Reintegration of Returning International Migrants:
The Role of Public Programs

A thesis submitted by

Nicholas S. Petschek

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ADVISOR: Weiping Wu

READER: Katrina Burgess

Abstract

Return and reintegration programs target a variety of migrants and are implemented by a variety of actors, including home country governments. This thesis uses return migration and reintegration theories along with practices from current return and reintegration programs to contextualize the Colombian experience. Because of several novel additions to the Colombian programs—specifically an emphasis on involving the international community and potentially host countries along with building local capacity instead of simply addressing issues from the top down—the case illuminates a new potential direction for other similar programs in home countries. However, despite these new and promising additions several lessons can be learned from using an embeddedness framework to examine program design and evaluation methods.

Acknowledgments

Although this may be the shortest of all the pages in this thesis, it is what has made the rest possible.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
BAC	Welcome Home Program
CAM	Congressional Ad-Hoc Migration Commission
COP	Colombian Peso
CROJ	Youth Reference and Guidance Center
CRORE	Reference and Guidance Centers for International Returnees
DANE	National Administrative Department of Statistics
DANSOCIAL	The National Administrative Department of Solidarity Economy
DAS	Colombian Department of Security
EC	European Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ENMIR	National Survey of International Migration and Remittances
EU	European Union
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
ICMPD	International Center for Migration Policy Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MFA	Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MMS	Migration Management Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
PIM	Integrated Migration Policy
PREVIE	Voluntary Migrant Return Program from Spain
PRP	Positive Return Plan
R&R	Return and Reintegration
ROC	Reference and Guidance Center
SENA	National Learning Institute
TCLM	Temporary and Circular Labor Migration Program
The City	The City of Bogota, Colombia
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees
US	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar

Introduction

Topic Introduction

Return and reintegration (R&R) are two distinct yet linked processes within international migration. Return migration has been written about for over 100 years, though it has always been the overlooked element of migration (King 1986). Returnees can return in one of two ways: involuntarily—where the host country removes the migrant by force, or voluntarily—where the migrant chooses to return to their home country. Neither option is new. What is new, however, is to understand return not in such dichotomous terms, but rather as a continuum of involuntary and voluntary. First implemented in 1979, assisted return programs became a policy tool for host countries to manage migration. Since then, both host and home countries have engaged with migrants attempting to persuade them to fulfill the outcomes each desires. For host countries this entails creating incentives for migrants to return home instead of using force. For home countries this also entails creating incentives for their diasporas to return, or creating incentives for them to stay abroad depending on the government's interest.

Reintegration—the reinsertion of a returning migrant into their home society—is a concept that has traditionally been examined in forced migration contexts (not to be confused with forced returns). Even more recently there has been the application of the concept of *embeddedness* to understand and evaluate the effectiveness of reintegration programs. Together these two concepts have been recently joined to create the now common term *return and reintegration*. This

connection has been made academically, though evidence from the field is scarce. Host and home countries have different agendas and different opportunities to influence the process of return migration and the subsequent reintegration of returnees.

Thesis Purpose

This thesis explores institutional responses to return international migration to home (labor sending) countries and subsequent reintegration of returning migrants. Given the recent nature of the connection between return migration and reintegration programs, this thesis first asks what R&R programs exist and what their basic functions and organizational structures are. It then uses this overview to ground a Colombian program which in many aspects has been regarded as unique in how it responds to return migration and program design.

With the first question several topics are explored, specifically the policy frameworks and contexts in which R&R programs exist, how they are funded, who implements and/or administers the programs, how the beneficiaries are defined and what particular services are offered. These questions allow for a better contextualization of the Bienvenido A Casa (BAC) experience in Bogota, Colombia, allowing the experience to be understood with regards to its contemporary programs as well as through the lens of current return migration and reintegration theories.

The thesis begins with a description of how different migration theories treat return migration and reintegration, the different types of return and reintegration,

and an overview of current public or quasi-public programmatic responses before exploring in depth the case study of programmatic and policy responses in Colombia.

Significance

Return international migration and the reintegration of return migrants have been receiving increasing attention, especially in Latin America. Although the topic is not new, there is increasing implementation of return migration theory through policies and programs worldwide.

Academic literature on return migration can be traced back to the 1960s and many schools of economic thought (Neo-classical economics, New Economics of Labor Migration, Structuralism, Transnationalism, Cross-border Social and Economic Networks) have all included return migration within their treatment of migration patterns. It is only after the international community has connected migration with development that these theories are revisited, as well as new models being developed (Cassarino 2004a). The United Nations attention to the nexus of migration and development is usually tied to the UN Population and Development Conference in Cairo in 1994 in which a chapter (chapter X) was included on international migration and sub-topics that later would be used to justify and promote return migration schemes (GFMD).

Most recently the Organization of American States (OAS) held a 2010 workshop on return migration, hoping to solidify a regional perspective and share best practices—an attempt which had not before been so explicit. This attention is due

to the improved understanding of return migration on the part of governments and civil society and from theoretical and practical levels as more circular and temporary labor migration opportunities begin to exist. An increase (or perhaps just better data) of voluntary and forced returns have also boosted the concept of return migration as a vehicle for development in the international discourse. As of now there has yet to be a comprehensive review of these programs, and learning between countries happens haphazardly. Part of the OAS workshop goals were to facilitate such learning; this thesis has similar aims.

Methodology

Each chapter will use different methods. Chapter two (Return and Reintegration Theory) will use a literature review to capture today's thinking on the areas of return migration, reintegration, migration and development and various subtopics of each.

For the following chapters I will use a mixed methods approach. Chapter three (R&R: Policy Context and Current Programs) is supported both by an academic literature review as well as a content analysis of home and host government documents, R&R program documents and websites as well as interviews with practitioners. There are also a plethora of conferences hosted by UN agencies/commissions and regional bodies on the subject from which come working papers, presentations, and conference proceedings.

Chapter four (Bienvenido a Casa: Bogota, Colombia) and chapter five (Conclusions and Analysis) use BAC program documents, internal BAC data as

well as interviews with the implementing agencies and program staff for the case study. Each interview lasted roughly one hour. Questions began with the conception of the program, program design, implementation, and future directions of the program. I was unable, however, to speak with a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the third implementing partner of BAC. These interviews shed light on the program's inception, its history, changes, and timelines as well as places of difficulty with current implementation. Chapter four will also make use of BAC data, including reports to overseeing agencies, presentations made to internal stakeholders and abroad at conferences on the subject along with intake data on beneficiaries. This last dataset was cleaned of any personal information before I received it.

The methods for the Colombian migration background section are more complex. The data for Colombia's migration and policy history are gathered through literature reviews as well as Colombian official statistics, of which several reports have been produced specifically on return migration to Bogota. It should be mentioned, however, that migration data is always contested. Home and host countries rarely agree, national NGOs rarely agree with their government's official statistics, and the international community holds not much more credibility regarding accurate data. Given that, I have attempted to defer to official Colombian data where possible, as this would be the data the government would have used to influence the creation of the BAC program. That said, data also come from host government agencies and academic and NGO sector sources.

Colombian data mostly comes from three sources: 1) the National Survey of International Migration and Remittances (Encuesta Nacional de Migraciones Internacionales y Remesas – ENMIR) carried out in 2008-2009 under the Foundation ESPERANZA, ALMA MATER Network and the District Migration Observatory, 2) National Administrative Department of Statistics (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística – DANE) 2005 census and 2006 surveys and 3) BAC data from 2010.

Limitations

The most substantial limitation to this thesis is data. A combination of an overall lack of data as well as inaccessible data does not allow me to draw strong conclusions regarding the effectiveness of R&R programs nor does it allow me to draw quantitative comparisons between programs. As information (and programs) is limited, my analysis is more of a "current practices" rather than "best practices." Again, given the constraints of this thesis I am not in a position to evaluate the efficacy or utility of these practices, but rather describe what seems to be a typical response in this field.

Lack of monitoring and evaluation data from BAC also prohibits an evaluation based on quantitative methods, though qualitative methods are available and utilized. For logistical reasons I was unable to interview a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), so this point of view is lacking. Even were I to have been able to interview a representative, the staff at Colombia Nos Une (the MFA program in charge of the BAC experience) were mostly new and had

been briefed from their outgoing colleagues about the initial phases and creation of BAC, but they had not experienced it first hand. This same constraint happened with the City, where I was able to speak with representatives who were not the most directly involved in the BAC experience.

Definition of Key Terms

There are two terms used throughout this thesis that merit a brief explanation. The definitions of home and host countries are to simplify the discussion for this thesis. Both are slippery terms and loosely defined. Migrant regularity and irregularity, however, are much more broadly used terms despite their often varying definitions.

Home and Host Countries

Home countries for the purpose of this thesis are net labor sending or exporting countries. These countries are often in the global south and have diasporas in both developed and developing countries.

Host countries are countries that are net receivers of migrants—labor receiving or importing countries. As most all countries have nationals that move abroad as well as foreign nationals that arrive, the concept of "net receivers" refers to countries who receive more foreign nationals than lose their nationals to migration: in-migration is larger than out-migration.

Both of these terms are used loosely, and over time a country's category can shift. Spain, for example, was a labor exporting country until the 1970s and now is a

labor importing country.

Regularity/Irregularity

Regularity refers to migrants in foreign countries that comply with the terms of entrance and permanance given by the host country. Host countries allow entrance given certain conditions, and migrants remain in regular status insofar as they comply with these requirements.

Migrants become "irregular" when they do not comply or stop complying with host countries entrance and/or permanance requirements. For instance, a Colombian migrant in Spain can enter on a tourist visa and is a regular migrant. Overstaying the allotted time given on the tourist visa or working in Spain while on a tourist visa makes them "irregular," despite having a means of being a regular migrant. Irregular is a more encompassing term than "undocumented," as it simply refers to being out of accord with host country requirements regardless of other possibilities of staying in the host country in regular conditions.

Return and Reintegration Theories

Return

Return migration is an elusive concept. To fully tease out its many facets one would have to uncover, at the least, the initial reasons and conditions of the original migration as well as the reasons for return. Given that this thesis focuses on the responses to return migration, I will not spend much time on the theoretical definition of return migration. This is not to downplay, however, the importance of the context in which migrants emigrated and how they fared abroad, as both heavily influence the R&R experience.

Although different migration theories have vastly different approaches and explanations for return migration, this thesis will not discuss their differences per se, but instead will provide a brief evolution of the different theories that have discussed return migration developing the most recent theory: Social Networks.

Russell King, Director of the Sussex Centre for Migration Research at the University of Sussex, succinctly describes the evolution of return migration literature as consisting—up until the 1960s—of only laments that there was no literature on return migration. King gives three reasons for this: Firstly, there is a staunch lack of data. Returns are always the least recorded, and were until recently typically excluded from migration surveys. Secondly, traditional migration theory assumes a uni-directional flow, be it (internal) rural-urban or international from developing countries to developed countries. Return migration

research gathered speed, following King, in the 1970s due to the world economic recession that drastically affected the flow of migration as well as the social and political climates for immigrants in developed countries (King 1986). Cassarino (2004) picks up where King leaves off, defining how return migration has evolved with the evolution of migration theory from neo-classical economics, to new economics of labor migration, structuralism, transnationalism and finally social network theory. There is an increasing level of humanization of migrants as theories become increasingly more nuanced and positive in their view of return.[1]

Transnationalism and social network theories allow us to move fluidly into the concept of reintegration. These two theories view return not as simply the end of the migration cycle, but as the beginning of another. *Return* is not a static concept to be thought of in a vacuum, but instead—as is obvious from practical experience—the beginning of a *return and reintegration* cycle that if ignored could and does lead to vulnerability (Cassarino 2004b; Richard Black and Koser 1999). Some scholars even take issue with the term *return*. Hammond argues that:

> Whether a returnee comes back to his or her birthplace or settles in an entirely new environment, he/she considers return to be more of a new beginning than a return to the past… [and that] the implications of [the term return] are that returnees should seek to move backward in time, to recapture a quality of life that they are assumed to have enjoyed before (Hammond 1999, 229).[2]

[1] Cassarino (2004) also notes that "returnees" will be context specific due to the varying characteristics of their return, including length of stay abroad, patterns of resource mobilization, legal status and motivations and projects.

[2] Hammond is writing specifically on refugees, the return of which is distinct from return labor (voluntary) migration, however I believe the point transcends.

Before moving to reintegration, however, I would be remiss not to develop the concept of force in migration. Force has two major roles in migration, first in the migration experience itself (forced vs. voluntary migration) and second in the return (forced vs. voluntary return). As suggested by the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration, forced migration can be understood as, "a general term that refers to the movements of refugees and internally displaced people (those displaced by conflicts) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects" (Forced Migration Online 2011). Common terms to describe the variety of forced migration include refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, development displacees, environmental and disaster displacees and smuggled and trafficked people (Forced Migration Online 2011). The return of forced migrants is usually conceptualized within the framework of a return to a previous life, as the initial migration was not one of choice or interest but made out of necessity.[3] There is also the vast distinction between forced and voluntary migration in that the United Nations has an agency that focuses specifically on refugees (United Nations High Commission for Refugees). Voluntary migration, on the other hand, is migration without "necessity" as defined in forced migration. The distinction is not clear, however, in either practice or theory, as Martin points out:

> Distinguishing between voluntary and forced migrants can be difficult. Voluntary migrants may feel compelled to seek new homes because of pressing problems at home; forced migrants may choose a particular refuge because of family and community ties, or economic opportunities. Moreover,

[3] The question of whether economic migrants are actually voluntary is a separate—albeit important—discussion.

> one form of migration often leads to another. Forced migrants who settle in a new country may then bring family members to join them. Voluntary migrants may find that situations change in their home countries, preventing their repatriation and making them forced migrants (Martin 2002, 26).

Force also plays a role in the return itself. The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Glossary of Migration defines forced return as, "the compulsory return of an individual to the [home country], transit or third country, on the basis of an administrative or judicial act" (IOM 2004a, 25). Voluntary return is defined as, "the assisted or independent return to the [home country], transit or another third country based on the free will of the returnee" (IOM 2004a, 70). Forced return typically coincides with a migrants *irregularity*. The IOM defines irregular migration as "movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration" (IOM 2004a, 34).[4]

The type of return (forced/voluntary) has consequences on many levels, one of which is reintegration. In his summary of the evolution of return migration theory Cassarino (2004) posits that two new dimensions are necessary to bridge the gap between how return migration theory can be used to understand reintegration. He advances the idea of incorporating *preparedness* and *resource mobilization* into the discussion of return migration, and that it is not enough simply to analyze the context in which the migrant returns (or is returned). Preparedness deepens the concept of willingness—which is traditionally accepted by states and international

[4] There is also the distinction between "voluntary without compulsion" and "voluntary under compulsion." Compulsion in this context refers to the end of a temporarily protected status, end of a temporary visa, rejected asylum seekers, or other scenarios where the return is voluntary, but by staying in the host country the migrant would thus move their status to irregular (and thus potentially face a forced removal) (IOM 2004b).

organizations as sufficient to call a return "voluntary" as well as be sustainable. The emphasis on returns being sustainable comes from the link between migration and development, discussed later in this chapter. Cassarino argues that a returnee's preparedness is comprised of both their *willingness to return* and their *readiness to return*, that is, the migrant's level of information regarding post-return conditions at home. Resource mobilization advances the social network theory to include the portability of "tangible (i.e., financial capital) and intangible (i.e., contacts, relationships, skills) resources that have been cultivated during the migration experience abroad. Resource mobilization also includes resources that the migrant had brought with him prior to leaving his/her home country (i.e., social capital)" (Cassarino 2004b, 17). Resource mobilization allows for a more sustainable and positive return because it gives returnees full access to the capital they have created abroad, as well as giving them the time to plan for its use.

Reintegration

Currently studies concerning R&R are using more and more sociological theories to support and evaluate their work. As stated above, as migration theories become more complex and holistic it is imperative to have adequately nuanced frameworks to approach reintegration. In this regard, current researchers have been drawing on Karl Polanyi's[5] contributions to economic sociology, and many international organizations and academics are today using the theory of embeddedness to understand the complexity of reintegration.

[5] Although Karl Polanyi is credited with initiating the theory of embeddedness, Mark Granovetter has also been highly influential in its development. The concept is often associated with network theory and thus fits with my use of Cassarino's additions to network theory's understanding of return migration (Granovetter; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Polanyi 1944).

