

Chapter 5

Guyana Country Case Study

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5.1 Introduction

Historically, because of its large number of colonies, Britain was the most important source of migrants across continents. Available data indicate that migration from Britain averaged over 50 per thousand persons annually from the 1850s to the first decade of the 1900s. During the same period, over 50 million European citizens migrated, mainly to North America, with Canada averaging 88 per thousand persons per year and the USA 75 per thousand persons per year (Hatton and Williamson 1998).

The most recent world migration statistics provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) report that about 214 million persons, or 3.1 per cent of the world's population are migrants (Table 5.1). A migrant is defined as an individual who changes his or her residence from one economy to another for a year or more (IOM 2011). Not unexpectedly, the migrant populations of the world's more developed regions represent about 10 per cent of their populations, whereas for less developed regions this statistic is just over 1 per cent. A detailed examination of migration to more developed regions indicates that, in 2010, migrants accounted for 8.7 per cent of the population in Europe (excluding the UK), 10.4 per cent in the UK, 13.5 per cent in the USA, 21.3 per cent in Canada and 16.8 per cent in Oceania. Apart from Oceania, these more developed regions have attracted significant numbers of Caribbean migrants.

The stock of international migrants for Caribbean countries (CARICOM members and associates)¹ represents a total of 3.3 per cent of the population in 2010 (see Table 5.1). In terms of migrant population for these countries, the leading ones are Cayman Islands (63%), British Virgin Islands (36.6%), Anguilla (39.3%), Antigua and Barbuda (23.6%) and Turks and Caicos Islands (19%). Some positive outcomes are gained from migration, based on the transfer of remittances from the host (or destination) country to the home (or source) country. These transfers are mainly financial flows, but also include commodity transfers.

Available data from Ratha et al. (2011a) indicate that remittances to all developing countries increased by 16.6 per cent in 2007 relative to the previous years (1995 to 2006). Remittances inflows for all developing countries ranged from US\$55.2 billion to US\$325.5 billion between 1995 and 2010 (see Table 5.2). Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean grew from \$81.3 billion in 2000 to \$324.8 billion in 2008. In 2009, remittances to the region fell to \$307.1 billion but showed positive growth in 2010. In 2009, Guyana was ranked in the top ten recipients of migrants' remittances

Table 5.1 Stock of international migrants (in millions) for selected geographical areas, selected years

Geographical area	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	% of population 2010
World	155.52	165.97	178.5	195.25	213.94	3.1
More developed regions	82.35	94.12	104.43	117.19	127.71	10.3
Less developed regions	73.16	71.85	74.06	78.06	86.23	1.5
Africa	15.97	17.92	17.06	17.74	19.26	1.9
Asia	50.88	48.77	51.92	55.13	61.32	1.5
Europe excluding UK	45.68	50.53	52.85	58.56	63.37	8.7
United Kingdom	3.72	4.19	4.79	5.84	6.45	10.4
Oceania	4.37	4.73	5.02	5.52	6.01	16.8
United States of America	23.25	28.52	34.81	39.27	42.81	13.5
Canada	4.5	5.05	5.56	6.3	7.2	21.3
Latin America	6.1	5.1	5.2	5.6	6.1	0.9
Caribbean	1.06	1.14	1.23	1.32	1.38	3.3

Note: The minor discrepancies in the numbers are due to rounding.

Source: UNDP (2008)

Table 5.2 Inward and outward remittances for all developing countries (US\$ billion)

	1995	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (estimate)
Inward remittance flows	2.2	4.1	8.1	10.1	13.0	16.6	22.0	22.5 ^a	24.3
<i>All developing countries</i>	55.2	81.3	159.3	192.1	226.7	278.5	324.8	307.1	325.5
Outward remittance flows	0.3	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.8 ^b	–
<i>All developing countries</i>	10.4	9.5	28.5	33.0	41.0	52.7	67.3	58.7	–

Notes:

^a5.4% of GDP in 2009

^b0.5% of GDP in 2009

This table reports officially recorded remittances. The true amount of remittances, including unrecorded flows through formal and informal channels, is believed to be larger.

Source: World Bank (2011)

to developing countries (17%). Guyana was also ranked in the top five countries for emigration, with an emigration rate of 56.8 per cent (Ratha et al. 2011a).

5.2 Guyana: country background

Located on the South American coast, Guyana covers a land area of 214,970 km² (83,000 square miles) and has a population of 772,000. Based on the 2011 Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.633, Guyana is ranked 117th out of 187 countries and is in the medium human development category (UNDP 2011). That HDI value was above the average of 0.630 for countries in the medium human development group and below the average of 0.731 for countries in the Caribbean and Latin America (UNDP 2011). Guyana continuously achieves higher HDI values on average than the other countries in the CARICOM sample set, including The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. Guyana's performance in several human development indicators improved between 1980 and 2011 (see Table 5.3). This includes a gradual increase in gross national income (GNI) per capita (2005 US dollars at purchasing power parity – PPP\$) of about 68 per cent between 1980 and 2011. In the World Development Indicator Database, of 215 countries ranked by their GNI per capita (PPP), Guyana is ranked at 154 with US\$3,530.

5.2.1 Poverty

According to the 2011 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) progress report on Guyana (Government of Guyana 2011), the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 can potentially be achieved if the government continues to develop and meet its objectives in reducing the proportion of people living below the poverty threshold. The report indicates that 'the proportion of persons living in moderate poverty fell from 43.2 per cent in 1993 to 36.1 per cent in 2006' (Government of Guyana 2011: 2). Extreme poverty in Guyana declined between 1993 (28.7%) and 2006 (18.6%) as a result of the government assisting 35,818 and 65,073 people out of moderate and extreme poverty, respectively (Government of Guyana 2011). Up to 2007, Guyana

Table 5.3 Guyana's HDI indicators 1980–2011

Year	Life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Mean years of schooling	GNI per capita (2005 PPP\$)	HDI value
1980	59.5	9.4	5.5	1,901	0.501
1985	60.4	9.5	6.0	1,393	0.494
1990	61.0	10.3	6.4	1,038	0.489
1995	62.1	11.1	6.8	1,904	0.546
2000	64.3	12.4	7.1	2,245	0.579
2005	67.3	13.0	7.5	2,420	0.606
2010	69.6	11.9	8.0	3,059	0.629
2011	69.9	11.9	8.0	3,192	0.633

Source: UNDP (2011)

was listed as one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere, experiencing stagnant or no growth between 1998 and 2006, despite significant expansion in the early to mid-1990s (Nathan Associates Inc. 2007). Guyana's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which was developed to assess the various deprivations in terms of health, education and living standards, was 0.053 in 2011 with a recorded intensity of deprivation of 39.5 per cent relative to Suriname and Belize. It was reported that there was a decline from 11.8 per cent of Guyanese children suffering from malnutrition to 7 per cent in 2008 (Government of Guyana 2011).

5.2.2 Health

Guyana has achieved the target for reducing child mortality, with this statistic falling from 120 per thousand live births in 1991 to 17 per thousand in 2008. The country's child immunisation coverage has risen to more than 90 per cent nationwide, while AIDS deaths among children were reduced to 1.9 per cent in 2008 (Government of Guyana 2011). There has been steady progress in the MDG targets to combat AIDS, malaria and other diseases, with declining prevalence of both diseases (to 1.1% in 2009 for AIDS and 1,541 per 100,000 persons in 2008 for malaria). The MDG which targets environmental sustainability has shown some improvement: a relevant indicator is that the availability of safe drinking water increased from 50 per cent of households in 1991 to 83 per cent in 2000 and 91 per cent in 2006.

5.2.3 Education

The 2011 MDG progress report states that Guyana has maintained a net primary school enrolment rate of over 95 per cent since 2000, with more than 90 per cent completing primary education on average between 2006 and 2009. The findings indicated by the report suggest that access to education in Guyana is universal as a result of government policies. Primary education policies are developed mainly to improve access for students living in hinterland regions as well as to raise the quality of education for students with learning disabilities.

