for previous residence on its last Census (South Africa 5-year, Zambia 1-year, Zimbabwe 10-year). Harmonization of questions, on both Censuses and household surveys, would help increase comparability of data in the region.

#### Other Sources to Measure Emigration

There are a limited number of alternative sources for measuring international migration in our pilot countries, though most of these suffer from lack of coverage or generalizability, thereby reducing their usefulness. In addition, most of these alternative sources are geared towards measuring emigration of nationals, though there are some exceptions.

Private employment agencies, who are monitored by the Ministry of Labour, often maintain databases on the number of jobs applied for by specific sectors and salaries, but these are believed to grossly underestimate the total number of people working in these professions. Zimbabwe and South Africa (with support from ILO and IOM) recently attempted a pilot project to match worker skills with employer needs, which would have regularized some of the irregular migration between the two countries. The "Beitbridge Database" collected

information from Zimbabweans on the Zimbabwe side of the border, and matched them with labour needs in South Africa. This project ran out of funding and was met with substantial political opposition, thus is not a viable source of information on labour migration.

Another possible source is data from the Social Security agency responsible for administering social security pensions for workers. If regularly maintained, and if enough migrant workers worked under formal employment schemes, social security databases would keep information on nationality and employer. None of these agencies were interviewed during this study, thus it is not known to what extent these would be viable sources of information. However, given the high prevalence of migrants working informally, this source would likely also have extreme undercoverage problems.

As mentioned previously, most of these alternative data sources are geared towards measuring emigration of nationals. For example, individual South Africa consulates collect information on South African citizens living abroad. However, these data are not compulsory, and are not for statistical purposes, but rather in case of an emergency evacuation. As such, they severely undercount the actual number of South Africans living abroad, and are admittedly poor sources of data for measuring emigration of South Africans. Zambia and Zimbabwe should have similar consular records abroad, but would also suffer from these same limitations.

Another example of an alternative source to measure emigration from South Africa is the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA). This too is extremely limited, for it only collects information on South Africans who graduated from a select group of universities in selected fields (engineering, medicine, math and science), who settled permanently in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the USA. Registration in this database is voluntary and it is not updated frequently, nor are there any distinctions made between short- or long-term migrants (Philips 2006). In all, it is not believed to be a very good measure of the total volume of South Africans abroad, but might provide some insight into brain-drain issues. Similarly, in Zambia and Zimbabwe, Nurses Associations keep information on their numbers leaving the country, but these sources also have weak coverage, and fail to include citizens who might have left the country to be trained in health professions abroad. Another potential source of data are private Diaspora organizations, like South Africa's Homecoming Revolution, a non-profit group which aims to reverse South Africa's skills shortage by encouraging and helping expatriate South Africans return home.

Finally, Zimbabwe (with IOM support) conducted a 2005 survey on their diaspora population (1,000 Zimbabweans living in South Africa and the UK), that is Zimbabweans living outside of Zimbabwe (Bloch 2005). As a result of this study, an Internet site was created where Zimbabweans living abroad could register. This database helps connect Zimbabwean diaspora members with a network of others in the diaspora, as well as providing information about jobs and investment opportunities in Zimbabwe. Once again, the underlying problem of these sorts of databases are coverage, and to what extent they represent the true Zimbabwean population living abroad.

### Measuring Emigration and Brain-Drain

Most of these other sources tell us very little about the volume of nationals living outside the country, though they can provide us with some information about their characteristics (occupations, education level, etc.) or their motivations for leaving. As we have seen, emigration is extremely difficult to measure, and almost no country in the world has been successful at doing this (aside from countries with population registers, but even in those cases many emigrants fail to deregister after leaving). In lieu of accurate border control data, there are four primary methods to estimate national living abroad: residual methods in countries of

origin, survey questions in countries of origin about persons living abroad, consular data in countries of destination, and migration data from destination countries.

The simplest way to measure emigration is via a residual methodology, where a population is counted at two points in time (using the same data source), and any difference in population size not attributable to births or deaths is due to net migration. This is normally calculated using two Censuses, and accurate birth and death rates need to be applied, as well as each Census needing to have extremely similar coverage. For example, for a high emigration country, improved coverage from one Census to the next might underestimate true levels of emigration, as population count might be larger due to the improved coverage, not a lower level of net emigration. This method also gives no information about characteristics of emigrants (e.g. education level, which is necessary for measuring brain-drain) or size of the in- and outflows.