Simply put, *embeddedness* deals with the relation of an individual to society. In relation to migration, the embeddedness framework has been applied to immigrant integration in host societies,[6] immigrant entrepreneurship,[7] and most recently, return migration.[8] Embeddedness theory is typically comprised of three interrelated dimensions: economic embeddedness, social networks embeddedness, and psychosocial embeddedness.

Economic embeddedness refers to the creation of sustainable livelihoods through the provision of or access to material preconditions. Sustainable livelihoods are defined by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway as:

> The capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term (Chambers and Conway 1992).

Practically, however, livelihoods can be understood whether or not people have access to resources and services—be that income and employment (typically thought of in economic embeddedness), as well as housing, land, education, transportation and health care.

Social network embeddedness is the extent to which one has access to and information on social relations. These social networks can range from one's acceptance into a community to whether one will be kept up to date with current

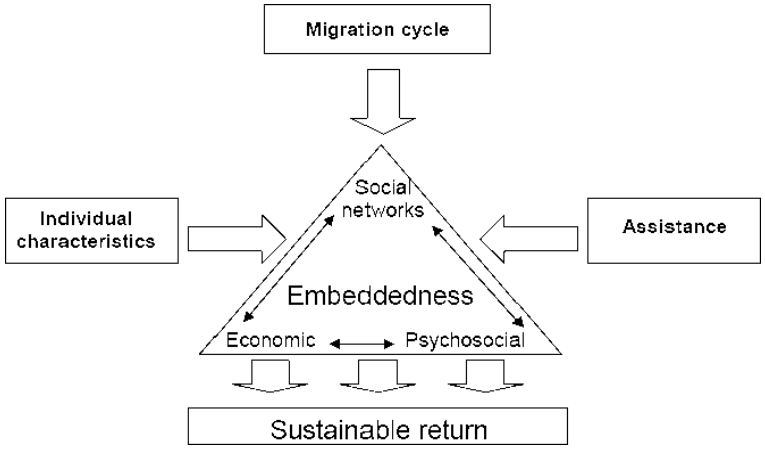
[6] (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993)
[7] Aldrich and Waldinger (1990, 1995) and Kloosterman (2006)
[8] (van Houte MSc and de Koning MSc 2008; Ruben, Van Houte, and Davids 2009; Cassarino 2004c; de Koning 2008)

information. Information is a crucial factor that Cassarino's work (2004) mentioned above draws on to develop a theory on return migration.

Psychosocial embeddedness is a much more elusive form of embeddedness, if not simply for its intangibility. Psychosocial embeddedness hinges on concepts (and constructs) of identity: to what extent is an individual able to express his or herself within the larger societal context, including identities relating to culture, religion, diet, interests and activities and language. Negative psychological conditions are typical responses to a lack of the above ability to express oneself and be accepted, thus psychosocial embeddedness is closely tied with mental health.

Ruben et al. (2009) introduce a model (Figure 1) to apply the embeddedness model to return migration. Three factors influence embeddedness: individual characteristics of migrants (age, gender, education, etc.), position in the migration cycle (reasons for the initial migration, experience abroad, reasons and conditions for return), and assistance (pre- and post-return assistance provided by either public or private means) (Ruben, Van Houte, and Davids 2009). Thus, "when applied to migration, embeddedness comprises multiple dimensions that influence how individuals define their position in society and feel a sense of belonging to and participating in that society" (Ruben, Van Houte, and Davids 2009, 914).

Figure 1: Factors Influencing Embeddedness



Source: (Ruben, Van Houte, and Davids 2009)

At its core this approach to reintegration is based on the individual. The environment into which the returnee returns will of course have an enormous effect on their level of embeddedness. This environment is influenced and created by the community of return, the larger society, and public and private actors. Given that this thesis explores public or quasi-public responses to return migration, it is important to understand how the public sector can and should approach the reintegration of returning migrants through mitigating embeddedness and its underlying factors.

Using the frame of embeddedness we can see the different aspects of reintegration that can cause tension for returnees and lead to a dissatisfactory return experience. It is evident that the migrant has changed since leaving home, and it is possible that the community/society has also changed. How these two interact is traditionally viewed through the lens of social change. Several hypotheses and frameworks help understand further the causes of social change.

To understand whether migrants will be catalysts for social change or will adapt to their old (albeit changed) society, R&R are often formulated into a hypothesis dependent on the migrants' value structure. Migrants with more urban and industrial value structures (i.e., their hometowns) will reintegrate less easily and will be more inclined to catalyze social change within the community they return to, while migrants with more traditional and rural value structures will, conversely, adapt more easily and willingly to the return environment (Cerase 1974). This dual-hypothesis can be used to understand both social and psychosocial embeddedness. Returnees with urban and industrial value structures who return to societies in which they *cannot* affect social change will understandably have low levels of embeddedness in these dimensions. Similarly, those with traditional and rural value structures returning and able to (more) smoothly integrate into their past society's current structure will have higher levels of social and psychosocial embeddedness.

Questions of change also lead to questions of relative versus absolute. There are two overarching perspectives on reintegration when looking at returnee embeddedness. Gmelch (1980) approaches re-adaptation from an etic perspective: whether migrants actually have adapted socially and economically (have they found employment, adequate housing, personal relationships, participation in groups and organizations, etc.) versus an emic perspective where the (re)adaptation is analyzed from the returnee's own perceptions of his or her adjustments to the new home environment, how the homeland fulfills the migrants expectations of the return environment and the migrant's sense of well-being. It

is within the emic perspective that concepts of *satisfaction* and *dissatisfaction* are typically uncovered, the latter of which is often associated with re-migration (G. Gmelch 1980). The emic perspective is similar to the psychosocial embeddedness category in that it looks to the migrants perception for judgment, not to objective and measurable means. Given that host governments (and home governments as well) use the concept of sustainable return to mean a prolonged stay, Gmelch's emic perspective and embeddedness' psychosocial perspective will prove important theoretical tools when designing, implementing and evaluating return programs.

Public Approaches to Reintegration

The public sector has a large role to play in the application of R&R theories. Both host and home countries can participate in the implementation of both, however more often host countries focus on return while home countries focus on reintegration. To operationalize reintegration theories there are several other issues that should be considered. The main rationale for operationalizing reintegration theories has been the recent connection of migration to development, what perspective to take regarding return migration for development ends and how to address potential equality issues with non-migrants.

The theoretical connection between migration and development is tenuous, complicated, and nuanced. Although there are many perspectives, the current word of the day is "co-development." Co-development is an approach to migration and development where migrants are viewed as "agents of

development," whereas before in more traditional economic theories of migration migrants were viewed simply as labor inputs for host countries. With the evolution of migration theories, including the widening understanding of a migrant's potential role in both the host and home societies (and the in-between space defined by transnationalism) the place and power of migrants has expanded.

Migration

Within the international community "migration as a policy development area is an orphan. But it has many stepfathers, stepmothers, aunts, and well wishers" (Olesen 2002, 128). Olesen (and others, although not with such metaphors) claim that there is no international body or organization that leads the international community on migration policy development—this may be true. The IOM—which was originally created in 1951 under the name Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration—has continually been seen as an operational institution, and not one of a policy leader.[9] There have been several attempts at international coordination on migration policy—specifically return and reintegration—however. A selected timeline is included below:

1994: Cairo Population Conference
2001: Berne Initiative
2005: Global Commission on International Migration
2006: High Level Dialogue on International Migration & Development
Annually since 2007: Global Forum on Migration and Development

The first mention was in the 1994 Cairo Conference where the topic was discussed in its relation to Development. Along with objectives of a) addressing

[9] The IOM would of course disagree with this statement, and they too might be correct. Whether or not the IOM is or is not the "parent" of the development of migration policy is less important than what actual international standards or policies exist for migration, especially when it comes to return and reintegration. And to that effect, international migration policies are scarce.

the root causes of migration, b) encouraging cooperation and dialogue between home and host countries and c) facilitating the reintegration process of returning migrants the Cairo report specifically mentions that:

> [Home country governments] are urged to facilitate the return of migrants and their reintegration into their home communities, and to devise ways of using their skills… [and host countries] are encouraged to facilitate return migration by adopting flexible policies, such as the transferability of pensions and other work benefits (United Nations Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs 1994).

This connection with Development has been a large step forward for the Migration community. Previously selective programs that viewed migrants as "agents of development" or took "co-development" perspectives (namely France and Spain), the connection was officially solidified at the international level with the Cairo report. Since then, however, many discussions on the actual nature of this connection have and will continue to exist, as discussed in more detail below.

Since Cairo, further international coordination on R&R has come in various forms. In 2001 the Swedish government with the support of the international community spearheaded the Berne Initiative in 2001 to bring the international community together under common goals—including sustainable and dignified R&R (Solomon and Bartsch 2003; UNHCR 2001).

International coordination again came through the short-lived Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), which existed from 2003 to 2005 and was mandated to "provide the framework for the formulation of a coherent, comprehensive and global response to the issue of international migration"

(Global Commission on International Migration). Along with emphasizing the connection between migration and development, the GCIM report states that "Effective return policies are required if national and international migration policies are to have any credibility and are to retain the support of the public… [and that] supporting the reintegration of temporary migrants [in their home country must be given attention]" (Global Commission on International Migration, 37 and 18).

The High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development began in 2006 in which further approval of the migration-development link was created. The specifics of how countries and the international community could implement this theoretical link have been discussed in increasing detail in the Global Forum on Migration and Development, held annually since 2007. The 2010 Forum held in Mexico specifically calls for the creation of "multiple service offices" in home and host countries to supply information regarding migration and return (with the idea of minimizing asymmetric information) (GFMD 2010). Migrant information centers were highlighted during the 2009 meeting in Athens, Greece, as a response to heightened return due to the economic crisis in host countries (GFMD 2009). These centers were also included in the 2011 forum in Switzerland stating they "are… key to preparing migrants for [a] safe and cost effective return home" (GFMD 2011, 6), but no further practical development was discussed.

Despite these efforts, the lack of international coherence on the topic leaves each region and nation to its own devices to create migration policies creating a

difficult policy environment to navigate for home countries as well as for migrants. Home countries have to create special relations with each host country and migrants have to understand complicated systems which are non-transferable to other countries (Transatlantic Learning Community 1999). Regional policies and agreements exist, although have not yet led to consensus on what frameworks are more effective and for whom.[10]

Development

Remittances sent home by migrants have long since surpassed (and dwarfed) official development aid. The heightened involvement of migrant communities and diasporas in their home countries in the political, economic and social arenas has also been noticed by international actors and has allowed an alternative perspective to take root in which more bottom-up or participatory approaches are taken (Nyberg–Sørensen, Hear, and Engberg–Pedersen 2002).

When looking at co-development it is important to understand the motives behind the three main actors involved: host countries, home countries, and the migrants themselves. It is important to note that while *migration* and *development* can be linked on abstract levels, there are, from a state-based perspective, two migration and two development interests: those of the host country and those of the home countries.

[10] Regional bodies and meetings exist as well, including: The South American Conference on Migration (Lima Declaration Process), the Manila Process, The Migration Dialogue for Western Africa (MIDWA), the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), The Regional Conference on Migration in North America (Puebla Process), the Western Mediterranean Cooperation Process (5+5 Process), among others.

Host Country Perspectives

Host countries have mixed motives for accepting and forwarding the theoretical connection between migration and development. Nyberg–Sørensen et. al have emphasized that from a host country perspective, although the two aspects are linked, there is recognition that the two have different ends, as well as different constituencies. While development policies are aimed towards poverty reduction of the poorest people and countries—it is not the poorest that migrate. Migration policies, on the other hand, take three policy logics: "(1) closure and containment, aimed at control of migrants and refugees; (2) selectivity towards immigration and development support; and (3) liberalization and transnationalism in the fields of labor mobility, diaspora activities, and refugee protection" (Nyberg–Sørensen, Hear, and Engberg–Pedersen 2002, 60).

With the first logic the connections between development and migration are limited, with the possible migration-induced benefits on development unseen. The second logic incorporates a rights-approach to forced migrants, with an understanding that development policies can alleviate migratory pressures, but still does not bridge the gap between migration and development. The third logic—that of liberalization and transnationalism—looks to activate the opportunities for home country development latent in migration. Specifically, host country policies are based on resource mobility and its transferability to home countries upon the migrants return (Nyberg–Sørensen, Hear, and Engberg–Pedersen 2002).

Home Country Perspectives

Similar to the case of host countries, theories behind how home countries interact with and value their migrant stock can also vary. Approaches have changed just as much with migration theories as with practical realities. Recessions in the industrialized world have always spurred reactions from migrant communities, whether it be higher return rates or "reverse remittances," where families at home support their migrants financially until they can get back on their feet (Ratha 2009; Papademetriou and Terrazas 2009). Demographics also play a role, with a "demographic bonus"—where a country's demography allows for a large working age population abroad to support smaller age cohorts back home—being a key topic in policy discussions in migrant sending countries (Peng and Cheng 2005; Partida-Bush 2005). This view coincides with views of migration as allowing financial resources to be shared back home (new labor economics of migration), but does not move further into either transnational or network theory understandings of migration. Manifestations of the latter two theories result in policies that line up with that of the third policy logic for host countries. Home country policies are also based on resource mobilization and R&R of migrants.

Bottom-Up or Top-Down?

As reintegration itself does not exist in a vacuum, we cannot conceptualize it as such either. Van Gendt (1977) outlines this point in his account on the reintegration debate at the international level in a search for public sector objectives of reintegration programs. Although he does not use these specific terms, Van Gendt essentially describes both a bottom-up and top-down

emphasis. The bottom-up approach views "reintegration services…as just supporting the individual returnees in the process of reintegration. For home countries, this implies, among other things, support to the individual migrant in finding a job and housing facilities and granting credit facilities" (van Gendt 1977, 45). This approach also includes potential support from host countries by way of either initiating or facilitating programs for assisting return with trainings, investment schemes, or others (van Gendt 1977). At the time van Gendt was writing, the theoretical connection between Migration and Development had not been established. Many critiques to this approach were that reintegration services were an *ex-post* solution, rather than an *ex-ante* (they ameliorated the negative effects of migration, instead of attempting to curb migration from the beginning). This view excluded, therefore, the notion of migration bringing development to the home country which (as previously discussed in this chapter) has since changed dramatically.

The top-down approach views reintegration from the national perspective, conceptualizing reintegration programs as a small set of services that fit into larger national or regional development goals. It believes, "[Home] countries should work towards the creation of sufficient earning opportunities and an appropriate economic infrastructure on the national and regional level. In this concept the rationale of special reintegration services in effect disappears and the emphasis is put on services of a more general nature that operate among others for returning migrants" (van Gendt 1977, 45). Thus the focus is on national development, and there is no explicit recognition of returning migrants being in a

different situation from non-migrant communities in terms of their development potential.

Van Gendt (1977) argues for a combined approach given that there is no evidence that migration will curb (wax and wane, yes, but never completely stop). By focusing on service provision to returning migrants, but integrating the services into broader development plans and regional strategies, home countries will be able to draw on the opportunities reintegration provides for development. Practically, this would be the alignment of training and investment opportunities for returning migrants with regional economic initiatives, emphasizing the creation of migrant businesses in specific sectors, and aligning the building of housing and other migrant-led infrastructure within city and regional plans.

Equality issues

A pertinent concern that comes from providing services to returning migrants for reintegration is the potentially unequal treatment bestowed upon returning migrants over local (non-migrant) populations as it is not the poorest of the poor—and often not even the poor—that migrate (Nyberg–Sørensen, Hear, and Engberg–Pedersen 2002). Given this, directing public funds to reintegration programs for returning migrants may not be the most efficient or fair expenditure. The services offered could just as easily be needed by local populations, and having selected services for a class of people as diverse as "return migrants" can be easily questioned. Another very real issue at stake with identifying and specifically providing services to returning migrants is the social interaction

between returning migrants and non-migrants. There are many cases that document tensions between these two groups, especially as non-migrants often view migrants as already being privileged, or having wanted to emigrate themselves but not having had the chance (Richard Black and Gent 2004; G Gmelch 1980).

Van Gendt (1977) differentiates between financial capital, social capital and orientation to make the claim that it is both necessary and just to provide returning migrants with reintegration services. While they may bring financial assets, which puts them potentially above the income level of their non-migrant peers, it is their lack of access to social services and employment opportunities, and general lack of orientation that sets them apart from non-migrants and merits a public intervention. "The objective of the reintegration services should be to achieve equality, after a limited period of time, between returnees and other members of the community… in order to achieve this equality objective, a positive discrimination during a limited period of time is justified."