5.2.4 Gender equality

Guyana has reported improvement in the goal of gender equality as the labour market has been made more accessible to women, with the proportion of women in the non-agricultural sectors increasing from 4 per cent to 33 per cent between 1991 and 2006 (Government of Guyana 2011). There was also a 12.2 per cent increase in the number of women in the Guyanese Parliament between 1992 and 2009.

5.2.5 Unemployment

Overall unemployment fell from 11.7 per cent in 1992 to 10.7 per cent in 2006.

5.2.6 Debt

Guyana has reported an improved level of debt sustainability, reducing its stock of external debt from US\$2.1 billion in 1992 to \$0.9 billion in 2009, with its ratio of

total debt servicing to GDP falling by 59 percentage points to 3.8 per cent between 1998 and 2009 (Government of Guyana 2011). Guyana has engaged in fiscal consolidation and debt relief efforts to assist in the reduction of the external debt burden.

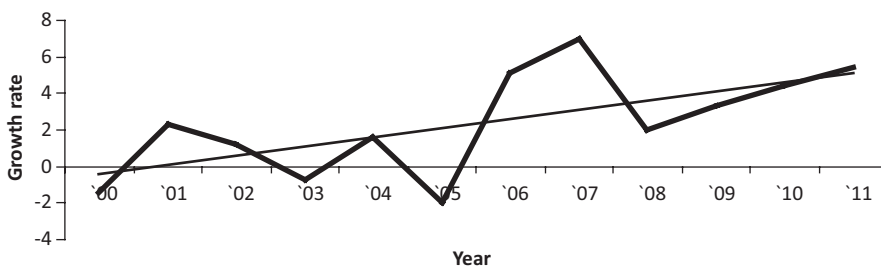
It was reported that the public sector debt declined from 93.1 per cent of GDP in 2006 to 60.5 per cent in 2009 (IMF and World Bank 2011). Guyana received \$611 million under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). In spite of economic improvements over the last decade, the country still faces severe vulnerability to external shocks and a moderate risk of debt distress. This is explained by the fact that all but one of the debt indicators (present value of external debt to GDP) is expected to be 38.8 per cent by 2013, which is 1.2 percentage points above the threshold value (IMF and World Bank 2011).

5.2.7 Investment and economic growth

According to the 2011 MDG progress report, Guyana is least likely to improve in global partnership for development by 2015. Total foreign assistance (aggregate of foreign direct investment and official development assistance) to Guyana increased by 19 per cent to US\$173 million between 2004 and 2009. There was an average of 1 per cent growth each year between 2002 and 2006 (Nathan Associates Inc. 2007). However, after real GDP growth rates increased by 4.7 per cent in 2006, these rates have surpassed 5 per cent in the subsequent years (Thomas 2012). Figure 5.1 illustrates the changes in growth rate between 2000 and 2011.

Available data indicate positive growth trends from a real GDP growth rate of -1.4 per cent in 2000 to 5.4 per cent in 2011 (Thomas 2012). As expected, Guyana's GDP per capita matches the path of the real GDP growth, with high growth rates in the 1990s (5.2% between 1990 and 2000), and then declines in the first decade of the twentieth century to 2.1 per cent growth between 2000 and 2009 (World Bank 2011). Real GDP per capita shows an increasing trend from US\$2,277 in 2007, through US\$2,497 in 2008, US\$2,629 in 2009 and US\$2,923 in 2010 to US\$3,202 in 2011 (DFAT 2012).

Figure 5.1 Guyana growth rates, 2000–11



Source: Thomas (2012)

Table 5.4 Macroeconomic performance and outlook (2015)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 ^a	2012 ^a	2013–15 ^b
Real GDP growth rate (2006 prices)	7.0	2.0	3.3	3.6	5.4	6.0	4.6
Overall fiscal balance (% of GDP)	-4.9	-4.7	-3.4	4.0	-3.5	-3.2	3.0
Investment/GDP (%)	21	19	17	17	21	20	26
Inflation rate (end of period)	14	6.4	3.7	4.4	3.3	5.4	5.4
NPV public debt-to-GDP ratio (%) ^c	42	41	48	48	48	47	48
NPV public debt-to-revenue ratio (%)	152	159	170	180	158	161	172
Total debt/GDP (%) ^c	60	62	61	61	85	61	62
External debt (\$ million)	718	834	933	1,043	1,206	1,131	–
External debt/GDP (%) ^c	42	44	45	47	53	52	52
Domestic debt (G\$billion)	69	75	87	101	146	–	–

Notes:^aEstimate/projection^bProjected average 2013–15 (PRSP)^cGDP at 2006 prices

NPV, net present value

Source: Official statistics and IMF and World Bank (2011)

The country's balance of payments current account deficit was 28 per cent of GDP at the end of 2006 compared with the 9 per cent deficit experienced in 2004 (Nathan Associates Inc. 2007). These imports are financed by vast inflows of remittances as well as debt relief and foreign direct investment (FDI) (Nathan Associates Inc. 2007). The IMF and World Bank (2011) reported that FDI inflows are able to finance about 80 per cent of Guyana's balance of payments current account deficit. This is based on an estimate, about US\$1 billion in FDI has been received (Thomas 2012).

Guyana's largest share of investment spending in the economy is obtained from external savings inflows. External savings inflows are obtained from two main sources: overseas development assistance (ODA), which is received by the government of Guyana, and FDI, which is usually provided by private institutions. The National Budget (2012) reported that, between 2007 and 2011, external saving flows averaged 11 per cent of GDP annually, while national savings averaged approximately 8 per cent. The ratio of investment to GDP averaged 19 per cent between 2007 and 2011 (Singh 2012). Thomas (2012) analyses Guyana as experiencing a downside risk of global economic shocks because capital flows to Guyana are directly connected to the global economic environment, which can have an impact on capital flows into the country.

5.3 Challenges and benefits of migration in Guyana

5.3.1 Migration and remittances: definitional issues

The IOM defines a migrant as 'a person who moves to a country other than his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year' (International Organization for

Migration 2009). Thus, for a migrant, the destination or host country becomes the new country of usual residence. An important economic gain from migration is the transfer of remittance flows by migrants from the host country to their home country. Other economic and social consequences of migration are affected by the growth of the diasporic economy. These include employment, education, health and culture.

According to the IMF (2009: 272), remittances are defined as 'household income from foreign economies arising mainly from the temporary or permanent movement of people to those economies'. These flows typically comprise financial resources or commodities, or some combination of both. Financial resource transfers are used mainly for consumption purposes, with small percentages allocated to savings and/or investment; commodities are typically consumed, although certain types may be used for investment.

In linking migration and remittances, Alleyne et al. (2003) developed a taxonomy of Caribbean remitters that includes the following six categories: migrant worker, permanent migrant, family migrant, part-life migrant, part-time migrant and returning migrant. The *migrant worker* is defined as a temporary resident in the host country, with ongoing ties to the home country. At a minimum, this remitter regularly transfers fixed remittances to meet family requirements at home. The *permanent migrant* remits mainly to satisfy specific obligations in the home country, such as the maintenance of ageing parents or financial commitments. The *family migrant* is one who has migrated and plans to move his or her entire nuclear family to the host country; here, remittances depend on the extent to which family members relocate to the host country. *Part-life* migrants work legally in the host country for their working life, with the intention of repatriating after retirement; while in the host country, these migrants may remit funds for investment mainly in housing and entrepreneurial activities. *Part-time* migrants from the Caribbean are most often farm and tourism workers who have contractual arrangements with farms or hotels in host countries; these migrants are likely to remit almost all of their income earned in the host country. Finally, the *returning migrant* is a worker who, despite an intention to remain in the host country, is forced for various reasons to return home; typically, where possible, these will transfer most, if not all, of their funds back to their country of origin.

5.3.2 Migration and remittances: data issues

Historically, data on migration have been collected and disseminated for CARICOM countries. However, collection and publication of remittance data for the region are much more recent phenomena, with various data collection methods used across Caribbean countries.