Another method to measure emigration is to ask questions in the origin country (for example on a Census or household survey) about household members, former household members, or relatives living abroad. From this, countries of destination and characteristics about the migrant (age, sex, occupation, education, etc.) can be ascertained. Aside from weighting issues, primary limitations of this method are potential problems of duplicate responses (particularly if asking about relatives, though this is less of a problem in a sample survey) and missing complete households who have moved out of the country, thus will not be in sample. A variation of this method is to ask mothers about all children living abroad (or about place of residence of brothers and sisters), and then using estimation techniques to calculate emigration (a technique called indirect estimation of migration, Zaba 1987).

Using data from destination countries is another option. As seen in the South African case, consular data are very unreliable, as each consulate uses different methods to estimate numbers, registration is voluntary, and more importantly are not collected for statistical purposes. More promising is use of data from other countries (e.g. Census) to arrive at the total number of citizens living outside the country. Of course, this method is dependent on individual data quality issues in countries of destination, and will vary greatly from country to country. Undercount issues still exist, and even more problematic is the issue of dual-citizenship, as dual citizens are usually only counted as nationals of their country of destination. Using country of birth data avoids this problem, but not all countries collect (or publish) this information. A third problem is accessing data, as publicly available data might not provide the level of disaggregation needed to identify persons from specific countries, as well as by characteristics like educational attainment. In many cases special tabulations would be necessary to get the level of detail needed for this sort of analysis. Data sharing mechanisms between countries need to be created for this sort of process to work, which currently do not exist in the Southern African region. This is an area in which SADC could play a great role.

## Remittances

Migrant remittances have been mentioned several times in this paper, and these too are extremely difficult to measure. While universally agreed upon as important, defining what remittances are, the first step towards measurement, is much more difficult. Though there is no universal agreement on how migrant remittances are defined, using a Balance of Payment (BOP) framework as reported by Central Banks, remittances are all household income obtained from or sent abroad (between resident and non-resident households), regardless of relationship between sender and receiver. "Household income" not only includes money, but also remittances made in-kind. Monetary remittances include cash sent or given to other people, as well as payment made through money transfers, cheques, etc. through either formal or informal channels. "In-Kind" remittances should include a number of things, such as goods, donations, and payments made on behalf of others. Latest BOP definitions include the concept of social benefits as part of "total remittances," which includes both social insurance

and social assistance benefits, presumably mainly pensions received from other countries (IMF 2006).

However, the BOP framework suffers from a number of limitations, including inability of banks to distinguish between short- and long-term migrants; lack of information about "informal" (e.g. hand-carried) or "in-kind" (e.g. goods) remittances; difficulty including transactions made at money transfer organizations (MTOs, which make up a large percentage of remittances); and different recording and reporting practices of BOP across countries, and even within countries, over time. Remittance reporting in South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe suffer from these same limitations, though there are some important distinctions to be made.

Official remittance figures are reported by Central Banks from data collected from financial institutions in their country. Sometimes this information is supplemented by survey data, though this is not the case in our three pilot countries. South Africa's Reserve Bank collects data from authorized dealers (banks, post offices, and –just recently- authorized dealers in foreign exchange) about the amount and destination of money sent (flows), and data are then released in quarterly bulletins. MTOs have recently been allowed to do business in South Africa, so this is a new additional source of information. Also, South Africa recently worked with the Central Bank of Zimbabwe to introduce a reporting system similar to theirs.

To use official means of remittance transmission in South Africa, the sender must be able to prove where they are staying in the country and provide identification. These requirements impede the use of these services by irregular migrants, who often resort to informal methods of sending remittances. Official remittance estimates make no attempt to measure informal channels, nor do they include goods or remittances made in-kind, thus grossly underestimate actual volume of remittance flows out of South Africa.