Of course *equality* is a slippery concept. Many governments with high-skilled diasporas initiate positive discrimination policies and programs (usually over the short-term) in areas of employment, taxes and housing to entice their skilled diasporas to return home (Horvat 2004). The question of whether migrants are or are not disadvantaged in regards to non-migrant population is a contextual question. In the above example provided by Horvat (2004) we see governments clearly positively discriminating towards an already privileged class. In van

Gendt's (1977) understanding, return migrants are in fact *not* a privileged class. It is obvious that return migrants are going to be, as a cohort, quite diverse. A common characteristic is, however, the fact that they are reintegrating into a new (old) society. Regardless of the degree to which a said migrant has remained connected to his or her place of origin or the social or economic networks they are able to tap into, I take van Gendt's (1977) assessment to hold generally true that return migrants are at least temporarily disadvantaged with regard to non-migrants who otherwise would have similar advantages (similar characteristics, social class, etc.).

R&R: Policy Context and Current Programs

The implementation of R&R theory happens within a particular policy context. This chapter will explore the perspectives with which host and home countries approach and implement R&R policies and programs: the context within which return migration centers operate. As both host and home countries have different agendas, motives, and opportunities in regards to return migration, reintegration, and development, it is important to understand both the interests and limitations of the two, and to find both common ground as well as differences.

After exploring the host and home country perspectives I will define return migration centers and explore the various facets of their implementation: how they are funded, who implements them, and how they are designed. As there are a very select few that fit the definition of return migration center I will draw from a wider array of R&R programs to get a broader perspective of current practices—which will serve to not only illuminate current practices, but will reveal just how few actual return migration centers exist.

National Policies on Return Migration

National return migration policies exist in both host and home countries—but for distinctly different reasons. This section explores the policy options available to both host and home countries, as well as what logic would lead each to enact certain policies. Although there are considerable options available, it is clear that countries are moving together in a common direction, as outlined below, which

further create the environment for return migration centers.

Host Countries

Host country policy options on return (excluding forced returns) are non-coercive, voluntary, assisted voluntary, non-forced returns and pay-to-go schemes. They are a set of policy tools used by host governments to encourage unauthorized or irregular migrants to leave the host country without incurring the cost, legal barriers and political obstacles associated with forced returns or removals (R. Black, Collyer, and Somerville 2011).

"In order to reduce the burden on welfare systems, destination countries have launched programs that provide monetary incentives to encourage migrants to return home" (Luckanachai and Rieger 2010). Voluntary return programs have their beginnings in 1970s Europe as an attempt to manage unwanted guest workers—mainly from Eastern Europe and Africa. The Dutch, French and German governments all had significant programs throughout the 1970s until the early 1990s, none of which were ever able to meet their proposed policy objectives (Webber 2011). The IOM has been implementing these programs for upward of 30 years—since 1979 in Germany. Although typically referred to as voluntary return and reintegration programs, the emphasis has always been on the return; to a lesser extent the voluntary state of the return, and to an even lesser extent the reintegration component. As voluntary returns are financed by host governments it is only with their interest that reintegration components are

considered.[11] IOM argues that returns are more sustainable with reintegration (less re-migration) so it should be in the interest of host countries, but the translation of that interest is not always seen in policies (Hardy 2011).

Despite the lack of substantial comparative data, several practical differences between non-coercive and forced returns makes the former much more cost effective. Although the magnitude of change is not known, it is clear that non-coercive returns are cheaper for host governments. For the actual removal, chartered planes needed for forced returns, the accompaniment of guards, medical personnel, translators, etc. all swell the cost of forced returns, while voluntary returns only incur the flight cost on a commercial carrier and the program incentives and administration costs (R. Black, Collyer, and Somerville 2011). For the detention process itself the cost of complex law enforcement elements and costs arising from social welfare benefits while in detention or in the removal process also significantly raise the cost of forced returns (IOM 2010a). Statistics from the United Kingdom's Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Program show an assisted return costing only 10% of a forced return in 2002-2003, and only 3.7% in 2008-2009 (European Migration Network 2011).

Non-coercive returns also provide the benefit of not needing formal bilateral agreements between host and home states. While bilateral readmission agreements have increased since the 1990s, they are a lengthy process, with many negotiations taking 10 or more years. As the majority of non-coercive returns are

[11] Save the interest of the international community or home governments, both of which have been taking recent interest. However, historically speaking the emphasis has only been on return.

implemented by the IOM, not only is the context in which returns are able to be made simplified, but the actual interaction between states is minimized which has been argued to allow an impartial actor (IOM) to handle the delicate subject of migration management (R. Black, Collyer, and Somerville 2011; SOPEMI 2009).

Although host governments name these programs as voluntary returns, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has two conditions that need to be met for a return to—in their eyes—be truly voluntary. First, return must be viewed in relation to conditions in their home country. Returnees must have appropriate information with which they can properly assess the consequences of returning. Secondly, the return must be viewed in relation to the host country. For a return to be voluntary the potential returnee must have an option to stay, which is not the case for most migrants returning through voluntary return programs (Webber 2011).

Home Countries

Home countries have a legal obligation to accept the return of their nationals (United Nations 1948). However there are many returns that home countries wish to incentivize (*courted returns*), and others they either have not or would rather not (*uncourted returns*).

As most high-skilled workers work abroad in regular (legally in host countries) conditions, portability of social security benefits and overall transferability between payments made abroad and at home will provide incentives for regular migrants to consider returning home. Host governments also play a role in this

relationship, as evidenced by the initial French and German return programs of the 1980s where migrant's social security contributions were capitalized to incentivize return (without coordination with home country systems) (Naik, Koehler, and Laczko 2008). Several other options exist for home countries such as active recruitment in host countries, the creation of temporary benefit packages including short/medium-term employment, housing and travel arrangements. Programs such as these have been in place in several countriessince the 1960s, though all with little effect (IOM 2000).[12]

Given both the limited success of the above programs and the general understanding that high-skilled workers abroad will rarely return, many states have been turning to "temporary-return" or "diaspora engagement" (IOM 2000). These programs—such as the IOM supported Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals[13] or DFID's Diaspora Volunteering Program—aim to entice highly skilled members of the diaspora to return temporarily to their home country to participate in knowledge transfer, business development, or philanthropy (IOM 2011a; A. Terrazas 2010). Programs to encourage diaspora led bilateral trade and foreign direct investments have also been explored in several countries (Farrant, MacDonald, and Sriskandarajah 2006).

Returns are not always courted or promoted, however. Where home governments have an interest in either keeping their diaspora abroad—which allows a

[12] India has had a program in place since the 1940s, Korea and Guyana initiated programs in the 1960s, Taiwan in the 1980s. A stronger indicator of high-skilled return however, is the home countries economic performance, not their implementation of said policies (IOM 2000).

[13] Implemented in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Sierra Leone and Sudan, among others.

continued flow of remittances—or keeping their national labor markets or social fabrics as they are, home governments will not implement return incentives. But once return flows are obvious—along with their effects on national and local economic and social environments—home governments do look to ameliorate and even harness the potential of their returning citizens with both reintegration programs and development focused (incentivized return and economic reintegration) activities such as policy and program creation. In Ecuador, for example, the government has established a Ministry to handle migration matters and created policies to facilitate the return of the mass-exodus after the 2000 dollarization (Nyberg–Sørensen, Hear, and Engberg–Pedersen 2002; Jokisch and Pribilsky 2002). Uncourted returns are usually not high-skilled workers, whom home countries actively court (IOM 2000).

Reintegration as a Tool for Development

It has often been advised that home countries should take a proactive stance on reintegration, especially as they look to foster development. Reintegration programs can and should be an integral component of national development agendas (EuropeAid 2009).

Several recommendations are commonly voiced, yet seldom enacted. Strengthening the capacities of national authorities to deal with returnees, promoting inter-ministerial cooperation in home countries, strengthening links with diaspora communities, improving remittance channels and management are some of the most cited (EuropeAid 2009).

Diaspora Strategies

It is important to also underline how R&R programs fit into two larger currents, namely home country diaspora strategies and relationships with host governments. R&R is closely related and at times overlaps with a country's overarching diaspora strategy, and in several instances working with host governments can play an important role in the R&R of migrants.

Many countries have overarching diaspora strategies to reach out to their citizens abroad. Programs and initiatives can have various motives and goals, but all of them include a realization that diasporas hold a certain level of power, abilities and development potential.

Ionescu (2005) creates a typology of diaspora initiatives implemented by home governments. These initiatives fit into several broad categories, the two biggest of which are network creation (business, professional, scientific) and development (community involvement, migration and development associations, remittances, co-development activities). Many of these initiatives engage the host country, as well as creating programs to influence return migration (Ionescu 2005). Several of these "return-enhancing" initiatives are directly linked to return migration resource centers. As activities take place before the actual return, while the migrant is still in the host country, there are also opportunities for host government involvement.

From a broader, more theoretical level it is evident that there is potential overlap between diaspora strategies, R&R programs, and relations with the host country,

especially given that more and more host governments are adopting a strategy of "assisted or voluntary return," and build the necessity for sustainable return into their policies (to ameliorate the effect of re-emigration).

Return Migration Resource Centers

Return migration resource centers are part of a process in which the public sector plays—or can play—a large role. The provision of services and information, creation of policy, etc., all constitute a use of government power that can ameliorate negative outcomes to migration, as well as create and support positive outcomes. Although brick and mortar (physical structures) return migration centers are relatively new, in that the area has received little attention from both governments and researchers alike, it is not as new a response for out-migration or immigrant integration in host countries. Given that there are three physical spaces in which migration takes place: home country (pre-migration), host country, and then home country again (post-migration), there are typically three similarly related common programmatic responses for each migration stage.

Migrant Resource Centers[14] are typically set up in home countries to assist in the pre-migration experience. "Services [typically aim to] facilitate and empower them to migrate in a legal, voluntary, orderly and protected fashion. (Tacon and Warn 2009). Services are just as often web- or telephone-based as having physical locations, and typically strive to link migration to development in the home country as well as provide protection services for migrants (Warn 2010).

[14] Warn (2010) notes that a plethora of names are used: Migrant Service Centers, Migrant Assistance Centers, Centers for Migrant Advice, Migrant Information Centers, or Migrant Worker Centers. For sake of continuity she uses the umbrella term "Migrant Resource Centers," which I will adopt for similar reasons.

The level of government involvement in these centers can thus vary from low (simply providing information on visa requirements) to high (participating in labor selection programs, remittances investment schemes, diaspora relations).

Host country programs also exist, and in the literature are referred to as "one stop migration shops." The European Commission formally adopted this approach in 2005 within their Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union. Said "shops" aim to improve "access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services (European Commission 2005)" while in the host country. They are "essentially based on the provision of both Government and non-Government services to immigrants and people interested in immigration issues under one roof… [providing a] holistic strategy of mainstreaming the provision of immigration services. (Oliveira, Abranches, and Healy 2009).

Thus for both the migration itself and the time spent in host countries a response has arisen which deals intrinsically with the proper provision of information, including (but not limited to) what opportunities exist, how to access them, what rights one holds and what society at large offers. Logically, therefore, one would imagine a similar approach to return migration. Given—as explained above—the difficulty with the concept of return it is understandable that a variety of responses and non-responses would surface. These programs typically target "uncourted" returns, especially returnees in irregular conditions as their levels of vulnerability will be higher. As migratory environments are vastly different from

country to country, exact services provided differ given what particular communities require.

For the purpose of this thesis I define *return migration centers* as those that have a) a physical presence in areas of return, b) whose either principal or substantial activity pertains to the reintegration of returning international migrants, and c) that has institutional access to government services. Programs meeting "b" and "c" but not having physical presence are instead return migration programs. The first quality (that of a physical presence) separates it from many of the other responses mentioned briefly before on diaspora policies. Having a physical presence has several advantages, over, say, an internet-based strategy, in several regards. Because return populations vary in demographic characteristics, having a physical presence will not deny services for the less technology-savvy migrants, it provides a space to interact personally with migrants, thus humanizing the experience. This also requires more investment on the side of the government or implementing body in the oversight and administration of the center. Regarding the center's focus, it is important that a primary focus of the program is on R&R given the variety of services and coordination needed. A program that addresses return as a side or secondary project will not have the same impact or reach, and will be neither structured in such a manner that it is able to provide all the services needed nor likely to focus a significant amount of resources on the subject. Lastly, institutional access or government recognition is mandatory, as a great deal of the services offered involve coordination with other government services and agencies. This can either be a center run by the government or stemming

from a government program, or where the center is in the private sector (either for or not for profit) it should be in direct contact with the government and be granted a certain amount of access to allow it to function properly as an extension of the public services it attempts to provide.

Reintegration Program Funding

Funding for R&R programs comes from three sources. International and multilateral funding is scarce, but exists, while most prominent is host country funding (mostly through assisted return programs). Home countries offer funding—usually more for reintegration than for return—but does not parallel the levels of host countries funding which focuses mainly on return.

Multilateral funding for reintegration is scarce. The EC-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative is a new program implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Created to run for three years (2008-2011) the program has an overall budget of 15 million euros, which will fund projects linking migration and development. Call for proposals were made where both state and civil organizations could apply for funding (UNDP 2011).

The European Commission (EC) has established a Return Fund for the 2008-2013 period as part of the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows program. Resources for this fund total 676 million euros and can be used to finance

integrated return management in EC countries or abroad to further actions in line with EC migration goals (EC 2010). Integrated return management consists of the development and implementation by European Union (EU) countries of national plans composed of a set of measures to encourage voluntary or enforced return schemes for non-EU country nationals, particularly those in irregular conditions. Created based on comprehensive assessments, which analyze both the population and the return context, these plans aim for effective and sustainable returns to home countries (EC 2010).

Host country funding is also prevalent. Host countries typically want to lessen the economic burden of unemployed migrants, as well as relieve social pressures created by host societies ("immigrants" are often one of the first scapegoats during economic hard times). Return funding from host countries typically falls into three categories: organized travel, travel costs and one-off payments.

Organized travel includes funding for the logistical arrangements concerning the travel as well as to fund pre-travel counseling. The one-off payments are the cornerstone of assisted return programs, and have been progressively changing their implementation from direct financial payments to in-kind reintegration support. These programs are usually dated back to the 1977 French program that paid airfare and what would now be roughly $2,000 USD per migrant (and $1,000 USD per child) to return to their home country (Plewa 2010).[15]

[15] Most European countries have implemented similar programs at some point, and usually in conjunction with the IOM. Australia, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Holland Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, among others, all have programs (R. Black, Collyer, and Somerville 2011; IOM 2010a).

Although the financial contribution from the host country remains (relatively) the same, host countries and implementing organizations (namely IOM) have come to realize that providing in-kind services allows for more sustainable returns. Whereas with simple cash transfers, returnees would spend money on either repaying informal debt or consumption items, neither would contribute to their economic or social reintegration back home. In-kind services allow host countries and implementing partners to tailor how returnees spend their money, for example, with the provision of trainings the host countries and implementing partners can choose the direction of investment of the payment (IOM 2000).

A difficulty with host country funding is that there is rarely direct interaction with home country governments. Although (as addressed above) this facilitates some aspects of the process, it does not help with the consistency or sustainability of programs. As funding is given per migrant and implemented by intermediaries, the possibility to integrate actions into larger home government development priorities or policies is limited. It is also true that funding is scarce, and it is the host government that prioritizes—based on their own needs—which returnees to help and why (Hardy 2011). A more collaborative approach with home governments would allow home governments to participate in setting priorities for returnees.

The least available funding source comes from home countries. Home country governments aim to smooth the reintegration process for returning nationals, specifically looking to integrate returnees into development objectives. Funding

rarely comes from home governments, however. Two situations, when present, do usually convince home governments to fund reintegration programs: high return numbers and the steadiness of return.

Home countries with large and sustained return flows (such as Kosovo and Afghanistan) realize the need to intervene in the return and reintegration process. Although home governments are often lacking funds themselves, by prioritizing the process they could potentially look for funds elsewhere (such as the international community) and become a partner in the return and reintegration programs financially sponsored by host governments and the international community.

Implementing Organizations

Like their variety of funding possibilities, R&R programs also have several different implementation schemes. Unlike funding, here the international community takes a strong role, typically in cooperation with the public sectors of host and home countries. For-profit sector participation is practically nonexistent, instead the non-governmental actor more involved in R&R program implementation are the not-for-profits—both internationally and nationally based.