The IMF (2009) reports remittances in its *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual* as part of current transfers in a country's balance of payments (BOP) statistics. The manual states that remittances are obtained from two important items in the balance of payments framework. The first component is the wage (income) earned by workers in economies in which they are not residents;

and the second component, remittances, includes cash and non-cash items that flow through formal channels, such as via electronic wire or through informal channels, such as money or goods carried across borders (IMF 2009).

The Bank of Guyana (2001) defines workers' remittances, migrant transfers, and other unrequited transfers: workers' remittances would include transfers made by workers who stay in foreign economies for at least one year. These transfers are made by migrants living and working in new economies to residents of the economies in which the migrants formerly lived. Migrant transfers or remittances and receipts to bank accounts abroad would be transfers made by migrants to their bank accounts abroad and not to their families. 'Other unrequited transfers' mean any non-financial transfers. These would include barrels and boxes, etc.

The World Bank has published remittance data since 1970; however, these data are available for only a few Caribbean countries up to 1989 and are not fully reported until 1990. Remittance data for Guyana from 2003 to 2010 are reported in the World Bank's *Migration and Remittances Fact Book 2011*. There are, however, no available reports on compensation of employees and migrants' transfers for the same period (Ratha et al. 2009).

5.3.3 Economic sectors hardest hit by migration

Countries typically face many challenges resulting from both inward and outward migration. Guyana has experienced negative net migration, which means that emigration surpasses immigration (more people leave than enter the country). Available data indicate that this affects the education (teachers) and health (nurses) sectors the most.

The extent of the impacts on these sectors has not been thoroughly assessed because information is limited. According to the World Bank (2011), Guyana had the world's highest migration rate of tertiary-educated persons (89%). Guyana's stock of emigrants was reported as 432,900 or 56.8 per cent of its population (World Bank 2011). Not surprisingly, the effects of such massive population losses, particularly of those educated at the tertiary level, have an impact on all sectors of the society. Because of the importance of the health and education sector in social reproduction, attention has been focused understandably on these sectors. The World Bank (2009) provides a detailed examination of the challenges in the country's nursing sector. Guyana is reported to have the lowest ratio of nurses per thousand persons in the Caribbean Region (0.55) and the highest vacancy levels of approved and funded nurse positions in the CARICOM countries studied. The study noted that this was a likely under-representation of the true levels of vacancies as establishments reflect budget constraints rather than needs (World Bank 2009: 17). Of the countries studied, Guyana had the highest levels of nurse attrition (18.5%) in 2007. Migration was the main source of attrition, accounting for 73.3 per cent of losses. Currently, Guyana has a nursing demand of 1.18 nurses per thousand persons (World Bank 2009). The World Bank (2009) suggests that, even with the plans for increasing training and reducing attrition, demand is likely to outstrip supply over the medium

term. Projections indicate that Guyana's demand for nurses in 2015 is 1.5 nurses per thousand persons, with a comparable supply of 0.5; by 2025, demand is projected to be 2.7 per thousand, with a supply of 0.7.

Guyana trains about 300 teachers per year and loses the same number to migration overseas (Chanda 2011). This flow of teachers to other countries is due to 'better conditions for service ... and relatively well paid' opportunities (Chanda 2011: 11). The findings of Chanda (2011) indicate that Guyana had a teaching force of 8,646 with an attrition rate of 13.8 per cent in 2007, rising to 15 per cent in 2008. Based on available information, the massive outflow of human capital (education and health) from Guyana results mainly from low wages, poor working conditions and limited opportunities.

5.3.4 Remittances: channels and uses

In recent years, remittances to Guyana have been sent mainly through money transfer companies (77.7%), with commercial banks and bureaux de change (also known as cambios) averaging about 11 per cent each. The USA has traditionally been the leading source of remittance transfers followed by Canada and United Kingdom.

Retrieval of remittances sent by both absent and other migrant donors was mainly through money transfer organisations (Kirton 2006). The results reported from the 2006 Kirton study showed that several money transfer organisations were utilised. Western Union Remittance Services was the one used most frequently by households and individuals in Jamaica (accounting for 72.8% of the sampled population receiving money through this particular facility). Building societies were the second most common entity used (13.6%) and other financial institutions were the least-utilised medium for receiving remittances (1.3%). Postal services, travellers and other media were also used to facilitate the collection of remittances by households. There are seven money transfer agencies in operation in Guyana. More than 50 per cent of the remittances in 2010 were in US dollars, with 19 per cent in Caribbean currencies, 13 per cent in Canadian dollars and 9 per cent in sterling.

Migrant remittances to the Caribbean are typically used for consumption, savings and investment or some combination of these purposes; the limited published evidence suggests that consumption is the most significant use. Consumption of commodities and services can typically generate positive effects on economic activity. A major constraint, however, is the leakage that occurs because of the relatively high percentage of imported commodities and services consumed in the Caribbean. If the majority of those households receiving remittances are in the poorer percentiles of income earners, who may be consuming fewer imports, increased consumption levels are likely to improve overall domestic economic performance.

If significant percentages of remitted funds are spent on basic consumer goods, such as housing, health and education – rather than on non-productive, luxury goods – improvements in the quality of life of the population are to be expected. Increased

expenditure on education can improve employment possibilities and the potential earnings for family members, while also increasing their employment options outside the country. Where remittance flows are higher in percentage terms for poor households, it is likely that levels of inequality in income distribution may be reduced. In-kind remittances also improve recipients' living standards; however, where these in-kind remittances are luxury-type goods, associated demonstration effects may increase the demand for such imports over time, thus affecting the country's balance of payments position.

Furthermore, if a percentage of remittances are saved locally, this increase in the pool of domestic savings can support domestic investments. Where these funds are placed in the financial sector, domestic borrowers may access them for productive activities that can lead to increases in income generation and employment creation. Samuel (1996) observes that it is quite possible that remittances can replace domestic saving by permitting a higher level of consumption.

Any discussion of the use of remittances for investment involves a number of issues. First, both cash and in-kind remittances contribute to investment. In-kind remittances include consumer goods such as computers, stereo systems, refrigerators, stoves and various household appliances, which are also used as investment goods, especially in informal micro-enterprises operated by the poorer strata of Caribbean countries. For example, a stove may be used not only to cook food for household use but also to sell food commodities in the community. The uses to which in-kind remittances are put require more detailed study to determine their specific effects.

Second, for many households with severely limited access to formal financial sector credit, remittances are their only source of finance for investment. Third, remittances can be used to finance the construction of new houses in Caribbean countries, especially by returning migrants. In many Caribbean islands that have experienced severe destruction from hurricanes, remittances have been used to finance disaster reconstruction of private homes (Samuel 1996).

5.3.5 Temporary migration schemes

Guyana operates no temporary migration schemes. Interviewees felt that the risk of absconding made Guyana unattractive for such programmes, especially for developed countries (Guyana interviews 2012). Like other members of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), Guyanese possessing identified skills are permitted to live and work in other CSME member states without restriction. The first category of workers allowed freedom of movement under the CSME was artistes, students with university degrees, sportspeople, and media personnel and musicians. This was extended in 2006 to include domestic helpers, teachers, nurses and persons with technical and vocational qualifications. Here, this attempt to broaden categories eligible for migration is reported to have created challenges, as some CARICOM countries have been reluctant to implement this in the context of the global recession and its negative impacts on unemployment and poverty levels in their economies.

Movement of Guyanese migrants to other CARICOM states pre-dates the CSME and was fuelled by various economic, political and social conditions at home. CARICOM states have benefitted from the services of skilled Guyanese migrants, particularly in the teaching and medical professions. More recently a wider range of skilled migrants, including construction workers, have also migrated to CARICOM states. It is reported that not all of these migrants have remained in the host countries legally.