In Zambia, the Bank of Zambia collects monthly information from commercial banks and MTOs (e.g. Money Gram) on a quarterly basis, and results are published annually as part of their national BOP. The Bank acknowledges reporting of remittances by senders and receivers is inadequate, and they are investigating the use of surveys to supplement information they receive from commercial banks. The main problem is data are computed manually by individual banks, who might code transactions differently. Also, looking at the form banks are to complete, it is questionable whether or not banks know if sender and receivers were Zambian or non-Zambian or what money was used for (e.g. the category "money sent back home by Zambians working or staying abroad for maintenance of their family or savings"). In Zimbabwe, we were not able to meet with the Central Bank to ascertain how they calculate remittances, but remittances figures are not publicly released, though they have recently incorporated a reporting system similar to what is used in South Africa.

In lieu of accurate BOP remittance reporting, household surveys could be another potential method to improve our knowledge about remittances. Household survey data can not only help measure the size and trends of remittance flows through measurement of remittances made in-cash and in-kind, but also by determining means of remittance transmittal, e.g. what percentage of remittances are sent or received via non-bank or informal channels. Remittance estimates could then be adjusted using this information normally missing from BOP methods. In addition, household surveys can inform us about characteristics of migrant remittance senders, as well as characteristics of remittance recipients.

Currently, remittance questions exist on the South African LCS and Zimbabwe's LCS, but these questions are inadequate for accurate measurement purposes. Additional questions could be asked to identify migrants, to determine where and to whom remittance flows are going, frequency and method of transmission, as well as expanding the scope of remittances to include goods and payments made in-kind. Remittance flows also need to be measured in both directions (in and out) so net remittances can be calculated. Additionally, information on



the impact remittances have on lives could be collected, by looking at levels of income and expenditure with and without remittances, both between and within households, and further by asking questions about how money is used by recipients.

There seems to be informal consensus among many analysts of household survey remittance data that household surveys tend to underestimate the actual amount of remittances, in terms of amount sent and amount received by persons. This is attributed to a number of factors, such as missing migrant households, question sensitivity (as is normal for money-related survey questions, but particularly so in this case, since monetary remittances are usually unreported to authorities (untaxed –at least for recipients-), and respondent recall. However, despite these limitations, household surveys are still able to measure other important aspects of remittances, such as direction of flows, frequency and mode of transmission, usage of remittances in every day life, and other measures of impact.

While all three countries have administrative records, border collection data, Censuses, household surveys, as well as other sources to measure international migration, a number of limitations exist. Within countries, data from different sources are not comparable in most cases, and between countries, differing definitions and degrees of coverage make comparability between similar data sources difficult. Despite these limitations, there are a number of recommendations which could be made to improve data quality in the region.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

To make sound policy decisions accurate data are necessary. The Southern African region, like most countries in the world, faces a number of challenges in the collection and dissemination of accurate international migration data, particularly as it relates to labour. Current data are incomplete and there are questions about its validity and reliability. To improve migration-related data a multi-spoke strategy needs to be implemented, including better utilization of existing data sources, development of new data sources, as well as improved communication between country stakeholders and between neighbouring countries.

Better utilization of existing sources includes both administrative records/border control data and household surveys. As a first step, common definitions and terms need to be developed to measure migration, both within and between countries. Harmonization of terms and definitions are of paramount importance for creating reliable and comparable data across the SADC region. As shown earlier, all three countries in this study use similar data sources for measuring migration, thus applying similar terms and definitions should be possible. While UN recommendations set forth in 1998 might prove to be too difficult to incorporate, some common standards (e.g. residence or length of stay criteria) should be adopted within the SADC region. The SADC Statistical Committee and IOM could play an important role in this harmonization process.

In addition to harmonization of terms and definitions, there is a strong need for improving data infrastructure by automating border control and permit information through computerization, as this was often identified by stakeholders as critical. Though South Africa has already incorporated this type of system, its implementation has resulted in several logistical problems which are still being worked out. Zambia and Zimbabwe could learn from the South African experience to avoid similar problems in the future. Of course, computerization of data systems requires a huge amount of financial and human resources, which are currently not available in these countries. Training of personnel to use the new systems, as well as a user-friendly interface, would improve data manageability. However, basic developmental issues like lack of electricity in remote border locations will need to be addressed before these systems can be fully implemented.

All stakeholders need capacity building with regards to improving the collection and measurement of migration data. For example, training of border control personnel in collection of migration statistics was identified by stakeholders as an important need. However, given historical informal movement of people across borders in the region and resulting gaps in data coverage, border control and permit data will always be limited, thus must be supplemented by other sources, such as household surveys.