The largest implementing organization of return and reintegration programs[16] is the IOM. A major IOM program for the last three decades has been Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR). Starting as simply facilitated transport, these programs have evolved to incorporate a range of services in order

[16] Again, this does not take into consideration repatriation programs, of which the most involved international organization would be UNHCR.

to promote the sustainability of returns with the three stages of return covered: (1) pre-departure assistance and travel preparations, (2) assistance with the actual trip home, and (3) post-arrival assistance for the socio-economic reinstallation and reintegration of returnees. IOM believes that AVRR programs are the most desirable form of return given that "it takes the individual's decision into account and allows returnees to prepare for their return while avoiding the stigma of deportation." (IOM 2010c, 10)

AVRR programs are only one piece of a comprehensive approach to migration management, however. Other components include efficient border management, effective asylum processing and, as a last resort, forced returns of those who do not have a legitimate basis to stay in a host country. Benefits include better treatment of returnees during the process, more autonomy over details (thus promoting more sustainable returns) as well as helping to support cooperative efforts between countries of origin, transit and destination in jointly managing migration (IOM 2010c).

For IOM to facilitate return processes, three conditions must be met. First, the return must be voluntary. Any evidence of coercion or lack of decision-making ability on the part of the migrant excludes IOM from participating, as its mission does not allow it to participate in forced returns. Second, the rights of migrants as stipulated in international and national laws must be respected. IOM will not agree to actions on behalf of a State that willfully prejudices the rights of migrants. Third, involvement in the return process must likewise not restrict state

sovereignty, therefore IOM will not partake in any action that willfully prejudices state sovereignty.

Several international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) also participate substantially in the implementation of R&R programs. Caritas International Belgium has been working with return migration since 1984 as an implementing partner of the IOM providing pre-departure assistance and travel logistics, and with reintegration since 2004 where Caritas works with local NGOs (now in over 50 countries) to provide social (temporary housing, medical care, education/training) and economic (job search, income generating activities) in-kind services (Caritas Belgium 2011). The International Catholic Migration Commission has been working with return and reintegration for over 50 years. It currently provides pre-departure assistance (including "go-and-see" visits home), return assistance including legal aid and psychological support to returnees and has worked worldwide, including Argentina, Kosovo, Uruguay, Vietnam, and most recently Indonesia (ICMC 2011).

The host country public sector usually takes care of the basic functions of forced return such as detention and transport to the home country. However while host countries will implement forced returns, they rarely implement voluntary returns, looking instead to NGOs or IOM to do so.[17] Any funding host countries put towards voluntary returns is implemented by IOM or INGOs. Home countries

[17] A prime example is Caritas Belgium. Funding and direction comes from the Belgian government who has identified the IOM as the policy's implementer. IOM then works with international NGOs such as Caritas to implement the programs on the ground.

also have limited actual presence in the process, though when funds are allocated to the situation they are typically implemented by local NGOs or IOM.

The private sector does not play a strong role in return, though most reintegration programs are linked with the private sector. Linkages can happen through private sector organizations such as business networks, or through corporations such as employment or recruitment agencies. In more developed contexts reintegration programs can delegate the labor force linkages to recruitment agencies that already have the contacts and structure to provide those services as in the case of Colombia (Puerta 2010).

By far the most active sector in return and reintegration is the non-profit sector, whether it be INGOs or national NGOs. These organizations are the ones with the most ground presence and the deepest community contacts. Because of this they are the most able to implement on-the-ground work. NGOs bring a set of values that neither the private for-profit sector nor the public sector typically advocate for, namely one based on humanitarian values, rights-based principles and safe, dignified and sustainable returns. Although these perspectives might be appreciated by the other two sectors, it is the non-profits that are able to fully back their inclusion in R&R programs (Danish Refugee Council 2008). These activities are carried out by the above-mentioned NGOs as well as the majority of the almost 50 NGOs with observer status to the IOM. While many provide or coordinate actual services, others work solely on advocacy levels (IOM 2011b).

For reintegration to be sustainable, changes and coordination need to happen in

the home country, and policies should focus on that instead of host country policies alone. The main obstacles to reintegration migrants face are related to home country environments: lack of networks and links with the national business community and a lack of policies, laws and regulations to facilitate their reintegration (Naik, Koehler, and Laczko 2008).

Regulating migration from the outset can help immensely with reintegration—for instance with contract or temporary migration where migrants know they will return before emigrating. If part of a circular or temporary migration scheme, migrants can have return and reintegration accompaniment from the beginning. These programs are most often associated with Bilateral Labor Agreements between home and host governments. There are a variety of tools within Bilateral Labor Agreements that can be tailored to the particular environments and often include reintegration programs (Naik, Koehler, and Laczko 2008). These agreements help to establish protocols and systematize the migration experience, which allows migrants to understand the processes better as well as makes the home-host country relationship easier. Currently the Philippines is a leading home country to use these agreements (Go 2007).

Design (services offered)

R&R services can be separated into three types: logistical/immediate, economic, and social. Services can also be provided in three distinct locations: the host country (pre-departure), travel, and in the home country (post-departure).

An expert round table on R&R organized by EuropeAid and the International

Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in 2009 clearly and succinctly lays out the needs of return and reintegration programs.[18] The round table produced seven main challenges to a successful reintegration program: information campaigns, housing, health or psychological problems, language barriers, economic reintegration, family impacts, and social reintegration all of which should be considered in program design (EuropeAid 2009). A 2008 evaluation report on return and reintegration programs to Kosovo outlines similar barriers and includes cooperation between home and host countries, monitoring and evaluation, and proper timing for specific services understanding that both the psychological aspect of returning and the physical packing of belongings need to be considered (Danish Refugee Council 2008). Proper program design should incorporate the above elements into the three service types and in the three locations.

Logistical services speak mainly to the travel portion of return. Information campaigns are helpful in targeting prospective returnees while still in the host country, as well as even before migrating. Sensitizing migrants to their rights, opportunities, and the process of return is a process that is best started as early as possible (EuropeAid 2009). Other logistical services include the actual flight (or travel) preparation, pick-up from the airport, and home country travel support (rural returnees often find themselves stranded in capital cities with no way to get home).

[18] The discussion brought together policy makers, practitioners and academics with three main objectives: (i) clarify the notions and types of return and return policies; (ii) exchange views, lessons learnt and best practices with actors in the field of return and reintegration regarding implementation and sustainability; and (iii) examine how return and reintegration sit within the broader development cooperation agenda with countries of origin (EuropeAid 2009)

Humanitarian services refer to alleviating the immediate vulnerable conditions returnees find themselves in immediately upon returning. Food and shelter are basic needs upon return and many programs provide humanitarian aid in the form of food kits and temporary shelters before returnees are transitioned to longer-term solutions or are able—through their own networks—to cover their basic needs.

Economic services look to integrate returnees into the labor market. Programs normally cover training, initial financial support for a short period of time while the returnee is unemployed, and employment linkages. Most programs, such as in Moldova, Morocco and Sri Lanka, differentiate between returnees looking for employment through an established business and those wanting self-employment (Athukorala 1990; Hincu 2011; Anon. 2007).[19] Some services, such as in Greece, aim to entice returnees to settle in rural areas by providing economic incentives and therefore helping rural economies.

Social reintegration assistance typically looks to help in housing, health/counseling, access to benefits and education. Longer term housing support is common and can take many forms including providing information, improving access to affordable accommodation, or by supporting housing reconstruction or subsidized social housing (EuropeAid 2009). Housing improvements are sometimes offered with either construction materials or funds to improve living

[19] It has been noted, however, that many times returnees go the self-employment route only because other employment opportunities are not available, and even within those who do succeed in establishing their own business often they are not prepared to maintain it (MAFE 2010).

conditions. Access to mortgages is also sometimes provided, as in Greece[20] (IOM 2000)

Emotional and mental health is an important service both individually and for the family unit. Many migrants have suffered from trauma or post-traumatic stress that requires special psychological counseling and support (EuropeAid 2009). Many migrants upon return do not have access to health services—particularly forcefully returned irregular migrants who have just gone through a host country detention system where they also rarely have access to adequate health (Davies et al. 2011). Some of these services are provided in-house, while other programs connect returnees to existing services to which they otherwise would not have had access.

Family dynamics are considerably changed because of the return. Whether family members returning home or those having stayed behind, the family unit can be helped by facilitating partnerships with civil society organizations in both host and home countries (EuropeAid 2009).

As returning to one's home country is not synonymous with social reintegration, returnees often feel socially isolated, as well as at times being discriminated against by local communities who have not migrated and who believe returnees receiving assistance are unfairly prioritized (Danish Refugee Council 2008; EuropeAid 2009). Specific services can "reunite" returnees with home communities by including home communities in services or by working with the

[20] The house must be bought with foreign exchange, however.

community to understand more broadly the situation in which returnees find themselves.

Educational services link with the economic services in job training, as well as ameliorating the barriers returning youth face. Language barriers faced by returning children who have either not mastered or forgotten their native tongue is also an issue that should be addressed in coordination with the education system (EuropeAid 2009).

R&R Conclusions

As discussed host and home governments have different approaches to R&R. Host countries are gradually seeing that voluntary returns are to their advantage as they reduce the burden placed on their social and economic systems but at a reduced cost to forced returns (and also are available to regular migrants as well) and that no formal agreement between countries is necessary. Home governments, however, divide their diasporas not by regularity, but by courted or uncourted returns. Home governments tend to want high-skilled returns for development ends, while they would prefer lower-skilled migrants to stay abroad and continue sending remittances. A shift towards viewing previously "uncourted" returning migrants as agents of development is a test to both home governments adopting to a new reality (that their diasporas *are* in fact returning) and to understanding that this group can also have positive development impacts.

Following this logic, R&R programs take many forms. While international funding does exist—such as the EC's Return Fund—it is scarce. Most often

programs are financed by host governments, and are focused more on *return* than *reintegration*. Home governments, on the contrary, focus more on the *reintegration* than the *return*, however funding is limited. Home countries need high return numbers and constant return to invest money in reintegration programs.

While host countries do implement forced returns, voluntary return programs are most often implemented by the IOM which in turn works with NGOs. Home and host countries rarely interact, however, which is where bilateral labor agreements can catalyze conversation and help the two countries come to a common understanding. Regardless of who implements the programs, they are generally implemented in three locations: host country (pre-departure), travel (the return), and home country (reintegration). The service basket consists of logistical and humanitarian services for the travel and immediate needs stemming from the return as well as social and economic services to support the returnee's reintegration.

Bienvenido a Casa: Bogota, Colombia

BAC Introduction

Managing return migration is an important component of sustainable development in Colombia because over four million Colombians—approximately 10% of the population—choose to migrate internationally. One of Colombia's responses is the Bienvenido a Casa program (Welcome Home in English, referred to here as BAC). Jointly implemented by the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the City of Bogota (the City) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the BAC program seeks to assist returning Colombian migrants in their reintegration into Colombian society. This chapter begins with background on Colombian migration and its diasporas, the institutional responses by the Colombian government and the IOM to this migration before detailing the BAC program itself.

Colombian Diasporas and Return Migration

Although Colombians are found throughout the world, the Colombian diaspora has its most established roots in three countries: Venezuela, the United States (US), and Spain.[21] Migration to Venezuela is the longest standing and was until recently the second largest community. But the Colombian community in Spain

[21] Although Colombians—like most diasporas—tend to create Colombian "communities" abroad, many studies have found that while Colombian immigrant communities rely on social networks for migration choices, the community is highly divided along lines of class, region and ethnicity. Internal mistrust and fragmentation is both a response to a highly divided country (Colombia has the most unequal distribution of wealth in Latin America with a gini coefficient of 58.49 in 2006) as well as a response to the conflict and violence in Colombia and to self-stereotyping regarding drug trafficking (Torres 2006; Guarnizo, Sánchez, and Roach 1999; World Bank 2011).

has grown rapidly in the last two decades and is currently the second largest Colombian community abroad, second only to that in the US.

Colombian migration to Venezuela is as deep rooted as the nation of Colombia,[22] and migration between the two countries was only regulated starting in 1942. Although Colombian migration to Venezuela intensified during the Venezuelan oil boom of the 1960s and 1970s and later tapered off, the long and porous border has some of the most active migration points in the Andean region (Álvarez de Flores 2011; The Andean Community 2005). Typically characterized as less educated, Colombians in Venezuela went to work either in agriculture or the petroleum industry (Pellegrino 1984). Since the mid 1980s Colombians who would have traditionally migrated to Venezuela began to opt for the US, and more recently, Spain. This was a typical trend in South American migration starting in the 1980s where migrants opted to migrate to developed countries instead of neighboring or regional developing countries. This was partly due both to the debt crisis and structural adjustment programs and to rising economic integration (Cerrutti 2009; Massey 1998).

Colombian emigration to the US since WWII has taken place in three waves, with each wave contributing to the complexity and nuance within the Colombian diaspora in the US. The first wave was a consequence of La Violencia,[23] a political war in Colombia in the late 1940s through the 1950s. Collier and Gamarra (2003) classify this stage as consisting of primarily lower and lower-

[22] The two were formally the same country, Gran Colombia, from 1819 to 1831.
[23] Although La Violencia ended in 1958, this initial wave of immigration lasted until the late 1970s. (Collier et al. 2003)

middle class young adult males from interior cities[24] escaping political violence and searching for economic opportunities. The second wave, spanning the late 1970s to mid-1990s, was inclusive of all social classes, but contained a much stronger presence of middle, upper-middle, and upper class migrants. In contrast to the politically based violence of the first wave, second wave migrants were fleeing drug-related violence as well as migrating as part of the drug trafficking and distribution system. Third wave migration began in the mid 1990s and has seen an even larger increase in middle, upper-middle and upper class professionals emigrating due to personal safety concerns[25] as well as increased economic push factors due to the Colombian economy's late-1990s recession. Migrant demographics also began shifting during the third wave with young adults and older adults migrating (where previously it was more young adults) as well as from rural and smaller city origins (Collier et al. 2003).

Migration to Spain has been a much more recent experience than to either Venezuela or the US.[26] Europe was seen as a destination of the Colombian elite, a small number of refugees and intellectuals, artists and students from the 1960s to 1980s. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the beginning of increased migration to Europe, in particular Spain, which coincided with the third immigration wave to the US (Torres 2006). Latin American migration overall greatly increased to Europe (particularly Spain) in the last several years, due to tightening immigration

[24] Mainly Bogota, Cali, Medellin.
[25] "Extortion, kidnapping, murder, etc., to their families from the Colombian guerillas, paramilitaries, common criminals, and government security forces" (Collier 2004, 4).
[26] Spain underwent a dramatic and rapid transition from labor exporter (mainly to northern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s) to labor importer in the 1980s when it both experienced an economic boom as well as joined the European Community. Spain's stock of immigrants has continued to grow substantially each year since then (Cornelius 2004).

and visa controls post September 11th, 2001 in the US (US) as well as regularization programs in Spain in 2000 and 2001 that helped solidify the Colombian community (Pellegrino 2004; Aparicio et al. 2003).[27]

Basic Characteristics

Information on diaspora communities is unreliable and incomplete. Direct comparisons between diasporas therefore involves creating a general overview and understanding the slight (and not so slight) differences among sources. The most unreliable of all numbers is usually the overall stock of migrants. The characteristics of the diaspora communities are described in Table 1.

According to official 2005 statistics, the US diaspora is the largest (36% of Colombians abroad, followed by Spain (23%) and Venezuela (19%). Overall most diasporas are of working age, with the diaspora in Venezuela being slightly older, followed by the US and then Spain. The feminization of Colombian migration has been a topic especially in Spain—where in the 1990s women made up over 70% of the Colombia population (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.). It is apparent that the most educated diaspora is in the US, which was predominantly initiated by upper class pioneer migrants, while the Venezuelan diaspora is the least educated. Unemployment rates for Colombian immigrants are higher in Venezuela and Spain than in the US.

Documentation is a persistent topic of interest among immigrant communities, and one that cannot be easily represented in table form. Documentation is an

[27] Spain implemented regularization programs in 1986, 1991, 1996, 2000-2001 and 2005 with the goal of satisfying the demand for foreign labor via legal channels while simultaneously curbing illegal employment (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005).

important issues especially considering that each host country (the US, Venezuela, and Spain) have different approaches to immigration which greatly affects the diaspora communities and return migration.

Because of the above mentioned visa requirement for Spain, a large number of irregular migrants came before the new visa requirements were implemented and simply overstayed their allotted 90 days. The case in the US, although unique, has also seen an increase in the undocumented or irregular population since 1990, as compared to those arriving before 1990. Women are more likely to be undocumented (Aysa-Lastra 2007). Although the Colombian population in Spain is one of the largest foreign-born groups (they represented 20% of Latin Americans in Spain in 2009), due to their recent arrival, only a small number within the community hold Spanish citizenship. But this number has been increasing slowly over the last several years (Pellegrino 2004; Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.; Pajares 2010). Numbers on Venezuela are not readily available, though given the high discrepancy in the stock of Colombians in Venezuela, one can assume the levels of irregularity are high.