Guyanese migrants have reported some level of hostility in their experiences with intra-regional migration. Anecdotal and media reports suggest that Guyanese are singled out for hostile treatment throughout the CARICOM region, but this appears to be somewhat more intense in Barbados (Trotz 2007). The full implementation of freedom of movement across CARICOM countries for identified skills, while improving options for persons in demand, could possibly exacerbate the skills problems that Guyana is experiencing. This is especially likely because the very factors that encourage Guyanese people to leave are likely to provide disincentives for emigration to Guyana from other countries in the CSME. In particular, Guyana's salaries are by far the lowest in CARICOM. Because of the high levels of migration from Guyana, many countries outside the CARICOM region maintain visa restrictions that limit access of Guyanese citizens. Given the problems of migration in Guyana, especially related to migration of nurses and teachers, the World Bank has proposed certain policies to the Guyanese government which target the country's migration problem. These recommendations include: increase the training capacity of the country; manage migration by creating barriers or by recruiting persons from abroad; improve data quality and availability; and adopt a regional approach to dealing with the migration-related problems as well as implementing programmes to increase return migration.

5.3.6 Impact of remittances

In Guyana, data for 2006 showed that remittances were 205 per cent of FDI, 24.6 per cent of GDP and 37.4 per cent of exports. As such, these inflows of funds contribute significantly to reducing the country's BOP current account deficit in the period of declining terms of trade (as a result of natural disasters) and also assists in stabilising the exchange rate (Roberts 2006). It was also speculated in 2006 that the high use of remittances in education contributes to the growth in Guyana's human capital; in addition, remittances uses in real estate and financial institutions represent the possibility of positive multiplier effects which would generate funds for developmental projects. The fall in the number of Guyanese below the poverty line is linked to the increasing inflows of remittances, beginning in 1992, when the percentage dropped to 43 per cent from 65 per cent in 1988 after a peak in migration. It fell further to 35 per cent by 2002 (Roberts 2006).

Other analysts, such as Khemraj (2009), have argued that remittances hinder, rather than enhance, domestic labour productivity. As opposed to generating a positive multiplier effect, remittances facilitate debt servicing; any effect such transfers are likely to have on savings would be unimportant, given the need for high levels of investment in productivity that goes unfulfilled. It is also posited that more economic linkages can be developed using FDI than remittances, since there exist no meaningful

arrangements through which the micro-quantities that enter the Guyanese economy as remittances could be injected into large developmental projects (Khemraj 2009).

5.3.7 Push factors for migration

The interest in migration from Guyana has heightened over the last decade. As migration becomes significant, a number of factors can be identified as contributing to the increase in migratory patterns. It must be highlighted that both 'push' and 'pull' factors are contributory and tend to be complementary.

Typically, Guyanese migrants are driven by many of the common push factors that drive migration internationally. These include lack of employment opportunities, particularly for new graduates; low salaries; high levels of economic insecurity; widespread perceptions of corruption; and low levels of confidence in the political process. Historically, Guyana's political environment has been a critical factor in preempting the levels of insecurity that underlie migration. Guyana's post-independence political environment is characterised by deep ethnic divisions that are manifested at all levels of the society. These have, on occasion, been manifested in outbreaks of inter-racial violence at the community level, especially in the wake of national elections (Trotz 2007). Guyana's political culture both reflects and entrenches the deep ethnic divide that exists in the country and emerged in the years preceding independence.

Specifically, in the nursing sector, the push factors have been identified as low salaries, work environment, professional recognition, opportunities for personal development, staffing levels and physical safety (ICNM 2010). A 2010 study by Una Reid found that conditions of work, such as 'workload ... stress ... equipment and supplies ... orientation and in-service education', were more important than pay in influencing the decision to migrate (Alleyne 2010). She also found that prospects for improved pension schemes, other benefits and for job promotion were also important pull factors (Alleyne 2010).

It can be argued that, for Guyanese migrants, the 'push' factors mirror the 'pull' ones in the host country. Among the factors listed as being responsible for this extra-regional movement are social problems such as poverty, unemployment and related economic insecurity and, to a lesser extent, political instability (UNDP 2005). The consensus for Guyana is that the overarching factor lies in the employment problems experienced in the country. Poverty, for example, can be linked to inability to acquire a satisfactory job, thus leading to a decrease in the quality of living. An estimated 83 per cent of graduates from the University of Guyana reportedly migrated because of a lack of suitable job opportunities in the country (UNDP 2005). Migration is then encouraged by the inability of the majority of the country's labour force to find sufficient and satisfactory employment.

5.3.8 Public services impact

Effects of widespread migration, especially of skilled people, such as Guyana experiences, can be expected to be felt across society. The experience of the sugar

industry, specifically the Guyana Sugar Company (GuySuCo), in attracting skill workers is instructive and is likely to have been typical of most businesses in most economic sectors. Some 800 people who had received training in sugar production-related skills between 1990 and 2005 had migrated, despite bonding requirements, which are limited to five years. Here, this labour migration has created shortages in management, forcing the company to promote persons without the adequate levels of skills and experience (*Stabroek News* 2011).

As already noted, the high levels of migration have impacted negatively on the availability of trained nurses in Guyana. The country's health ministry reported that the country had lost between 25 per cent and 35 per cent of its experienced nurses annually over the preceding decade (Alleyne 2010). These levels of nurse migration have resulted in significant losses in funds spent on training nurses by the government of Guyana. It was also reported that about half of the government's annual expenditure on training has been lost as a result of nurse migration (Alleyne 2010).

Available research results indicate that between 1997 and 2007 about 50,000 nurses migrated from the CARICOM, which is an estimated loss in public expenditure on nursing education of about US\$2.2 million (CARICOM Secretariat 2007). It is projected that by 2020 the shortage of nurses will increase to 800,000; projections are not much different for other skilled occupations in the medical field, such as doctors and technicians. Guyana data show that 75 per cent of trained personnel emigrated between 2000 and 2004 (CARICOM Secretariat 2007). Guyana is one of the top ten countries with the highest expatriation rates of doctors, at 72 per cent, after Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada, with India having the highest rate (Sanders 2011).

Guyana's loss of teachers is significant. Some 15 per cent of the country's trained teachers migrate annually. This has translated to allocating funds for training about three times the number of teachers needed annually to maintain the number of properly trained educators in the country. The majority of the Guyanese teachers migrate to the USA, Canada, the Caribbean and Botswana (Baksh 2007).

5.3.9 Migration and remittance trends

Migration has been an important element of Caribbean life for centuries. Many historians date Caribbean migration as beginning with the forced mass movement of Africans to the Caribbean to work as slaves on sugar plantations, beginning in the sixteenth century. The major waves of Caribbean migration which are typically analysed and discussed are those which occurred after Emancipation. Marshall (1987) identifies four phases of Caribbean migration as follows: first phase, 1835 to 1885; second phase, 1886 to 1920; third phase, 1921 to 1940; and fourth phase, 1941 to the present.

The first phase was characterised primarily by intra-regional or intra-territorial migration, consisting mainly of young adult males moving from their Caribbean country of origin to other British colonies in the region. The second phase of Caribbean migration typically involved intra-regional movement of persons from

the British West Indies to work on sugar plantations in Cuba and the Dominican Republic (Richardson 1983). During the third phase of migration, Caribbean migrants (mainly from Barbados and Trinidad) travelled to Venezuela to work in oil fields and to Curaçao for employment in oil refineries. Beginning in the 1940s, the fourth wave of emigration of Caribbean people was primarily to developed Western countries, mainly the UK and USA.

The following sections discuss Guyanese migration to major host or recipient countries (by country) during the fourth phase of Caribbean migration.