While household surveys are less able to accurately measure stocks and flows of migrants, they are useful at looking at the characteristics and impact migration has on people as well as areas. Most surveys in the pilot countries fail to even capture basic migration information like nationality or country of birth, which could be combined with employment variables to assess labour migration (e.g. where migrants workers are coming from or professions they work in). Questions on reason for move (e.g. for employment purposes) or family members living abroad could further answer important questions about labour migration, emigration, and brain-drain. Survey information on remittances could be used to bolster data collected by banks when reporting BOP estimates on remittances, as well as measuring other important aspects of the phenomenon. Either adding questions to pre-existing surveys or creating new specialized migration surveys, to address specific policy questions, are both strategies which should be considered. The small sample size of these surveys make analysis more difficult, but when data are pooled over years, some of these limitations may be overcome. Again, cost of implementing new surveys can be prohibitive, but if pre-existing surveys (like a labour force

survey) are used, then additional costs are minimized.

Given the high number of stakeholders involved in the production and use of migration data, it is important to improve lines of communication between the various parties involved. Competition and lack of sharing information between agencies was identified as problems by stakeholders in some countries. Of particular importance is the relationship between the DHA, who collect and process administrative data, and the Statistical Offices who analyse and disseminate the data. If not already in place, regular meetings between stakeholders need to occur to discuss data needs and changes. This already happens to a limited degree in the countries studied, but a need for greater communication (and input) was voiced by many. A networked LAN system, linking different government organizations under the same computer network, might be a way of moving towards this. Regular collection and dissemination of data is also recommended, which has been a problem of late in the region (see Annex I for a list of recommended tabulations).

For each country, an inter-agency task force should be created, which would improve communication within government and strive towards improving international migration data. This group would outline a strategy for collecting, disseminating, and improving labour migration data by first defining the scope of data collection (what needs to be measured and how will it be defined), then identifying relevant data sources (e.g. residence permits, border control data, Census, household surveys, other sources), followed by setting conditions for optimal data collection, data processing, data adjustment, data review procedures, and data dissemination. This approach would be a didactic process, as the process would be repeated the following year, making improvements based on the previous year's experiences. Regularization of data systems is a key to improving the reliability, validity, and comparability of these data in the region.

Data sharing between countries, as well as the aforementioned harmonization of terms and definitions, is also needed. No formal data exchange mechanisms exist within the region, and organizations like the SADC Statistical Committee and IOM could play a large role in facilitating such dialogue. If data are not directly comparable, efforts need to be made to provide documentation on methodologies used to produce figures, so that exactly what population being measured is known. In the end, a common migration database among SADC countries would be a significant output of this endeavor. This could be an important source of information about brain-drain and emigration, though it would be dependent on the harmonization and quality of data among countries.

Given the many different agencies involved with the establishment of a common migration statistical system across the SADC region, there would be a need for a coordinating institution to help manage the development of this system. The establishment of such system needs to be accomplished within existing legal frameworks and legal instruments in respective member states. Further, the roles of key players need to be clearly defined in order to avoid duplication of collection, processing, and dissemination of migration data.

The SADC Statistical Committee, in collaboration with an international/regional body like IOM or ILO, could play a large role in this. As was done for the 2010 round of decennial Censuses, the SADC Statistical Committee could assist countries harmonize data collection systems and establish a common data base. To further this, the SADC Statistical Unit would need to strengthen its capacity to carry out this work. The development of a National Network on data collection and analysis could be established, which would include all relevant government departments and institutions who have been identified as stakeholders in labour migration data. National focal points would be assigned and tied to SADC's Statistical Unit, who would supervise transmission of national data to a newly created SADC Labour Migration Database Secretariat in co-ordination with the National Network.