Table 1: Colombian Returnee Characteristics

	Spain	United States	Venezuela
Population[28]	874,000[29]	1,368,000[30]	722,000[31]
Age	Working age, younger[32]	Similar to Spain[33]	Working age, slightly older[34]
Gender (% Men)[35]	44%[36]	46.3%[37]	48%
Largest Educational Cohort	High School (46%)[38]	Higher Education (56.5%)[39]	Primary School (56%)[40]
Unemployment rate	Modest, but rising[41]	6.8%[42]	13% M; 57% F[43]

[28] National Administrative Department of Statistics 2005 Census.

[29] In 2009 official Spanish data estimates the Colombian population at 287,205, although two-thirds of the population is thought to be irregular thus the number is probably significantly higher (Pajares 2010; Torres 2006). The Colombian community in Spain increased by a factor of 18 from 1999 to 2007 (13,214 and 246,610, respectively), which speaks to the rapid growth as well as stock (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.). While it is easier to enter Venezuela without proper documentation, prior to January 2002 Spain did not require visas for Colombians arriving as tourists which has been related to the high levels of irregularity of the Colombian population (Gonzáalez and Miles-Touya).

[30] Numbers for the US Colombian community also differ by source. 2009 American Community Survey data puts Colombians or Hispanics of Colombian origin at 916,616, while other sources place the community at two million in 2005 (Aysa-Lastra 2007; Pew Hispanic Center 2011).

[31] A recent study supported by upward of 100 national and international NGOs places this community at four million (Hernández 2010). This discrepancy is not surprising given the porous nature of border regions and volatile political relationship between the two countries. Even with official numbers, in 2000, Colombians in Venezuela constituted the largest immigrant stock in South America (Cerrutti 2009).

[32] In Spain the Colombian population is also young with 85% between the ages of 16 and 64 and 58% of women under 34 years, with an average age of 32 in 2006 (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.).

[33] Colombians in the US are slightly younger than in Venezuela, with only 69% between 18 and 64 (Pew Hispanic Center 2011). This difference could be due in part to the omission of 15-17 year olds in the data.

[34] The largest age category for Colombians in Venezuela is 40-44; 88% between 15 and 64 (CELADE).

[35] Gender varies given where in the country migrants settle. Colombian migration to the US and urban areas of Venezuela has typically been women while rural Venezuela is mostly men (CELADE).

[36] Females made up over 70% of Colombians in Spain in the 1990s. The decrease in feminization has been attributed to 2000 and 2001 regularization programs in Spain, which allowed women obtaining status to use family reunification processes (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.).

[37] (Pew Hispanic Center 2011).

[38] Official 2004 data from Colombia show that 14% of Colombians over 18 residing in Spain, regardless of status, have less than 5 years of formal education (primaria incompleta), 23% between 6 and 12 years (secundaria incompleta), 46% have a high school degree (13 years) and 16% have higher education (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.). Significant differences among gender are not found.

[39] In 2009 in the US 30.3% of Colombians ages 25 and older had at least a bachelor's degree, with 26.5% having some college, 26.9% completing high school and only 16% having completed less than high school education. The majority (57.5%) self report speaking English proficiently, own calculations based on (Pew Hispanic Center 2011).

[40] In 2001 56% of Colombians in Venezuela had less than 6 years of completed education, with only 26% having more than 10 years with male migrants, on average, being less educated than female (CELADE).

Migration Patterns

Migration decisions rely heavily on social networks, thus communities abroad typically show a strong regional focus. Colombians in Venezuela typically come from the departments[44] of el Valle del Cauca, Antioquia, Norte de Santander and Bolivar, as it is more common to migrate inter-regionally than cross regionally. That is, Colombians from the Colombian Caribbean coast migrate to the Venezuelan Caribbean coast, while border departments (such as Norte de Santander) typically see migrants cross over into a similar region in Venezuela (Pellegrino 1984). The majority of Colombians in Spain come from the Coffee Region and from the northern part of the Valle del Cauca Department (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.).[45] Data on the US diaspora is not readily available.

Decisions of where to settle are also highly dependent on established migration networks (Torres 2006). Within the US Colombians are concentrated in the South (46.8%), mostly in Florida (31.9%); and in the Northeast (37.3%), mostly in New

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[41] Unemployment rates of Colombians in Spain have increased dramatically in recent years compared to other immigrant communities in Spain. Working Colombians in Spain typically fall into two main industries: 70% are found in the service or manufacturing sectors as wage-labor, while roughly 25% are found in domestic services, 90% of whom are women (Pajares 2010).

[42] Of employed Colombians, 62.6% are in services, 20.5% in trade and transport, 10% in manufacturing and 6.7% construction/agriculture/mining with 32% in management or professional occupations, own calculations based on (Pew Hispanic Center 2011). Employment patterns are broken up primarily by social class with lower and lower-middle classes working in manufacturing, service and agriculture while middle, upper-middle and upper classes work in professional business and educational contexts (Collier et al. 2003).

[43] Labor force participation rate of Colombians in Venezuela is 69%. Disaggregated by gender, men have a participation rate of 92%, while women only 48%. Economically active Colombians less than 24 years of age are primarily found in Agriculture (27%) or Commerce, Restaurants and Hotels (21%) while those 25-59 years of age tend towards Commerce, Restaurants and Hotels (26%) and Services (20%) (own calculations based on (CELADE).

[44] A unitary republic, Colombia has 32 departments. Departments vaguely resemble States in the US.

[45] The Coffee Region is located in the middle of the "golden triangle" between Bogota, Medellín and Cali which includes the departments of Caldas, Risaralda, Quindío and the southern part of Antioquia. The region has approximately 4 million inhabitants and a territory of 28,000 kilometers squared, the majority of which has been used for coffee production since the first half of the 19th century (Garay Salamanca and Medina Villegas n.d.).

York (16.1%) and New Jersey (12.9%); with newer communities in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Chicago, Houston and Boston (Pew Hispanic Center 2011; Aysa-Lastra 2007). Within Spain the Colombian diaspora is dispersed throughout, with roughly 30% living in Madrid and 15% in each Catalonia and Valencia. A particularity with the Spanish community is its lack of integration due to its recent beginnings (as evidenced by the low citizenship rate) and the main preoccupation or focus is still economic survival (Torres 2006).

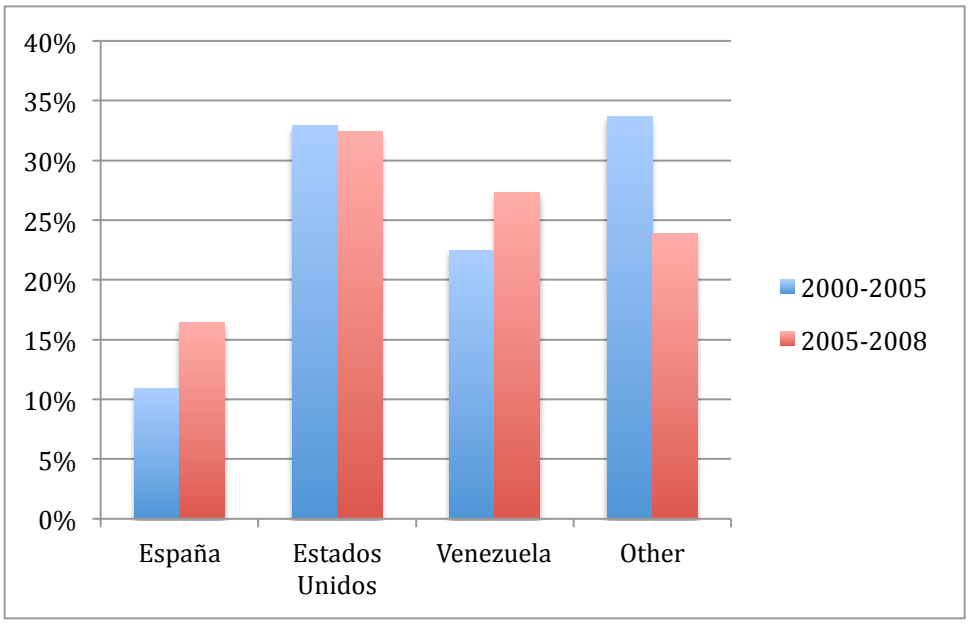
As for return migration, a migrant's decision to do so is seldom based on one factor, or even, for that matter, one context. Reasons vary at the individual level as much as they do at the community or national level, and an individual's decision to return home is surely to be influenced by the current social and political climates around them, as well as those in their communities of origin. These reasons are typically discussed within the framework of push and pull factors for initial migration, which can be used to frame reasons for return as well.[46] Regardless of the possibility to draw larger conclusions as to why Colombians are choosing (or being forced) to return, it is important to begin with the fact that they are in fact returning, and at an increasing rate.

As per a 2009 study, 5.5% of Colombian households now have a returned migrant, with higher representation in the Northern region followed by the Central-West region. The higher volume of return in the northern region is thought to be a direct response to the current situation in Venezuela where

[46] The push-pull framework previously assumed migration to enable equilibrium between economic growth and contraction in different regions or geographic locations (Massey 1998). The framework can and is often used more broadly, incorporating other social and environmental aspects and not centering solely on economic growth.

political and economic tensions are escalating (Mejía et al. 2009). The overall return population mainly comes from communities in the US, Spain,[47] and Venezuela, as represented in Figure 2 using DANE 2006 and ENMIR data from Mejía et al. (2009):

Figure 2: Overall Return Migration to Colombia



Source: Mejía et al. 2009

Employment and labor trends are salient push factors and return populations have been found to have a "negative selection" effect in that the least educated of emigrants return (C. Medina and Posso 2009). This does not hold with Venezuelan returnees (who show high education levels), probably because they are likely to return for security reasons while it is true for Spain, and to a lesser extent the US. This typically means they had more difficulty integrating into the host country's labor market, which is consistent with ENMIR data as men cite

[47] Colombians returning from Spain has increased by almost a factor of 6 (5.87) from 2005 to 2008 (Pajares 2010).

employment 14% more than women as a reason for returning. This can be tied to the type of employment done by gender, especially in Spain where women are highly concentrated in personal services, a sector less affected than those in which men typically work (such as construction), while women cite family reasons more often. In addition, we see that from Spain slightly more men return while many more men return from the US, and more women return from Venezuela (Ortiz 2009). This, however, is not found in the returnee population using the BAC program where an overwhelming percent (over 65% in all three cases) are male (BAC 2010a). This could be explained by other studies' findings where returning women are less likely to work (especially if they worked abroad) upon returning home, and BAC could be viewed solely as an economic reintegration program, hence their low participation rates.

A second push factor relates to the social aspects of living abroad. There appears to be a critical time of a few years within which, if the migrant cannot in some meaningful way establish him or herself, the propensity for return is much higher. All three diasporas on average show relatively long periods abroad with 11.2, 6.7 and 16.5 years for the US, Spain, and Venezuela respectively (BAC 2010a). Migrants returning before this critical period are understandably going to have different experiences returning, as well as different reasons for doing so. There is also little evidence that—despite typical migration narratives—issues of maladaptation, discrimination or xenophobia play a role in decisions to return

(Mejía et al. 2009).[48] However, despite their low weight in overall responses, they are more often cited when returning from Spain or the US than, for instance, Venezuela (Ortiz 2009).

Last, levels of irregularity hover around 30% in recent years for the US and Spain, which contributes greatly to reasons for return, with each host government taking a particular route to deal with this situation (Mejía et al. 2009). From the Bienvenido a Casa database we see that although the top two self-reported reasons for return are economic and family for the US (31%, 25%) and Spain (53%, 22%), for Venezuela they are economic and security (32%, 27%). Forced returns are more prevalent from the US, with 28% of cases citing being deported or returning for documentation issues while a deeper look into reasons for return from Venezuela show that the next salient reason cited are political issues (14%), which in the region are strongly related to issues of security (BAC 2010a).[49]

Close to 100% of return migrants sent remittances while abroad, leading some to the conclusion that they were planning for their return (Sosa and Durango 2006). While over 85% of all emigrants state economic or employment reasons for their initial out migration, only 70% of returnees state that reason for emigrating, with the missing 15% attributed to wanting the experience or adventure that comes with migration. The main self reported reason for return is family (53.5%) (Mejía et al. 2009). Within the Spanish community, two separate surveys in Madrid and

[48] In the ENMIR study, 13.3% cited adaptation and only 0.1% discrimination or xenophobia as reasons for return (Mejía et al. 2009).

[49] Venezuela bound Colombians are also the only ones to significantly report security reasons as the principal reason for migrating in the first place (23%) (BAC 2010a).

Perez y Geraldo (2009:9) identified 45.6% and 78.2% respectively as planning to return to Colombia.

Host Government Responses to Colombian Diasporas

Host governments often target specific populations to facilitate or expedite return. Each host government takes a decisively different approach with Venezuela and the US focusing on forced returns and Spain on voluntary return programs.

In 2009, 8,569 Colombians were officially forcefully returned from Venezuela, a 46% increase from 2008 (DAS 2010). The specific context of returns from Venezuela is much more immediate than forced returns from the US or Spain due to the hostility faced from Venezuelan migration officials and the low level of Colombian state presence along the border as well as the proximity of the two countries (Universidad de Pamplona, Colombia 2010). The highest percent of migrants lacking proper documentation come from the North Region (30% lack the proper documentation to enter the country to which they travel). As we have seen, this population typically migrates to Venezuela, which contributes to the forced returns seen from this country (Mejía et al. 2009). Coupled with an extremely high migratory flow of an estimated 14,600 annual returns (not counting daily movements), the Cúcuta – San Cristóbal border is the most active South American border area, and political instability in the region and between Venezuela and Colombia further hinders return (CAN n.d.). There are many reports of Venezuelan officials rounding up Colombians and taking them back to Colombia, which does not count as official deportations as it is not through any

formal system (Universidad de Pamplona, Colombia 2010).

The US has no official program that works on return issues, and the use of deportation has risen astronomically, doubling in the last 10 years with current daily removals at over 1,000 per day (Jin Lee 2010; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2011).[50] 28% of the BAC population from the US cites deportation or documentation issues as their reason for returning (BAC 2010a).

The Spanish government is the only of the three to use a carrot in place of (or at least along with) a stick and has taken steps towards creating an environment conducive to sustained return. Based on the concept of Co-Development, Spain's 2001 immigration law (Plan GRECO) puts forth a framework for more integrated return programs which have manifested in two bilateral agreements, one on temporary labor and one on social security and two voluntary return programs (Annan 2007). The bilateral agreements each contribute an important part to the character of return Colombian migration from Spain. The first was enacted in 2001 to regulate temporary migration and is implemented at the regional level where private sectors actors needing labor submit their requests to the Spanish regional government which in turn passes them on to the Colombian government for the actual recruitment. The second was initiated in 2008 and allows accrued social security benefits to be used in both countries; it works in conjunction with the second voluntary return program (Government of Spain; Annan 2007).

[50] Removals can be forced or voluntary, though each stems from a removal order which upon receipt the receiver can decide to have the US return them to their last country of residence bypassing court proceedings or take the case to court and face possible forced removal. The end result is usually the same, but with different legal consequences as being forcibly removed excludes the individual from reentry for a specific period of time (Immigration Equality 2011).

Of the two voluntary return programs PREVIE (Programa de Retorno Voluntario de Inmigrantes desde España) was the prototype. Begun in 2003 through an agreement between the Spanish Ministry of Labor and the IOM, the program takes place in Spain where immigrants of any status[51] are given information and orientation regarding return, help with necessary paperwork associated with returning, a paid flight home, pocket money for the trip and the possibility of start-up capital for microenterprises once back home or "reintegration" funds as well as possible follow-up in the home country.[52] Since its inception the program has assisted 952 Colombians mainly returning to el Valle (44%) and the Coffee Region (43%) (Pajares 2010; Ruiz Vallejo and Ceballos 2009; IOM 2009a).[53]

The second program was initiated in direct response to the economic crisis for unemployed immigrants within the unemployment system. Immigrants can apply and if selected, are returned what they have contributed in two parts: 40% of their social security and unemployment contribution is returned while still in Spain upon acceptance to the program and 60% once the immigrant has returned to their home country. Since its inception in late 2008 the program has assisted 1,990 Colombians, the second highest rate behind Ecuador (Pajares 2010).[54] Although only 9% of BAC returnees cite the program as the main reason for return, that

[51] The majority of immigrants participating in the program initially were irregular (Pajares 2010).
[52] 50 Euros are given for travel money with the possibility of 450 Euros per person for reintegration as well as 1,500 Euros per person (up to 5,000 total per family unit) as start-up capital for a business (IOM 2009a).
[53] 26% of these returned in 2009 due to the global economic recession that hit Spain particularly hard. Colombians are also the fourth largest group to participate in the program after Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil (Pajares 2010).
[54] Of the many conditions, the immigrant must be in their home country 30 days after receiving the first installment to receive the second. Participation in this program waives the right to request residency or work permits for the three years following the return of the unemployment benefits (Pajares 2010).

does not exclude others from having used it as a means, but not necessarily as a driving force behind their choice to return (BAC 2010a).