United States of America

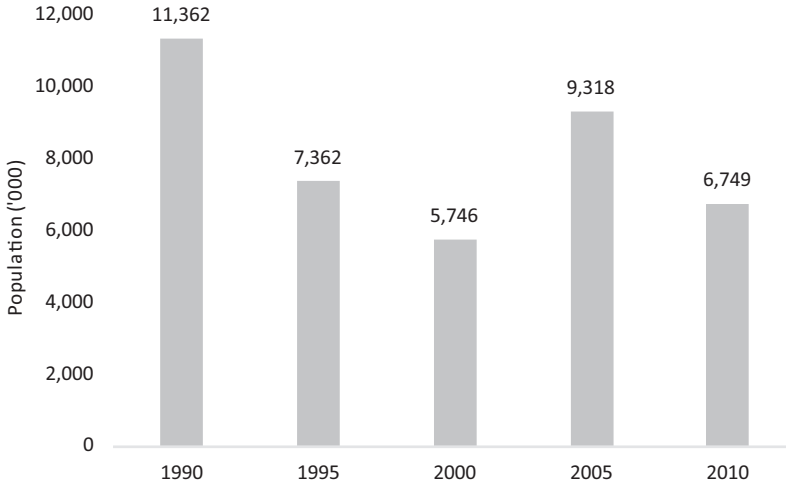
Migration to the USA has dominated the movement of Caribbean people internationally since the 1970s. Guyana has been one of the primary source countries for such migrants. The Migration Policy Institute (2009) data indicate that, between 1986 and 1989, Caribbean migration to USA increased from 53,746 to 64,778 persons (or approximately 20%). In terms of the stock of Caribbean migrants in the USA, US Census (2000) data report that, by the end of the 1980s, some 137,575 Guyanese resided in the USA.

Increases in migration to the USA in the 1980s resulted mainly from the implementation of the Permanent Labour Certification arrangement, which allowed US employers to hire migrants on a permanent basis in any field. These would include the H-2A and H-2B agricultural guest worker programmes (1986), as part of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), and the H-1C Nurses in Disadvantaged Areas programme, which began in 2006. The US 1990 Immigration Act further helped to encourage large-scale migration to the USA from the Caribbean. Guyana has had no formal arrangements with the USA under any of the guest worker programmes.

United States Department of Homeland Security (2011) data reported that during 1990 there was an inflow of 11,362 Guyanese. Between 1990 and 2000, there was a steady decline in the number of Guyanese nationals residing in the USA; there was, however, an increase of 9,318 (16.96%) migrants in 2005, followed by a decline of 6,749 migrants in 2010 (see Figure 5.2).

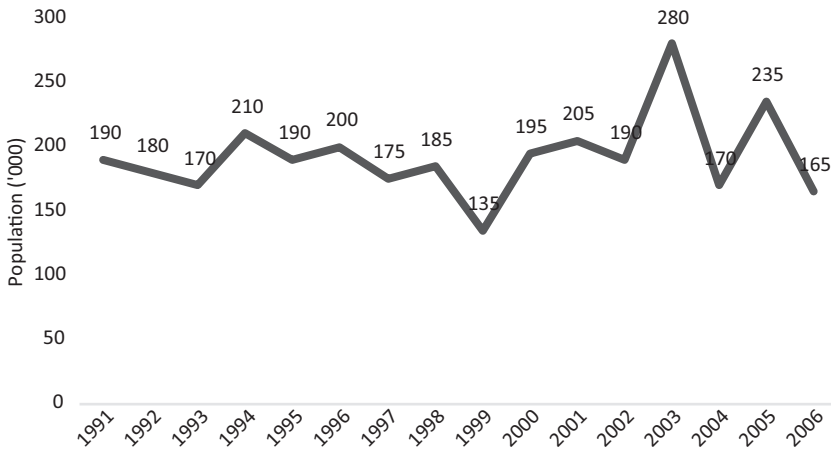
United Kingdom

The annual flow of Guyanese migrants to the United Kingdom from 1991 to 2006 is shown in Figure 5.3. According to Thomas-Hope (2000), trends in the movement of Caribbean people to the United Kingdom have been quite low during the twentieth century. The data show that between 1991 and 1998 there was a steady flow of Guyanese migrants to the UK (usually between 170 and 210 each year); however, there was a sharp decline in 1999 (see Figure 5.3). Between 2003 and 2005, there was a peak in the number of migrants to the UK. Since the late 1990s, UK immigration policy has been based on 'selective openness' with a bias in favour of expanded economic immigration and tighter security to combat illegal immigration. In 2002, the UK government introduced visas for highly trained migrants to enter UK on the basis of their skills.

Figure 5.2 Guyanese migrants to the USA, selected years

Notes: Data presented in Figure 5.2 include persons granted legal permanent residency during the year regardless of their actual arrival dates. These data represent persons admitted for legal permanent residence during the 12-month fiscal year ending 30 September of the year designated. Many of the individuals admitted actually arrived in the United States in earlier years.

Source: United States Department of Homeland Security (2011)

Figure 5.3 Migration of Guyanese to the UK, 1991–2006**Notes:**

Inflow data included in Figure 5.3 show 'grants of settlement'. People granted settlements are those who are subject to immigration control and who are allowed to remain in the United Kingdom indefinitely. This includes (a) people granted settlement on arrival at ports of entry and (b) people initially admitted to the United Kingdom subject to a time limit which was subsequently removed on application to the Home Office. The majority of settlement grants in recent years have resulted from the removal of the time limit. The settlement data published by the government of the United Kingdom are rounded for confidentiality reasons. The data before 1997 were rounded to the nearest 10; from 1997 onwards, the data were rounded to the nearest 5.

Source: Compiled by authors from Migration Policy Institute (2006) data

Canada

Like the UK, Canada has experienced smaller inflows of Guyanese migrants than the USA. Available data show that between 1990 and 1995 there was an increase in Guyanese migrants to Canada from 2,895 to 3,976 a year. However, there was a steady decline in Guyanese migrants to Canada between 2000 and 2010 (see Figure 5.4).

Remittances

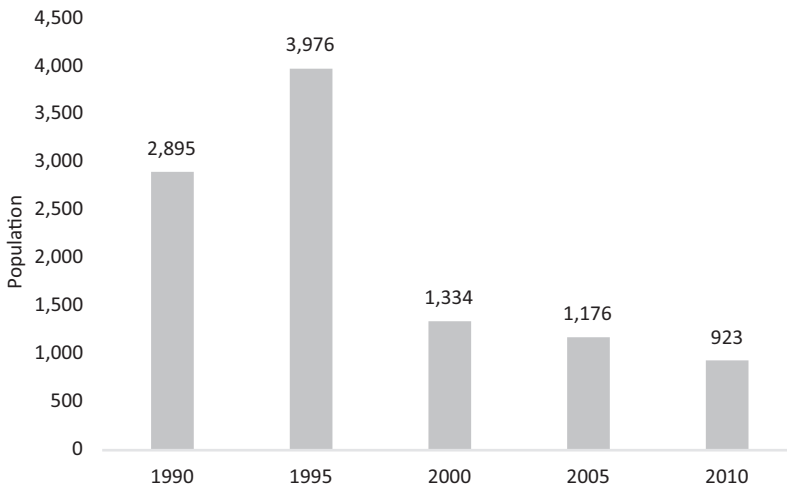
The World Bank (2011) remittances data indicated that Guyana has recorded a significant increase in remittances since 2000. There is an upward trend from US\$22 million in 2001 to \$283 million in 2007. In 2008 and 2009, there was a slight decline in remittance inflows to \$267 million, but the amount increased to \$373 million in 2010, rising further to \$399 million in 2011 (see Figure 5.5).

Remittances per capita data for Guyana show significant improvement over the last three decades. Between the 1980s and 1990s, annual average remittances per capita rose from \$2.60 to \$10.60, and they increased to \$211.80 in the first decade of the twenty-first century (see Figure 5.6).

As a percentage of GDP, remittances to Guyana rose from 0.4 per cent to 1.1 per cent between the 1980s and 1990s. In 2000–2010, the proportion of remittances to GDP increased to 15.9 per cent (see Figure 5.7).