Finally, while lack of financial and human resources were identified as needs for improving data, a higher level problem is lack of advocacy at high political levels. Such advocacy is needed for allocation of resources to improve the collection and measurement of migration data in the region. Until migration issues are seen as a priority to a countries' development plans, resources will not be committed towards improving collection of data. While labour migration is often identified as a variable towards poverty reduction in national development plans, there are no coherent government policies to incorporate it as such, and no legislative mandate to make it happen. Thus, it is imperative that labour migration statistical systems in the SADC region be developed within the respective frameworks of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), which stresses the development of national level statistics to support national development plans and strategies, thus attracting higher priority in terms of support and the mobilization of resources from stakeholders.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Given the push towards creating free market trade areas, and thus free movement of labour, in the SADC region, labour migration should be at the forefront of regional policy formulation. Many challenges to improving the measurement and collection of labour migration data exist, including issues like emigration of highly skilled nationals abroad and the flow of money and goods across international borders. There is no easy solution, but improved advocacy and communication within and between countries in the SADC region is critical, as is harmonization of methods and definitions used to collect, measure, and disseminate migration data. Better utilization of household surveys to supplement data from administrative and BOP sources is also crucial in this regard. This data assessment exercise has identified the current capacity of NSS to collect, manage, and disseminate official statistics on migration, and hopefully has provided recommendations on ways to enhance the ability to make sound policy and decision making in the SADC region, and help harmonize policies towards labour migration.

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## ANNEX I: RECOMMENDED TABULATIONS

Tables should be tabulated for both stocks and flows of international migrants, by age, sex, and variables of interest. Data by both country of birth and citizenship should be reported if possible. Though most of these data on remittances are currently unavailable, these tabulation would be beneficial as well. While countries might not be able to currently provide this level of detail, these are the type of information which should be collected and disseminated in the future. A number of labour migration indicators could be derived from the data in these tables as well.

### STOCK

Resident population by age (5-year age groups), sex, country of birth (top 10 origin countries and other origin countries)

Resident population by age, sex, country of nationality

Employed persons by age, sex, country of birth/nationality

Industry (per ISCO standards) by age, sex, country of birth/nationality

Occupation (per ISCO standards) by age, sex, country of birth/nationality

Employment status of persons by age, sex, country of birth/nationality

Number of refugees by country of origin, (by age, sex, education, occupation)

Nationals abroad by sex, age and occupation/industry, educational attainment (top 10 destination countries and other destination countries) **(emigrants)**

Ever lived/worked abroad by sex, age, occupation **(return migrants)**

### FLOWS (using a 12 month migration interval)

Inflows of migrants (foreigners and foreign born) by age, sex, country of origin (top 10 origin countries and other origin countries)

Inflows of migrant workers (employed) by age, sex, industry, occupation. (top 10 origin countries and other origin countries)

Inflows of refugees by country of origin (by age, sex, education)

Outflows of nationals by age, sex (and if possible, education/employment status/industry/occupation) by country of destination (top 10 destination countries and other destination countries)

### REMITTANCES **(most of this information is not available, but could be obtained via surveys)**

Total Inflow (by remittance types), by country of origin (top 10 origin countries and other origin countries)

Total Outflow (by remittance types), by country of destination (top 10 destination countries and other destination countries)

Average amount sent/received by households (monthly and annually)

Value of Money

Value of Goods

Value of Remittances In-Kind

Value of pensions received from other countries

Frequency of sending

Mode of transmission (method used most often to send)

Bank transfer

MTO (Money Transfer Organization)

Post office

Agent/courier

Hand carried  
Other

Use of remittances (money) (template)

Used to buy food and/or clothing for family  
Buy other household goods  
Pay for schooling/vocational training of household member  
Pay off medical bills  
Pay off debts  
Pay for wedding, funeral, or other social function  
Pay for visit abroad (travel)  
Buy land  
Rent more land  
Improve land  
Buy farm inputs/implements  
Invest in non-farm business  
Other financial investment  
Buy/improve house/Home construction  
Save money (bank or post office savings)  
Other

POSSIBLE INDICATORS DERIVED FROM TABLES

% of population who are migrants  
% of workforce who are migrants (by industry or occupation)  
% of migrants who are in workforce  
% of migrants who were asylum seekers/refugees  
Annual Inmigration rate  
Annual Outmigration rate  
Annual Net Migration rate  
% of total migrants (stock) entered during past year  
% of emigrants with college degree  
Average amount of remittance receipt (for households receiving remittances)  
Average amount of remittances sent (for households sending remittances)  
% using remittance to fulfill basic needs (food, clothing, housing)

## NOTES

## NOTES

## NOTES



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