Institutional Interest and Frameworks

Institutional frameworks at the international, national, and local levels are important for understanding the BAC experience. Below the international, national and local institutional and policy environments in which the BAC was created are detailed as well as the relevant experiences brought by the IOM, MFA and the City which would guide their involvement in the BAC experience.

International Frameworks

At the international level, the Organization of American States has been influential in the coordination of return policies and experiences on a regional level. In 2010 the Special Committee on Migration Issues (of the OAS) held a workshop titled, "The Return of Migrants: Challenges and Opportunities" to "share and promote regional initiatives and programs to help migrants that come back to their countries of origin to easily reintegrate to the labor market and their communities" (OAS 2010). Although there are no major developments at the OAS level regarding either return migration or reintegration, the organization is aware that better coordination and harmonization of policies can lead to better protection of migrants and can leverage home country development.

At the regional level, although no direct work has been done in the Andean Community towards return and reintegration specifically, there are several initiatives underway which do coincide with the topic on both inter-regional and

extra-regional levels (migration within the Andean Community and migration between the Andean Community and the world). Currently conversations on a regional passport, broader economic integration, and border management are underway in an attempt to better coordinate migration activities between Andean countries as well as between the region and typical host countries in North America, Europe, and to some extent the Southern Cone. Particularly interesting, and undoubtedly linked to return migration (although not explicitly) is the process of *Andean Cooperation Mechanism on Consular Assistance and Protection and Migratory Matters* where Andean nationals abroad without access to their own country's diplomatic or consular representation can receive assistance from other Andean Community country's institutions (CAN 2011).

On the other hand, "the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM or Puebla Process) is a multilateral regional forum on international migration which involves countries that, from different perspectives, share a common problem, based on experiences relating situations of origin, transit and destination for migration" (Puebla Process 2011). Although Colombia only holds observer status, the goals and action plans of the Puebla Process speak directly to return and reintegration processes in home countries. Specifically, the Puebla Process is split into three areas of focus: Migration Policy and Management, Human Rights, and Migration and Development. Return migration has been touched upon in the first and last areas: within Migration Policy and Management return migration is included in three of the 11 objectives:

Objective 6: To strengthen coordination between governments and

> international organizations in processes relating to the return of migrants in an irregular status.
>
> Objective 7: To develop a regional strategy and approach to facilitate the return of migrants with irregular status while strengthening coordination between our authorities, in order to ensure a safe, dignified, and orderly return.
>
> Objective 10: Technical cooperation for the reintegration of returned migrants (RCM 2009).

The third objective (Migration and Development) is the most interesting as it speaks not only to return but also to reintegration. The objective has not been particularly developed, and has only one implementing action, "To develop projects for social and labor reinsertion of returned migrants (RCM 2009)," and only one activity, "To sponsor social reintegration projects (RCM 2009)." Although two pilot projects have been scheduled at the initiative of the US in El Salvador and Honduras, neither constitutes a full-fledged effort.

Despite these actions and activities, neither return nor reintegration is explicitly mentioned in the objectives of the Migration and Development area. In several instances the connection between returning migrants and proper reinsertion into countries of origin is emphasized, though without any practical or on-the-ground direction. Most activities are seminars, workshops, and campaigns geared more towards information sharing than to implementation, meaning there is no leadership being taking from the Puebla Process on reintegration—thus it is up to the individual states to do so.

International Organization for Migration

Internationally, IOM developed its first assisted voluntary return program in 1979

for Germany. Programs quickly followed for Belgium and the Netherlands. These originally simplistic programs involving only transportation arrangements have matured into projects that promote sustainable return[55] and now also include addressing the concerns of the community the returnee enters (IOM 2010a).

IOM Colombia currently works with several host countries to implement assisted voluntary return programs through its Migration Management Services division (MMS). This is the same division that works with BAC. Current AVRR programs are with Italy (Return assistance under the National Asylum Program), the United Kingdom (Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Program), Switzerland (Information Return Fund) and Spain (Voluntary Return Program - PREVIE) (IOM 2009b).

IOM has a long history of working with Reference and Opportunity/Guidance Centers (ROCs). ROCs were first introduced in 1992 in the context of disengagement and demobilization of former combatants. The model facilitates the flow of information to vulnerable populations about services available to them as well as accompaniment, follow-up and monitoring. By referring and accompanying beneficiaries through the necessary processes to obtain services, beneficiaries are empowered and do not become dependent on the ROC.

In Colombia the model was applied to ex-combatant child and youth soldiers (denominated CROJ), for those who had graduated from the government's demobilization program. CROJ programs were funded by the United States

[55] "Sustainable returns" are defined by the IOM as the "continued presence of the returnee in the [home country]" (IOM 2010a, 23).

Agency for International Development and the governments of Italy and Canada[56] (L. Medina 2010).

IOM Colombia has also implemented the Temporary and Circular Labor Migration program (TCLM).[57] Seasonal workers work for nine months in developed countries (typically Spain) and then return to Colombia. With support from the EC and in coordination with various social organizations IOM has supported the mobilization of approximately 4,100 temporary workers to Catalonia (IOM Colombia 2010).

National Frameworks

The Colombian government has taken several steps towards including migration and globalization into visioning processes and development plans, as well as creating a plethora of institutions to address the matter. In 2008 the Integrated Migration Policy (PIM) was passed, which also both created institutions to address migration and helped existing institutions consolidate their service offerings and coordinate with other agencies.

Colombia Vision 2019 is a discussion created by the previous Uribe government consisting of a visioning process for the country for 2019, when the country will celebrate 200 years of political independence. Specifically recognizing the need to design a foreign policy in accord with a transforming world the process speaks

[56] IOM has implemented similar programs in Mozambique, Angola, Mali, Uganda, Guatemala, Haiti, the Philippines, Kosovo, Timor, Cambodia, Congo Brazzaville (Republic of Congo), Guinea, Sierra Leone and Indonesia and have included women, children and members of ethnic groups (L. Medina 2010).

[57] Since 2001, 6,000 Colombian nationals have benefited from temporary migration programs with Spanish regions within Bilateral Labor Agreements between Spain and Colombia (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2011a). TCLM is one such program.

directly to the need take advantage of Colombia's human capital (i.e., migrants) (National Planning Department 2010a).

Presented by the current Santos government, the 2010-2014 development plan "Prosperity for All" outlines the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the central actor for the creation of a national migration policy which should include the implementation of proper data gathering tools, migration management, social network creation, human capital attraction and the creation of services for migrants including strategies to facilitate and accompany return (National Planning Department 2010b).

Created in 2003, the National Inter-Sectoral Migration Commission (Comisión Nacional Intersectorial de Migración) represents the perceived need on part of the government for better coordination. The commission is made up of representatives from the Ministries of Defense, Social Protection, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Security, Planning, Higher Education, Colombian Institute of Educational Credit, Technical Studies Abroad and counselor services. Under revision are the inclusion of the Ministries of National Education, Culture, Environment, Housing and Development and Family Welfare. Among the many responsibilities, the commission looks to coordinate the actions of all actors involved to create a more efficient, effective, and relevant policy context for Colombian migration. This includes policy creation, investigation and research, and follow-up activities (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2011b).

Parliamentary representatives can voluntarily participate in the Congressional Ad-

Hoc Migration Commission (Comisión Accidental Migratoria del Congreso de la República – CAM) which serves as a body to direct studies and policy briefs both towards creating more comprehensive action towards migration within the parliamentary system. The CAM has also achieved a general acceptance of migration as a topic to be explored and handled by the government, as well as acceptance by the general public that migration creates more complex economic and social consequences than is traditionally thought, thus necessitating appropriate state (and civil) action (Mejía and Perilla 2008).

Run by the National Statistics Department, the Inter-Institutional Migration Statistics Committee (Comité Interinstitucional de Estadísticas de Migración) focuses on "creating an inter-institutional technical space to design, implement, integrate, and consolidate statistical projects as well as the diffusion of results to the appropriate entities so as to be able to appropriately complete their functions (Mejía and Perilla 2008)." Other supporting agencies include the Ministry of Security, Foreign Affairs, Commerce, Industry and Tourism and the National Bank, among others. This organism has been the most important for the creation and diffusion of migration statistics (IOM Colombia 2011).

In an attempt to integrate all the current unconnected policies, as well as create a framework under which all government agencies can come together and form coherent actions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs created the Integrated Migration Policy (PIM in Spanish) passed in 2008. The process has three phases: 1) policy creation in coordination with think tanks and universities; 2) diffusion of policy

draft with the Colombian diaspora. Meetings were held with Colombian communities in Quito, Ecuador, New York, USA and Madrid, Spain as well as with other government actors and civil society. After discussions, recommendations were added to the policy draft for the creation of the Integrated Migration Policy. The final (third) phase was the institutionalization of the policy through the National Council for Economic and Social Policy which officially supported the proposal as CONPES 3603.

The final policy has five themes, one of which is "Positive Return."[58] Within the Positive Return Plan are five strategies: 1) immediate attention for returnees, 2) capacity building for labor market insertion, 3) capacity building for financial resource access, 4) return of high-skilled human capital, and 5) programmed return (Vallejo 2010). The strategies can also be separated into different timeframes. Immediate attention for returnees address short-term issues, labor market linkages/insertion are short and medium term strategies, while high-skilled human capital return, entrepreneurship programs and programmed return are medium and long term strategies (L. Medina 2010).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Between 2002 and 2006 an overhaul of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs included a more precise definition of its tasks and responsibilities (IOM Colombia 2010). Currently tasked with "creating and directing Colombian migration policy (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2004)," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is

[58] The five themes are the Abroad Community Plan, Services for Colombians and their Families Abroad, Orderly and Regulated Migration, Positive Return, and the Observatory for Colombian International Migration.

the institution in charge of the creation, coordination, and implementation of all Colombian migration policies.

MFA links with host countries concerning return migration are few. The MFA has a social security agreement with Spain that allows Colombians (since 2008) to add their contributions made in Colombia to those made in Spain—however neither the US nor Venezuela has this agreement currently (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2011a). With Venezuela there are considerable joint economic and social development policies for their shared border, but no specific mention of migration (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2011c).

Created in 2004 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Colombia Nos Une (Colombia Unites Us) creates institutional support for BAC within the MFA. The program strives to connect with and provide services for Colombians living abroad. Colombia Nos Une led the design and implementation of the recent PIM and is the body within the Ministry in charge of its implementation (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2011d; Mejía and Perilla 2008).

Housed in the MFA Department of Immigration, Consular and Citizen Services, Colombia Nos Une is based on six strategies: the Community Abroad Plan, adequacy of services to Colombians living abroad, the Positive Return Plan (PRP), Portal RedEsColombia, orderly and regulated migration and the International Colombian Migration Observatory (Red Alma Mater 2011). Most salient for BAC is the PRP which is derived from the PIM.

The PRP takes a holistic approach to migrants. This translates into attention on different aspects: support and counseling, physical health, family insertion, social and labor, training facilities and immediate attention.[59] The PRP looks to implement reference centers for migrants (called Reference and Guidance Centers for International Returnees – Centros de Referencia y Orientación para Retornados del Exterior – CRORE), in the capitals of the departments with the highest migration rates to provide these services as well as work with departmental governments to include migration in policies (Botero de la Torre 2009; Sos Paisa 2009).[60]

Although an informal inter-agency and inter-institutional body, Alianza Pais merits mention. Created by Colombia Nos Une just after its inception, Alianza Pais is an informal inter-institutional body made up of governmental, academic and civil society organizations working on migration issues, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IOM, the Bank of the Republic of Colombia, money exchange houses (casas de cambio), academic networks (such as ALMA MATER), local NGOs and UNFPA. Alianza Pais has been a key network in the implementation of the first studies in Colombia on migration and remittances (Mejía and Perilla 2008).

Within all these agencies and institutions the leader of the BAC process is Colombia Nos Une. As it also is in charge of implementing the PIM, the program

[59] PRP has five activities: the creation of reference centers, training to facilitate labor market insertion, technical training and guidance for access to credit, incentivizing the return of highly-skilled workers, medium and long term programmed return (Botero de la Torre 2009).
[60] Since 2006 Colombia Nos Une has been working with department and local governments to create migration policies, and have done so in the Eje Cafetero, Atlántico and Bolívar departments as well as the City of Bogota (Botero de la Torre 2009).

coordinates with the other actors to ensure proper implementation, efficiency and monitoring.

Local Frameworks

An understanding of the importance of migration in the Bogota context in the creation of BAC comes in part from the national bodies dealing with the issues mentioned above. Then Bogota Mayor Samuel Moreno was a Colombian senator from 1991 to 2005, during which time he served at coordinator of the CAM described above. This experience led him to understand both the importance of migration as it relates to Colombia as well as the institutional support the national government provides. In 2008 Moreno was elected mayor of Bogota, where he quickly set about constructing the institutional support at the municipal level for what he saw to be the proper treatment of migration as it related to Bogota (Daza 2010).

Bogota has both local policies and public institutions to handle migration. The recently passed local migration policy (La Política Pública Distrital Migratoria) was created in coordination with the IOM and the Colombia Nos Une program so as to be the final coordination of policy for migration. In its draft form the policy looked to combat two problems. First, growing migration trends have not been accompanied by the growth of institutional support for those migrating, and therefore second, the public sector has not been able to provide the adequate or sufficient services to migrants (Mejía 2009).

Moreno's first creations were the Department of International Relations through

which he met with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Governor of the Department of Cundinamarca[61] regarding the creation of the Migration Observatory. Created in 2008, the International Relations Department in the Bogota municipal government has been a new organizational tool for coordinating international cooperation efforts on the local level with goals of capitalizing on international support as an effective way to combat poverty and poor health as well as being able to strengthen local institutions necessary for human and urban development (Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2008a). Tasked with designing and implementing local policies relating to international affairs, establishing and maintaining communication with international actors and the Bogota population abroad. Special attention is given to the context of a globalized society in which Bogota operates.

The Department has two sub-departments, International Affairs and International Exposure. International Affairs is mainly concerned with the development and implementation of policies and strategies that channel international community actions into the city. This sub-department works closely with both regional and national government agencies, mainly the Ministry of Planning, as well as with bilateral and multilateral organizations.

International Exposure takes a different approach. Tasked with planning, coordinating, and implementing projects that spread the image of Bogota as a "human, modern, competitive, supportive, inclusive and integrated world city"

[61] Cundinamarca is one of Colombia's 32 Departments. While its capital is Bogota D.F., Bogota is also a "Federal District" as the seat of the national government, and thus is administratively separate from the Departmental system.

(Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2008b). The sub-department, therefore, acts similarly to an international advertising agency for the city. It also focuses on representing Bogota in events, forums, seminars and cultural, political, economic and social spaces that allow the city access to the international scene (Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2008b). Thus while the International Affairs sub-department focuses on channeling existing projects and working with existing relationships, the International Exposure sub-department looks more towards creating new relationships and defining Bogota as a global city within an international context.

Created by the Municipality of Bogota, given that Bogota is one of the obligatory places migrants must pass through to leave the country for international destinations, the Integrated Migration Observatory (Observatorio Integral de Migraciones) has three main actions: 1) to generate appropriate information to allow the local government to understand the needs and provide services to citizens of Bogota in relation to migration, 2) to participate in policy discussions and contribute to the creation of state and local level migration policies, and 3) establish alliances and agreements with like-minded institutions of local, national and international character (Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2011). This initiative—created through the Positive Bogota policy (in 2008)—was strongly supported by Colombia Nos Une and the IOM.[62] Then Mayor Samuel Morenos stated at the Observatory's opening that, "Migration policy must contain four key

[62] Through beginning research and the construction of the Observatory, Bogota reached out to the IOM for technical assistance. Most of these institutional creations were financed with help from the IOM. Preliminary research by the Observatory made it clear that return migration needed to be addressed (Daza 2010).

areas: prevent mass migrations originating from structural crisis, promote the full exercise of the rights of Bogota emigrants and foreign immigrants, create incentives to link Bogota emigrants to the dynamics of the city and provide public attention to migrant families (Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2008c)." The Observatory is headed by the Bogota International Relations Department with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the IOM, various civil society organizations and the academic sector (Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2008d).