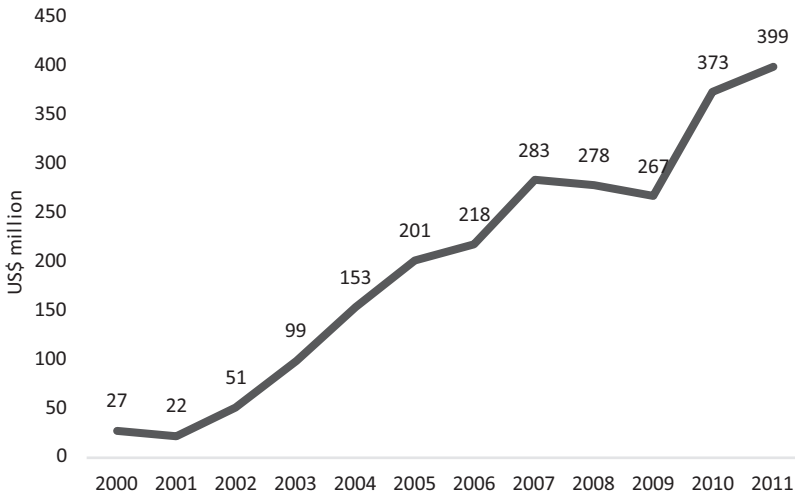
The volume of remittances as a percentage of ODA for Guyana displayed an upward trend and into the twenty-first century. Figure 5.8 shows that the proportion was

Figure 5.4 Guyanese migrants to Canada, selected years



Note: The data show the number of 'landed immigrants' who were granted permanent residence status during the given year. A landed immigrant is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by the Canadian immigration authorities.

Source: UNDP 2008

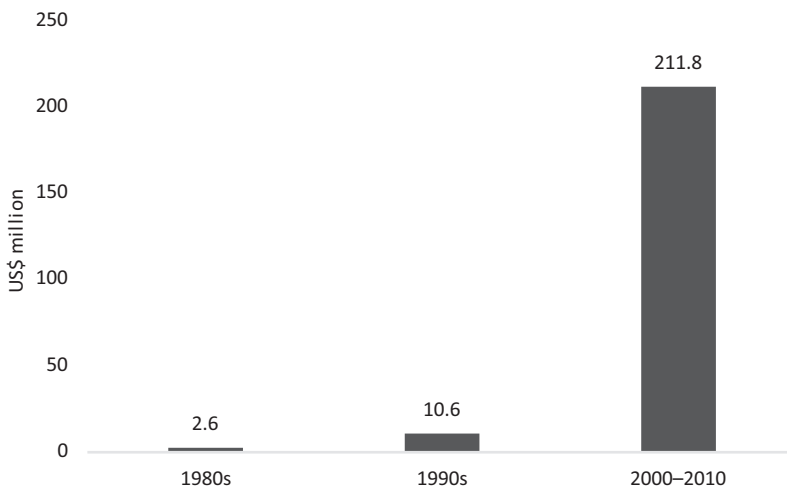
Figure 5.5 Remittance inflows to Guyana, 2000–11

Note: All numbers are in (nominal) US dollars. The figure for 2011 is an estimate.

Source: IMF (2011)

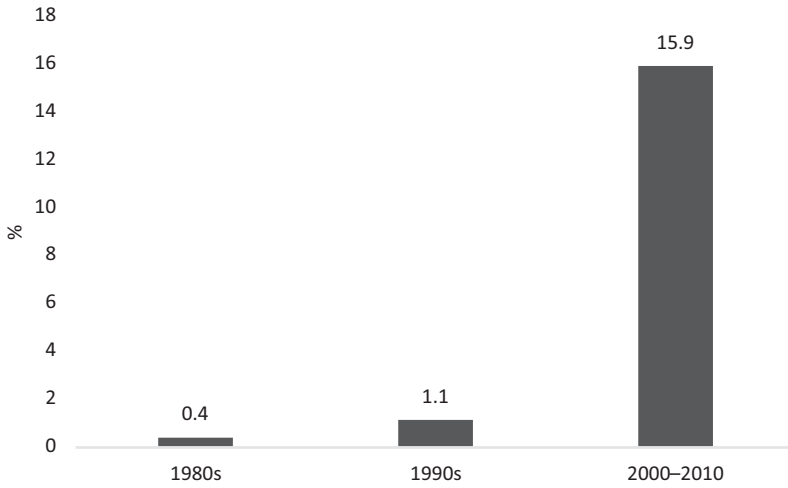
7.1 per cent in the 1980s, falling to 6.8 per cent in the 1990s. Since 2000, the proportion of remittances to ODA has increased significantly to over 100 per cent (111.9%).

During the 1980s, Guyana's proportion of remittances to FDI stood at 44.4 per cent, but it fell to 15.3 per cent in the 1990s; however, this ratio increased significantly to over 200 per cent (208.8) in the first decade of the twenty-first century (see Figure 5.9).

Figure 5.6 Guyana remittances per capita (US\$)

Source: Compiled by authors from World Bank data, <http://data.worldbank.org/>

Figure 5.7 Guyana remittances as a percentage of GDP, annual average 1980–2010

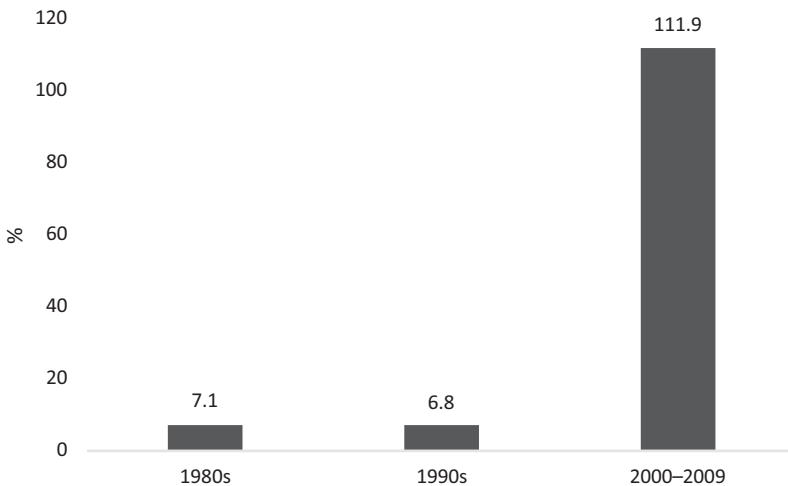


Source: Compiled by authors from World Bank data, <http://data.worldbank.org/>

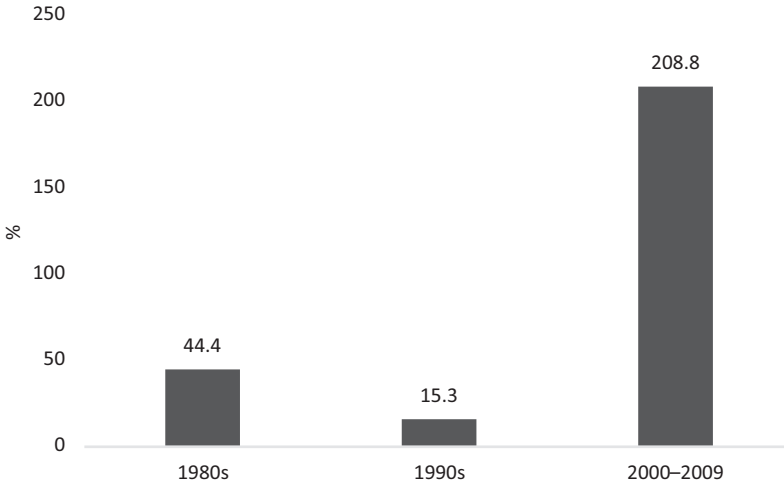
The remittances to merchandise imports ratio for Guyana shows an upward trend since the 1990s (see Figure 5.10), rising from 1.6 per cent to 13.7 per cent over the 2000–2009 period.

Similarly, the ratio of remittances to merchandise exports displayed a positive trend over the last three decades. In the 1990s, the proportion was under 2 per cent, and it rose to 24.1 per cent in first decade of the twenty-first century (see Figure 5.11).