Bogota also incorporated migration issues into its 2008-2012 Economic, Social, Environmental and Public Works Plan "Positive Bogota: For a Better Life." It strives to make Bogota a "Global City" through programs such as "Competitive and International Bogota," and "Bogotanos in the World," which have the goal of creating an incentive system for insertion of Bogotanos—people from Bogota—in the dynamics of the city and assist families of Bogota migrants (BAC 2009).

Bienvenido a Casa

Managing return migration is an important component of sustainable development in Colombia because over 4 million Colombians—approximately 10% of the population—currently live abroad. The Welcome Home (Bienvenido A Casa – BAC) program was launched in June 2009 to ameliorate the negative effects of return migration, and to turn return migration into a resource for local and national development. The program has since been jointly implemented by the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the City of Bogota (the City) initially as a pilot program.

Below I describe the different interests and levels of preparedness each implementing institution brought to the creation of BAC before looking at the program itself.

BAC was conceived from these three institutions and their previous policies. Each institution sees it as an extension of their own policy or previous programs—IOM a return program, the MFA a CRORE from PRP and the City as a manifestation of Positive Bogota. BAC has two phases. The first includes the initial planning stages and the first five months of operation. From there BAC closes for a month to restructure, thus starting phases two. The phases were not planned or envisioned, but a measure taken as the program was veering off course.

Phase One

The first meeting to discuss Bogota's local migration policy was the 5th and 6th of December, 2008, which again included the three main actors: IOM, the MFA, and the City. Within these primary discussions for policy directions came the interest in an R&R program. The prototype itself came in part from a model IOM had used in other countries for returning migrants (Daza 2010; S. Puerta 2010).

A technical committee comprised of representatives from the IOM, the MFA and the City was formed to design the program. This committee led to several agreements, formalized in an agreement signed on May 7th, 2009 with the three institutions agreeing to support the program technically, financially and specifying the division of responsibilities. The signing of the agreement (and

therefore the design of the program) was rushed to coincide with the visit of William Lacy Swing, Director General of the IOM, to Colombia so he could sign the agreement himself. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jaime Bermúdez Merizalde (2008-2010), was also present at the event, a rare occasion for a local policy (Daza 2010).

The initial agreement was based on the following five components: 1) immediate care and assistance to Colombian migrants returning from abroad whose rights are highly vulnerable; 2) legal guidance and direction to Colombian migrants returning from abroad, in order to provide comprehensive care in immigration matters; 3) advice and management to facilitate the integration of migrants on the labor market, as well as in the independent production sector; 4) psychosocial counseling to returning migrants in vulnerable situations, and guidance and links to health and education programs; and 5) management assistance to school linkages for returning school-age migrants (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2009).

The program itself had a general objective of facilitating the reintegration of returning Colombians by recognizing their experiences, knowledge, and skills obtained abroad with the goal of investing these new abilities in the country's overall development. The program also has five specific objectives which speak more to the services provided: 1) to promote the protection of the rights and fundamental liberties of returning Colombians; 2) to alleviate the vulnerable conditions of return; 3) to identify the experiences, skills and knowledge of

returning Colombians and to promote local development processes; 4) to give psychosocial, legal, and income generating services to returnees; and 5) to support the design and implementation of public policies, integration projects and the prevention of irregular migration (L. Medina 2010).

The program officially opened its doors almost two months later, on June 25th, 2009 and began what would become the first phase of implementation until December 10th 2009 (just over five months). A large opening event was held along with a substantial communication campaign using several mediums to attract attention and diffuse the program opening among local communities. The program was housed in a municipal building and was to be staffed with a director who would be an employee of the IOM, and with institutional "linking" positions for programs run through the MFA and the City, each of which would be employees of the MFA and the City, respectively. The director would report to a technical committee comprised of two to three representatives from each implementing entity meeting every two months. Meetings requiring urgent attention could be handled virtually, or special sessions could be convened (S. Puerta 2010; Daza 2010).

This initial phase—come December—would be used to tailor the program to the specific context and needs of the return population. There were several holdups in this first phase, however. There was difficulty in finding adequate staff, and eventually the decisions made regarding staffing proved to be more politically motivated than based on merit. High staff turnover would continue to plague the

program throughout its first year (S. Puerta 2010; Daza 2010; Murillo 2010).

BAC initially targeted Colombians abroad with intention to return or those who had already returned to Colombia after January 1st, 2009. This cut-off date was established with the logic that those having returned before the date would already have reintegrated. Beneficiaries also cannot have a serious offense record in a host country (a crime that both the host country and Colombia view as a serious offense) (S. Puerta 2010). As there was no more specific targeting for services, returnees with no serious offenses having returned after January 1st, 2009 could access services regardless of their income level, skill or education level, type of return (forced or voluntary) or reason for initial emigration.

Despite program design, the initial service offering was not complete. Due in part to lack of staffing, only economic and legal components of the program were implemented. The economic component involved only workforce linkages, with BAC working closely with the SENA[63] and Mission Bogota.[64]

Phase Two

After just over five months of operation, on December 10th, 2009, BAC closed its doors for internal revision and restructuring. Two new service areas were created, humanitarian and psychosocial assistance, and there was a general strengthening and restructuring of the other components. Previously designed components that were never implemented were also reevaluated and implementation plans were

[63] The National Learning Institute is a public national Colombian institution dedicated to providing technical degrees and workforce development (SENA 2011).
[64] A program of the Municipal Institute of Social Economy, Mission Bogota employs residents from stratus one and two (Colombia uses "stratus" to define tax rates and welfare benefits. There are six stratums, one is poor and six is rich) (Instituto para la Economia Social 2011).

proposed. On January 15th, 2010—over a month later—the program was reopened.

The new BAC program was split into six units: humanitarian assistance, legal assistance, psychosocial assistance, income generation, communications and administration. The previous technical committee and director positions were maintained but the previous staff positions dedicated to being institutional links to the three implementing entities were changed to correspond to the different services provided by the program.

The restructuring also improved the target population—a topic that had been circulating within BAC, the IOM and the City. Slight modifications were made with the introduction of a more solid definition of "vulnerability." Initially there was no working definition of the term within BAC itself. Although a publication on the city's website did initially define vulnerability as "returnees without family, work, or economic support to continue their travel to their final destination or to economically and socially reintegrate into Bogota," the definition was not used uniformly in BAC or the other two implementing entities (Alcalde Mayor de Bogota, D.C. 2009).

The new definition of vulnerability came from a 2001 United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) *International Seminar on the different expressions of social vulnerability in Latin America and the Caribbean* and was subsequently defined as "the risk or probability of the individual, household or community to be hurt, injured or damaged given changes

or permanence of external or internal situations"[65] (BAC n.d.). Given this new definition and based on the work done in BAC's first phase seven types of vulnerability were identified: deportees (forced returns); victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children; returnees who were homeless while abroad; ethnic and cultural groups;[66] pregnant or nursing mothers; elderly; disabled (BAC n.d.).

In the first year of implementation, BAC provided services to 391 returnees. International migrants returning by air (namely from the US and Spain) arrive into Bogota, the capital, regardless of their final destination or place of origin in Colombia. Of the 391 returnees, 44% came from the US, 21% from Spain and 10% from Venezuela, with 66%, 65% and 68% being men, respectively. Economic situation is the highest reason for initial emigration, with family being second for the US and Spain and security for Venezuela. Economic reasons are also the first reason cited for return. While 17% of returnees from the US were deported, an additional 9% returned because of documentation issues (this latter number barely reaches 1% for Spain or Venezuela). Overall, 9% of returnees were over 60 years old, with the highest (17%) coming from Venezuela, then the US (11%) and Spain (6%) (BAC 2010b).

[65] The definition is taken speficically from: Busso, Gustavo. "Vulnerabilidad social: nociones e implicaciones de para políticas para Latinoamérica a inicios del siglo XXI". Articulo sin revisión editorial. Seminario Internacional "Las diferentes expresiones de vulnerabilidad en América Latina y el Caribe". Santiago de Chile. 20 y 21 de junio de 2001. Santiago de Chile: Comisión Económica para América latina y el Caribe (CEPAL), 2001. Pg. 8.

[66] Officially 10% of Colombia's population belongs to ethnic or cultural groups, while the NGO community believes the number to be over 25% (U.S. Dept of State 2011).

BAC Organizational and Service Re-Design

BAC internal structure was also redesigned, along with the services provided. Two service areas which did not exist before were created (Humanitarian Assistance and Psychosocial Assistance, the latter of which provided both new services and housed some of the original services) while the income generation area was reinforced and expanded. Two non-service areas were also created, communication (public relations) and administration.

Humanitarian Assistance

New needs assessments carried out by BAC identified the needs of vulnerable populations, specifically, personal hygiene, food, protection from changing climates, shelter and transport to final destinations. Given these needs, the humanitarian assistance area was divided into four components: reception, kits, shelter and transportation/communication (BAC n.d.).

Continual conversations with the Department of Security (DAS) regarding facilitating the reception of beneficiaries remains unsolved, but the newly proposed idea was to establish a presence in the Bogota airport and to work with Colombian immigration officials to sensitize and refer returnees to the program. Although this was never implemented, a stronger rapport was built with DAS.

Initially kits were put together in an ad-hoc fashion, and did not meet international sphere standards.[67] Upon restructuring BAC, three kits (hygiene, food, clothing)

[67] The Sphere Project is a voluntary initiative bringing together humanitarian agencies to improve the quality of humanitarian assistance and accountability of humanitarian actors. The sphere handbook gives internationally recognized minimum standards for humanitarian responses (The Sphere Project 2011).

were developed in accordance with sphere standards to properly address the needs of returnees.

The hygiene kit is designed to prevent sickness and infections in returnees originating from host, transit, and home environments and are designed with four perspectives: gender, age, ability, and identity. The gender focus differentiates between men, women, and pregnant and nursing women, and is present throughout the other three perspectives. Specific kits are available for children, teenage girls, and teenage boys, as well as for the elderly over 60. Kits are also designed for handicapped returnees, as well as returnees belonging to ethnic or cultural groups.[68]

The food kit is designed to ensure a balanced diet to the vulnerable population to reduce the risk of malnutrition due to an unbalanced diet or lack of caloric intake. Based on definitions by the Ministry of Social Protection, food kits are prepared for three groups: those under two year of age, those over two years of age and pregnant or nursing women.

The clothing kit is designed to protect vulnerable returnees from inclement weather.[69] Currently the clothing kits include only blankets. Although some clothing kits have been purchased, the majority are expected to come from private

[68] The hygiene kits selected cost $22,000 COP per kit (roughly $11 USD per kit). BAC initially bought 289 ($6,358,000 COP/$3,240 USD). However, because their purchase did not follow appropriate procurement procedures (a budget was not created, nor terms of references for the purchases), they had to be entered as "donations" from the IOM to the City. Subsequently, the majority of the kits were "misplaced" after being transferred to someone's personal residence (BAC n.d.).

[69] To define the clothing kit the climatic conditions of Bogota were analyzed. Maximum temperatures are 67° F, with minimum temperatures of 46° F. Average temperatures are 56° F. The overall climate in Bogotá is cold, damp and rainy thus presenting the risk of the spread of diseases and respiratory infections (BAC n.d.).

companies through corporate social responsibility programs. If a returnee is staying more than one day, some shelters can provide second-hand clothes. The Secretary of Social Integration already provides specialized kits to pregnant or nursing women.

Delivery of kits is preceded by a brief interview with the returnee where BAC identifies which group they belong to, if they have the economic ability to buy the items themselves, and the condition of items if they have them. BAC also identifies dietary restrictions and respiratory conditions in respect to food and clothing kits. Although BAC identifies a need for the kit, its receipt is voluntary and beneficiaries accepting kits sign proof of receipt. Actual delivery of the food kits is done by the shelters (BAC n.d.).

Temporary shelter is provided for up to three days to returnees. BAC has established official relationships with five shelters spread geographically throughout Bogota. Each shelter has a different focus such as health or families. Previous relationships with shelters were ad-hoc and last minute, leading to complications in the financial relationships. Shelters are tasked with the distribution of the clothing and food kits (BAC n.d.).

Along with the distribution of kits, at the behest of BAC the shelters also provide local transport (in the form of pre-paid bus cards) so returnees can attend to administrative and bureaucratic matters related to the services they are attempting to access. Transportation to the returnee's final destination is also provided, and relationships with select bus companies have been established to receive an

institutional discount and to facilitate the booking process.

Communication services (in the form of pre-paid phone cards) are also given to returnees and are distributed by shelters. This allows returnees to make the necessary calls for their processes in Colombia (they also have the option of either using phones at BAC or working with BAC staff to make calls) and to communicate with family and friends (in Colombia or in the host country) to update them on their whereabouts and situation. This is especially necessary for forced returns, who often have been unable to communicate with many friends and family regarding their location and current condition (BAC n.d.).

Psychosocial and Legal Assistance

Psychosocial assistance (although included in the initial program design it was not initially implemented) aims to socially integrate returnees through access to social services: social security, housing, education, culture, and recreation. The area also seeks to establish social networks for returnees.

Returnees are first taken through all the services they have access to, and together with the BAC social worker make a decision about what services would be most appropriate for the given returnee's case. Upon choosing which avenues to pursue, the social worker accompanies the returnee through institutional connections which facilitate their receipt of said services. The services are all administered on a district level, and BAC has developed connections with a plethora of public, private, and non-profit institutions outlined below.

As certain programs come from new international agreements, some national ministries are also involved. For instance, the Ministry of Social Protection held a briefing for 25 BAC beneficiaries regarding the social security agreement with Spain (BAC 2010e).

Income Generation Services

The income generation services were also improved and have been described by the director as the most sought after services (Tribuna Abierta 2009). As before the area worked solely in employment linkages (mainly directly through the City of Bogota), the new area contains four components: entrepreneurship, a project bank, employment, and monitoring.

Under the entrepreneurial/start-up component self-selecting return migrants receive entrepreneurial training run by local academic institutions, access to seed capital (approximately equivalent to $1,800 USD)[70] and access to a project bank. The project bank is a compilation of all returnee productive projects, along with the necessary business networks for the City.

During the first phase—before the entrepreneurial component was technically implemented—16 beneficiaries were referred to a government run business start-up training program (BAC 2010e).

During the first phase a total of 64 returnees were interested in the entrepreneurial component, 42% coming from the US, 17% from Spain and 9% from Venezuela.

[70] In agreement with the Colombian Foreign Trade Bank (BANCOLDEX), the MFA launched a special credit line for return migrants to leverage their productive initiatives (Sos Paisa 2009).

80% of them were men. 87% were between 30 and 60 years old (36% between 40 and 50). 45% had less than secondary education, 33% held undergrad degrees and 22% held advanced degrees. Overall the men were more educated (BAC 2010c). Once the component was implemented, 23 beneficiaries graduated in the first class in October, 2010. (Red Es Colombia 2010).

Projects are chosen for funding based on a viability test administered by the implementing agency based on 11 weighted criteria, as dictated by the MFA's PRP. Higher weight is given to business plans with differentiating aspects of the business idea indicated through innovation and competitive advantages. Average weight is placed on criteria of the level and rigor of research done on the business opportunity, professional capacity of the applicant, personal capacity of the applicant, current market conditions, financial feasibility, environmental sustainability, and compatibility and symbiosis with other businesses. Lesser weight is placed on criteria of regional decentralization, technology and knowledge transfer, and employment generation (Plan Retorno Positivo n.d.).

The employment component is similar to that of before, giving workforce training through both public and academic institutions and linking returnees to local employment through public programs or private recruitment agencies. Monitoring activities are coordinated with both the entrepreneurial and employment components. Returnees receiving start-up grants are provided one year of technical assistance for their businesses, while returnees following the employment path are given less.

Communication/Administration Areas

The communication and administrative areas do not provide direct services to returnees. The communications area fills a void from the first phase of program implementation by designing, implementing, and managing the programs marketing, public relations and information system. The administrative area oversees the daily administration of the office as well as program finances and archives.