Figure 5.8 Guyana remittances as a percentage of ODA, selected years



Source: Compiled by authors from World Bank data, <http://data.worldbank.org/>

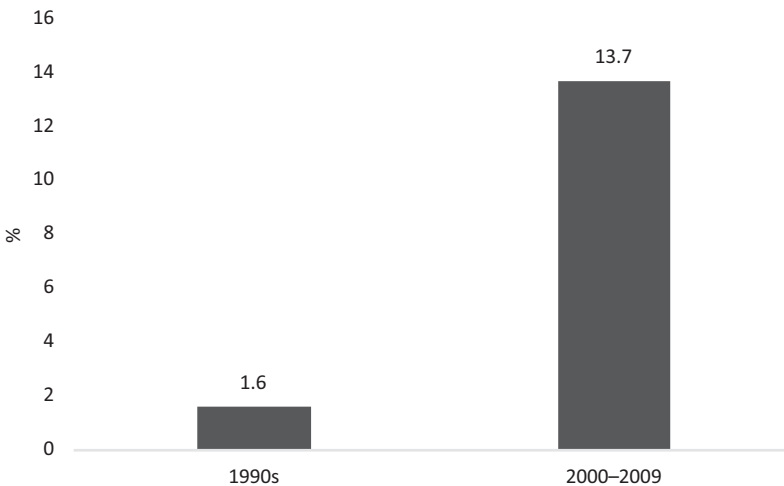
Figure 5.9 Guyana's remittances as a percentage of FDI, selected years

Source: Compiled by authors from IMF data, www.imfstatistics.org/imf/

5.4 Policy issues

5.4.1 Mass migration policies

The government of Guyana has prioritised training and education of the country's human resources as an integral part of its national development strategy. In its 2006 national development strategy, one of the highest priorities is to develop the human resources of the country. Consequently, there has been a special focus on

Figure 5.10 Guyana's remittances as a percentage of merchandise imports, selected years

Source: Compiled by authors from IMF data, www.imfstatistics.org/imf/

Figure 5.11 Guyana's remittances as a percentage of merchandise exports, selected years



Source: Compiled by authors from IMF data, www.imfstatistics.org/imf/

not only training teachers but increasing their pay. By 2010, government policy focused on increasing the number of public and private educational institutions, thus contributing to an increase in the number of available jobs in the education sector. The policy also targeted additional government expenditure on education, with implementing information technology prioritised as an important element in the education process.

As part of the policy response to problems in the medical field, one approach has been to provide a system of incentives to medical practitioners willing to work in rural areas. Government policy has also focused on dealing with the shortage of medical personnel. One of the solutions to this problem is expanding the medical faculty at the University of Guyana. Additionally, polices have been implemented for specialists from abroad to visit the country to assist with areas in which Guyanese doctors were deficient.

To mitigate the emigration of nurses, a potential policy is the provision of financial incentives to entice more nurses to remain in the country. The migration of teachers at the local nursing schools has led to a reduction in the intake of nurse trainees; in response, the government has increased the monthly wages of nursing school teachers and sought to provide more realistic living salaries. Another policy initiative in the medical sector has been to link promotions and training opportunities to performance management, which is expected to provide self-development across a wide spectrum of staff at all levels.

In relation to the education sector, a slightly different approach from that of the health sector has been implemented by the government. In an attempt to counter the negative effects of the ongoing migration of the country's teachers on the quality of the education system, the Guyanese government launched the Educational Television Broadcasting Service (ETBS) in 2011. This initiative, a dedicated educational channel,

was developed to expand access to academic and public educational material and is seen as supplementary to classroom teaching. In terms of policy responses to migration problems, there has been an increase in the levels of collaboration within the Caribbean region. As a part of the 'Year of Caribbean Nurses', celebrated in 2003, the Homecoming Programme was implemented. This programme was geared towards providing a temporary solution to the 'brain drain' problems facing Guyana. In this programme, Caribbean nurses who had migrated were encouraged to return home and volunteer their expertise in their respective home countries. As a result of this recent development, members of the Guyana Nurses Association of the United Kingdom have made annual visits to Guyana to run screening tests for hearing (Salmon et al. 2007).

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has provided support to Guyana with migration policy development and implementation. PAHO's stated mission for its work in Guyana is to assist with the technical development of the country's health sector. The principal mandate of WHO/PAHO in Guyana during the early 2000s was to provide specific policy advice, as well as to influence policy, actions and spending on the health sector. In an effort to undertake this function successfully, PAHO assisted with research and development as well as monitoring of the health sector's performance (Country Cooperation Strategy 2004).

5.4.2 Regulations of the remittances industry

According to Kirton (2006), money transfer organisations in Guyana include commercial banks (most widely used) as well as non-bank financial intermediaries such as credit unions, building societies, bureaux de change (cambios) and other money transfer companies (MTCs). Under the laws and regulations governing the operations of remittance services facilities, the Bank of Guyana required bureaux de change and commercial financial institutions to provide monthly reports on the inflow and outflow of workers' remittances. Commercial banks were requested by the Bank of Guyana to submit data using the IMF's BPM5 (Balance of Payment Manual) format regarding migrant transfers, unrequited transfers and workers' remittances on a monthly basis (Kirton 2006).

Historically, the remittance industry in Guyana has been largely unregulated. The industry, which consisted of various players such as commercial banks, cambios and MTCs, was dominated by the MTCs, which controlled approximately 78 per cent of the remittance market. This dominance is partly because MTCs have lower fees than the other financial institutions, and because of the problems related to services provided by commercial banks. Whereas the commercial banks and cambios have been regulated and supervised by the Bank of Guyana, the MTCs were neither regulated nor supervised. There only existed an agreement between the central bank and MTCs for the submission of data to the Bank of Guyana for BOP calculations, which was enacted in 2009.

5.4.3 Policies and institutions

The regulatory landscape of the remittance industry experienced a major change in 2009, when the government opted for more stringent regulation of the industry.

The remittance industry was then transformed from being largely unregulated to being fully regulated with the introduction of the Money Transfer Agencies Act. This legislation made provision for the Bank of Guyana to regulate and supervise MTCs, thus bringing this group of financial institutions in line with the already regulated commercial banks and cambios (Bank of Guyana 2011).

5.4.4 Successful strategies

The 2009 Money Transfer Agencies (Licensing) Act provided the central bank of Guyana with 'supervisory oversight of those entities' (Bank of Guyana 2011: 21). Six money transfer agencies were licensed to operate money transfer businesses in 2011, while 167 agents were registered to provide remittance services in Guyana (Bank of Guyana 2011). The Bank of Guyana's Annual Report (2011) indicated that, during 2011, receipts from workers' remittances rose by 12.1 per cent (US\$44.4 million to \$412.2 million). Net current transfers were \$414.6 million (increasing by 11.8%), which implied that Guyana experienced higher inflows from in-kind transfers and workers' remittances in 2011.

5.4.5 International organisations and donors

The Multilateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank has proposed that micro-finance institutions play an active role in the remittance market (Orozco 2006). Here the key role of the micro-finance institution would be to provide financial services to clients that have limited access to the formal financial sector for funding. Consequently, this is expected to enhance possibilities for national economic development and a deepening of the country's financial sector. These institutions would target lower-income groups and simultaneously provide investment activities by offering financial products. It has also been proposed that, to mobilise savings of diaspora communities, commercial banks in Guyana should establish branches in the host country to be closer to the migrant communities as mean of strengthening links with the Guyanese diaspora.

5.4.6 Private sector interaction with policy-makers

The National Competitiveness Council is a private sector organisation established to work in partnership with the government of Guyana to aid in decision-making and policy development for the country. This joint working group, developed in 2006, is designed to establish strategies to improve various areas related to the economic and social development of Guyana. In relation to migration policies, one of the stated areas to be assessed is 'addressing brain drain' as well as to 'assess the strengths and weakness of current policy framework for retention and attraction of skills' (Government of Guyana 2006: 46). The objectives of this entity include:

- Act as a central point of public-private leadership for the National Competitiveness Strategy to oversee and co-ordinate ongoing strategy formulation, ensure that the goals of strategy are adhered to, that policies and programme are implemented, results are monitored and evaluated, policies and programme are altered in light of performance, and that new policies and programmes are devised.

- Develop a shared vision of Guyana's future (renewing and updating the vision articulated in the National Development Strategy).
- Search for solutions for key cross-cutting challenges facing the country's economic development, some of which were discussed and are being driven forward by the action teams formed at the summit (e.g. brain drain issues, tapping more effectively into the diaspora's resources for development).
- Search for synergies among donors and lenders to improve aid effectiveness in support of the objectives of the NCS and in line with the Paris Declaration.
- Provide the policy leadership to ensure the success of future yearly Presidential Summits.
- Promote and communicate the NCS locally and internationally.

(National Competitiveness Strategy 2012: 33)

5.4.7 Productive uses of remittances

Various policy proposals have been identified as a means of enhancing the productive use of remittances (Kirton and McLeod 2007). These policies include redirecting funds through official channels; facilitating pooling of funds for productive uses; reducing transaction costs; mobilising savings; and increasing foreign exchange inflows. Underlying these recommendations is that the government should provide various incentives for the recipients of remittance inflows.

5.4.8 Human capital formation and labour market policies

Bristol (2010) has highlighted various policies used to address migration problems. He suggests that issues concerning migration may be solved by facilitating and encouraging return migration as well as 'concomitant human capital to optimize benefits' (p. 139). An assisted voluntary return programme which focuses on incentives directed towards reclaiming human capital from migration has been proposed. Guyana is implementing the CARICOM Return Facilitation Policy, where migrants would be restricted to four years in the foreign country while being provided with motor vehicle and tax concessions when they return to their home country (Bristol 2010).

5.5 Costs, benefits and policy developments

5.5.1 Benefits of migration and remittances

The foreign exchange inflows from remittances typically help the poor, unskilled and unemployed in home countries with their necessary consumption. Return migrants acquire the requisite skills and financial boost to promote economic development in home countries. For some individuals, migration has facilitated individual development in terms of acquired wealth and improved standards of living in host countries. Use of banks and other formal remittance services contributes to business activity in the home economy.

Telecommunications

Telecommunication arrangements (by the internet or telephone) mainly use the services of the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph (GT&T) Company, which is a Guyanese-owned telephone company. These telecommunication facilities are increasingly utilised to transfer funds as well as information across borders to the Caribbean region and internationally. With migrants having reduced incomes, it is likely that use of these services will be reduced.

According to its official website, GT&T has been in operation since 1991, when the government of Guyana decided to privatise telecommunications by selling state-owned companies to local and foreign investors. As a result, the Atlantic Tele- Network (ATN), based in the US Virgin Islands, owns 80 per cent of the shares in the company and the government owns 20 per cent. Since its inception, GT&T has had the exclusive right to provide international voice and data communication services into and out of Guyana. This licence expired in December 2010, but ATN chose to renew it and continue operations in Guyana. The government has allowed the licence to be renewed but only until legislative changes have been implemented in the context of its plans to liberalise the market.

GT&T collects payments from foreign carriers (such as AT&T) for facilitating international calls from the carrier's country to Guyana, and makes payments to these carriers for calls made from Guyana to the carrier's country. The company collects payments from its customers as well as its competitors in Guyana at rates stipulated by the Guyana Public Utilities Commission (ATN Annual Report 2010). Revenues from international services have been decreasing over the past four years; these amounts fell from US\$47.8 million in 2008 to \$38.2 million in 2009, \$27.9 million in 2010 and \$24.8 million in 2011 (ATN 2009, 2010 and 2011 Annual Reports).

Travel and tourism

Travel and tourism plays an important role in the economic development of Guyana. This sector has made a significant contribution to GDP, visitor expenditure and employment in Guyana. The World Travel & Tourism Council (2011) ranked Guyana at 63 out of 181 countries internationally in terms of travel and tourism's contribution to GDP. Travel and tourism in Guyana was expected to contribute GY\$13.9 billion directly in 2011 (4.8% of GDP) compared with \$12.8 billion in 2010.

Nostalgic products exported from Guyana

Trade in nostalgic goods (goods that are popular in the home country such as pepper, shrimps and cassareep) represents an important benefit of migration. 'Nostalgic' products are commodities that are traditionally consumed by natives of a country who are delighted to continue consuming them abroad if they are available, whereas 'ethnic' commodities are items demanded not only by migrants abroad, but also by other people who are interested in consuming commodities from different countries (Stubbs and Reyes 2004).

Purchases of nostalgic goods represent one means of maintaining cultural traditions from the home country, while generating revenue for sellers of these commodities. US imports of Guyanese goods reflect the role of the Guyanese diaspora. Eight products represent 90 per cent of goods imported into the USA from Guyana. Guyanese Americans demand nostalgic commodities such as rum, fish and tea; sales of such products represent an important share of total Guyanese exports. Imports of spices, for example, which more than 60 per cent of immigrants reported buying from Guyana, have also increased substantially (Orozco 2002).

5.5.2 Costs of migration and remittances

Health and education sectors

Migration affects crucial sectors in the Guyanese economy (especially health and education), leading to deterioration in standards of education and healthcare. There are negative impacts on both the private and public sectors; the effects of the 'brain drain' has disrupted plans targeting growth and development in the country. In the National Development Strategy (NDS 2000), the civil society umbrella group in Guyana stated that the country had experienced a reduction in its quality of education since the 1980s and that there was a dearth of technical expertise throughout the disciplines necessary for development. The NDS cited a serious shortage of trained teachers at all levels of the educational system. In their 2004 national report (Government of Guyana 2004), the Ministry of Education reported that the attainment levels in Guyanese schools are very low and a significant proportion of teachers are untrained and unqualified. The report also stated that there were incredibly high levels of functional illiteracy.

In the health sector, there are high vacancy rates; as a result there exists a high patient–nurse ratio, which exerts pressure on the quality of healthcare nationally, as it places serious limitations on the quality of service the healthcare providers who remain can offer patients. Fewer health workers have to attend to larger numbers of patients, increasing the level of health worker stress and leading to a deteriorating working environment for these healthcare providers. The emigration of large numbers of Guyanese nurses also results in the importation of nurses from countries such as India and Cuba. This may often create a language barrier between healthcare providers and patients in a context where communication is critical. This, coupled with the diminished quality of service offered in public healthcare institutions, has resulted in the population losing confidence in the public healthcare system.

Fraudulent and unregulated activities

The emergence of fraudulent, unregulated and unauthorised brokers, together with unregistered remittance facilities and recruitment agencies, has had a negative impact on diaspora money transfers. The growth in migration and flows of remittances have created opportunities for these fraudulent activities to take place. However, although there is anecdotal evidence of these activities across the Guyanese diaspora, few official data are available.

5.6 Migration and remittances policies: recommendations

Guyana has been negatively affected by outward migration, particularly as this relates to the primary sectors of health and education. Public policy responses as part of the country's National Development Strategy have been developed to address migration problems. The National Competitiveness Council is a public–private sector collaboration set up to deal with the negative effects.

- Organisations should be established in host countries through which the Guyanese public and private sectors can mobilise information about migrants and develop networks. These organisations can participate in making migration policy and negotiations regarding the development of strategies geared towards enhancing remittance inflows and dealing with migration problems. This approach has been used successfully by countries such as Mexico and Morocco, where migrants are involved in diverse activities in the migration and development policies of the country (IMI 2010).
- Retention of skilled workers and promoting return migration are critical policy issues which should be assessed and for which policies should be devised. A Caribbean regional approach to address mass migration problems is recommended. Where feasible, a Caribbean Regional Migration Organisation with responsibility for migration issues across all CARICOM member states should be established.
- The Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) was developed in 2004 by Commonwealth ministers of education to develop strategies to minimise teacher migration from their respective countries and thereby minimise the negative impact on the education sector (UNESCO 2011). As a signatory to this protocol, Guyana could benefit from several recommendations which address teacher migration from the country. Policy-makers and stakeholders could devise a teacher migration system that would seek to address issues and challenges teachers face in Guyana. The system would assess and address problems concerning the involuntary migration (migration due to economic necessity) of teachers, teacher qualifications and employment rights, and teacher migration management in host countries.

Given the critical nature of migration for Guyana, it is necessary for policy-makers to establish communication channels with existing and potential migrants (especially teachers and nurses) to develop feasible policies.

Note

- 1 CARICOM countries are Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The associate members are Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

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