Implementation Structure and Institutional Connections

BAC is currently administered by the IOM, MFA and the City. For the IOM the program is run through Migration Management Services (MMS), which is the department that "articulates global strategies, policies and responses across all IOM's operational services to Member States, and provides advice and expertise to IOM's Field Missions and other functional units on program policy, development, implementation and monitoring" (IOM 2010b). The department focuses on six areas: Assisted Returns, Counter-Trafficking, Mass Information, Migration Health, Movement and Technical Cooperation on Migration. For the MFA, BAC is administered through the Colombia Nos Une program. This program, as noted above, has several other programs that compliment BAC—specifically Red Es Colombia, Plan Comunidad and Red de Consulados. For the City the link is with the Department of International Relations for administration and the District Service Network for the provision of services.

Because BAC is a reference center more than a service provider, its connections

with other institutions is paramount. As BAC works on several levels, its institutional partners are varied. Overall, BAC's national connections work towards the creation of policy, the BAC model expansion, and enhanced migration data collection/utilization.[71] Local government connections are more geared towards the actual provision of services.[72] Private sector connections mainly help with the income generation and transportation services.[73] NGO and international community connections typically focus on the provision of social services and assisted return programs.[74] BAC has created a network of national and local public services as well as connections with the private, NGO, and international community sectors.

Funding

Funding for BAC is distributed between the three implementing actors. For the pilot year (June 2009 – May 2010) the BAC budget was 720,000,000 COP. Of that total, 36% was contributed in cash and 64% in kind. The majority of the in kind support was on behalf of the City and was in office set-up costs. For the first year both the City and MFA contributed 38% of the total budget with IOM filling the remaining 22%.

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[71] On a national level BAC Works with the Ministries of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Housing, and Social Protection as well as the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation, Public Defender Office, Office of Taxes and Customs, Special Administrative Unit of Civil Aeronautics, and Administrative Departments (DAS, DANSOCIAL and DANE) to achieve its service and policy goals (L. Medina 2010).

[72] Locally BAC Works mainly with District Secretaries: Government, Health, Housing, Education, Social Integration, Economic Development and Mobility as well as with the District Institute of Tourism and the Institute for Solidarity Economy (L. Medina 2010).

[73] Currently BAC works with the El Dorado International Airport (OPAIN SA), Terminal Transport SA, Airlines (AIRES), the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá, Family Compensation (CAFAM, Colsubsidio) recruitment and outsourcing agencies (Manpower) and universities (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, School of Business Administration – EAN) (L. Medina 2010).

[74] BAC has NGO connections with development focused NGOs (Asociación Manos Amigas, ISCOD, AESCO, AICODE, APECOL), Shelters (Hogar Refugio San Bernabé, La Maloka, Fundación Kolping Colombia), and organizations of solidarity economy (Mutual Solidaria) (L. Medina 2010).

The second year budget was significantly lower—only 44% of the pilot year. Table 2 shows the breakdown of costs, and which entity supported it. Distribution between the three entities is more equitable, once start-up costs have been taken care of, though IOM's contribution is still the smallest.

Table 2: BAC May 2010 - May 2011 Budget

Budget Line Item (May 2010 - May 2011)	% of total	Counterpart (%)		
		MFA	*The City*	*IOM*
Human Resources	66	42	44	15
Office Equipment	1	0	0	100
Transportation	5	0	0	100
Operating Expenses	5	0	43	57
Humanitarian Assistance	10	0	0	100
Life Building Projects	5	23	0	77
Institutional Strengthening / Model Extension	7	100	0	0
Project Monitoring, Set-up and Evaluation	2	0	6	0
Total COP	323,145,080	36%	33%	31%

Source: BAC May 2010 – May 2011 Budget. Authors calculations.

Extension

Extension of the reference center model is currently anticipated differently by each implementing entity of BAC. For the City of Bogota, their understanding is they will eventually administer the program themselves, but will still receive funding from the national government through the national migration policy budget. The IOM would like to expand the center to nine other regions—chosen for their levels of high return—while the implementing entity with the most interest in the programmatic extension is the MFA (who completely funds the institutional strengthening and model extension budget line).

As stated above, a goal of the PRP is the incorporation of migration issues in

departmental policies, and the creation of reference centers in all department capitals. Colombian consulates in the US currently advertise several centers already in existence: Bogota D.F. (Bienvenido a Casa); Pereira, Risaralda (Bienvenido a tu Tierra); Cali, Valle del Cauca (Centro de Atención a la Migración); Cúcuta, Norte de Santander (Centro de Atención a la Migración); and Medellín, Antioquia (América España Solidaria y Cooperación) (Colombian Consulate: Atlanta 2011).

BAC Conclusion

The Colombian diaspora is in fact quite a complex and nuanced transnational community. The three diasporas vary greatly not only in the makeup of the communities, but also in the factors and mechanisms of return migration. Venezuela's close proximity creates the most dynamic situation with high security concerns, while the US context focuses mainly on removal proceedings and job opportunities. It is the Spanish case that provides the most interesting analysis for looking at return migration. Although the Colombian community in Spain is relatively new and not well established, the two governments have done the most to create linkages between the two countries. As these relationships are still quite new further analysis will be needed to see the effects of these programs. On the one hand they could increase migrant agency in their individual decisions regarding their migrations, and on the other, could potentially contribute to the formation of a different type of immigrant community with very different roots and integration than with other diasporas. Whichever the case, these differences

need to be acknowledged, understood, and considered in future decisions regarding diaspora relations or return migration.

The context for BAC is positive. Although the international level does not provide much guidance towards return or reintegration policies, the Puebla Process does specifically mention a desire to move towards that direction. Colombia (in no relation to the Puebla Process) is well on its way to doing so. Future looking processes such as Colombia Vision 2019 and the Prosperity for All development plan both look hopefully towards the future, bringing in return migration as a strong ally in the country's development. Grounding these processes is the newly approved PIM, which spells out how and when these two larger processes can be met.

The institutional set-up is also promising. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs with its new organization has created Colombia Nos Une, which since its inception in 2004 has been the driving force behind the implementation of the PIM, and therefore the BAC program. The local Bogota level has also undergone significant changes for the better. With Moreno as Mayor a focus on migration has taken root, with institutional changes and policies to back it up. A new municipal department (International Relations) and a local migration policy have created a hospitable environment for programs such as BAC.

The Colombian experience with R&R programs is on the forefront of migration policy due to its innovative program design, implementing and funding structure and a sustainable exit-strategy. The Colombian context showed a clear need for

R&R services, and through various channels the international community and government of Colombia were able to identify shared goals for return migration.

The three implementing agencies all brought different resources and experiences to the creation of BAC. As an international organization the IOM has experience in return migration throughout the world, the MFA brings an understanding of the Colombian migration context and the City recently underwent institutional changes which allowed for the implementation of BAC.

The MFA and IOM have each taken the lead in different areas. It is evident that BAC would not exist without the previous emphasis placed on migration on a national level—led by the MFA through it's Colombia Nos Une program. Other national initiatives led to a solid understanding of the return migration context in Colombia, allowing targeted and pre-meditated interventions to be created. The IOM brought technical skills—and was asked time and again to provide technical support on national and local levels—and was able to draw on it's vast knowledge of R&R programs and migration policy from its work internationally and in Colombia. The precursors to the BAC model can be clearly seen in past IOM programs. The City was able—through both leadership and the ability to collaborate with other actors—to also provide a strong institutional base for the creation of BAC.

The program was not—and is not—perfect. The design phase was rushed, and a host of problems have been identified, some addressed, others not. The program faltered the most in implementation. A well conceived program is quite different

from a well implemented program. Not enough understanding went into the actual constraints the program would face when implemented—the design phase was too theoretical. Good measures were taken, however, to address the identified problems, and it is a positive sign that early on the three agencies were able to place long-term goals ahead of short political gains and properly address the problems. This is particularly important as BAC is the most developed CRORE, slated to be the prototype for national expansion.

Analysis and Conclusions

BAC is Colombia's response to a changing migration system. As a country, Colombia had been exploring the issues of migration for several years creating a complex system of policies, institutions, and conversations around the connections between migration and development and between return and reintegration.

The on-the-ground outcome of these policies and institutions is the CRORE model, exemplified by the first center: BAC in Bogota. This chapter explores the difficulties both inherent in the BAC experience, as well as those that rose from its implementation before placing BAC in the context of other current R&R programs and R&R theory.

Difficulties with BAC

Despite its novelty, BAC is not without its obstacles. I address three distinct issues: design flaws, implementation flaws, and systemic barriers.

Design Flaws

Design flaws are a direct result of a rushed design phase. Hurrying to coincide with the visit of William Swing, the design of BAC was pushed through and its doors were opened prematurely. Aside from the experience the IOM brought from its other return programs, a thorough assessment of other programs worldwide, or even regionally, was not completed. No indicators were fully developed, leaving no way to rigorously evaluate the program (or provide

substantive reports) complicating both the BAC experience as well as hindering the expansion of the CRORE model.

A main problem was beneficiary targeting. While there were certain populations that were explicitly excluded (those with serious criminal records), there was not explicit targeting. This led to both a wide array of returnees seeking services, all with a variety of needs. This I believe led to the implementation problem described below of a slowly created institutional network. A more targeted population would have allowed BAC to solidify its important networks first. BAC should target forced returns as they have more immediate needs, and develop their networks to better reach this population (stronger relationship with the airport, DAS, and consulates).

Once BAC underwent restructuring there was a more concerted effort to target beneficiaries, but there was still no differentiation or targeting measures for returnees from different social or economic classes except for emergency services—while BAC is entitled to serving returning migrants regardless of the other resources they have available, a more targeted group would allow them to better tailor the program.

As mentioned in chapter three, R&R programs can have a presence in three locations: host country, travel, and the home country. In its design BAC only focuses on the last: home country. Pre-departure services should be provided, including information to migrants. Although BAC does provide a limited version of this service, it could be done through consulates and IOM offices and with

more detailed information. BAC should produce brochures regarding typically asked questions and updates on conditions in Colombia and regularly update consulates and IOM offices.

BAC still has no web presence worthy of the services it offers. There are a splattering of mentions on various government pages with an address and phone number, but no detailed information. BAC should have its own website that provides high-level detail on the services it offers and who can access them. The creation of a website was approved by the technical committee, but has not been implemented (BAC 2010d).

IOM implements a variety of other assisted return programs, but these processes are kept separate. Assisted return programs often involve financial support for returnees to start businesses—the majority of which either fail or are never started as the returnees tend to spend the money on previous debts or consumer goods, and when they do start businesses there is no training or follow-up provided. Although the economic incentives to do so are not directly present,[75] these returnees should be part of the BAC system. Integrating them into the BAC system would provide them both training and follow-up without being a financial burden on BAC because the returnees bring their own financing through the IOM assisted return program (BAC would have to cover the training and follow-up costs, however). This would consolidate the return programs in Colombia,

[75] IOM receives a service fee for administering the return case for the host government. Although it is not in their interest to give us this position (and service fee), the services they provide to the return migrant could be integrated into the BAC system.

establish relationships between BAC and host country institutions/organizations, and potentially increase the results of the other assisted return programs.

Three counterparts (IOM, MFA and the City) working together is never easy—especially cross sectors. Regarding the day-to-day operations of BAC, more autonomy should be given to the director. Daily decision and office management related issues should not need to go through the technical committee. Like any program or project, micro-managing it will decrease its flexibility and remove decision making authority from those that interact with the problems daily: the staff and director of BAC. Because there are three counterparts it also creates an environment where issues can go unnoticed. More explicit segregation of tasks between the three counterparts would allow for a more successful program.

Implementation Flaws

Several problem arose not from the design, but from the implementation of BAC. Gaining momentum for the program proved to be difficult both in setting up the service offerings as well as having the services offered used by returnees.

Because of this there has been low morale among BAC staff, and motivation has also been low. There have been several times where forced turnover of staff has been necessary to better meet the needs of particular program positions. Hiring processes should include open announcements to assure the positions are filled with qualified individuals.

Related to the above design flaw of BAC autonomy, the three institutions have

difficult links. Memorandums of Understanding set out to delineate responsibilities were not revised or approved by the three institutions for some time, leading to different understandings of what BAC objectives were and how it should be implemented (BAC 2009).

Service standards also became a problem, especially in humanitarian aid. A lack of initial protocols in shelter and kits led to complicated financial relationships with shelters and sub-par service delivery. While these have been improved to some extent, this is another example of how lack of initial design was compounded in implementation.

Other services lacked appropriate protocols leading to sub-standard delivery as well as complicating the delivery process. Institutional networks were built slowly, and BAC did not get the support it needed within service-providing institutions to which BAC was referencing returnees. This is exampled by the long wait to implement the business start-up component and was made more difficult by BAC staff turnover.

Even as BAC progressed into phase two of implementation a considerable lack of effort was given towards creating an internal database to properly review cases and to produce statistics on how the program was functioning. This created further difficulties in reporting and in sharing information between the three organizations. Although this issue at times found its way onto meeting agendas, it was never addressed.

Systemic Barriers

Systemic barriers are distinct from design or implementation flaws. The latter two are the result of a rushed design phase and inadequate program implementation while systemic barriers are difficulties inherent in the system in which BAC works. Proper design and strong implementation can ameliorate these adverse conditions, but cannot change them.

The most pressing systemic barrier faced by BAC is institutional turnover. As a reference center BAC is tasked with maintaining links with a plethora of institutions to deliver services, as well as relying on other institutions to run smoothly itself. All three implementing organizations—the IOM, the MFA and the City—have high turnover. The IOM position in charge of the BAC program has changed three times since the BAC process was begun, as did the MFA connection. The City connection has changed less, but none-the-less has contributed to a less than stable environment.

Barriers also arise when working with other programs within the three implementing organizations. Consulates have provided a particularly difficult situation. Consulates have a defined set of tasks, and are not interested in lengthening their list of responsibilities. For BAC to work with consulates (for the reasons described above) the initiative needs to be taken from the MFA connection, Colombia Nos Une. The inability of Colombia Nos Une (for the MFA), MMS (for IOM) and the Department or International Relations (for the

City) means BAC is left without access to the services provided by the other arms of these institutions as well as not being able to fully extend the program's reach.

Situating BAC within Current Practices

Policy/Institutional Setup

BAC is the result of a new national policy which follows world trends and interest in the possible connections between migration and development. Through its new national policy Colombia has taken a strong step towards institutionalizing these possible connections. These policies view migrants as agents of development and work with both traditionally "courted" and "uncourted" returning migrants.

Other reintegration programs typically deal either with courted (home country incentivized) or uncourted (no home country incentives in place to induce return) returns, each has a distinctly different target population. As unlike facilitated migration (the final stage in the MFA's Positive Return Plan) programs such as in the Philippines, where the return process is begun before initial emigration (usually in conjunction with temporary contract migration and implemented through migrant resource centers) is BAC does not begin the "return" process until the migrants themselves begin the process. Most other un-incentivized return programs (such as El Salvador) have similar target populations. Neither Colombia nor El Salvador discriminates within the return population based on other available resources returnees might have access to, however.

Funding

Funding and ownership for BAC is unique. Most other programs that attempt to

address similar concerns do not have neither as integrated a structure and exit strategy nor are as collaborative in funding. Similar programs in El Salvador, Mali or the Philippines do not have exit strategies for turning over the program to local authorities, and thus depend on foreign assistance for both funding and implementation (Álvarez 2008; Battistella 2004; CIGEM 2011). Programs that incentivize the return of high-skilled migrants do, however, tend to be more home government driven (Jonkers 2008). By combining both approaches BAC is able to create a scenario where it receives sustainable levels of funding by local and national Colombian governments, with the international cooperation (IOM) exit strategy being highly emphasized.

It is still important to improve the communication between home and host governments, however. Funding provided to other assisted return programs from host governments is still channeled through the IOM, and not through BAC or the MFA's PRP. While the IOM has participated in the creation of a sustainable program model with BAC, it has not given up the income it receives from other assisted return programs.

Home governments need large and sustained returns to dedicate money towards R&R. Colombia has both, and has been doing its share in creating the appropriate environments for the return as well as the reintegration of migrants.

Implementation Structure

The implementation structure of BAC is also unique partly due to it functioning on three levels: interacting with host governments through the MFA, working

with local governments to create local migration policies as well as providing R&R services to returnees. As the program functions on three levels, while the direct service component is implemented for the target population the program also works behind the scenes to develop local capacity and create the institutional environment (both through local organizations and policy) necessary for the program's sustainability once the IOM steps back. This allows the immediate needs of current returnees to be met by the program as well as plans for the longer-term and future return migrants.

Other programs are not as strongly inserted into the public sector—save for purely public sector responses such as in the Philippines—as is BAC. The typical response from the international community and host governments is to fund initiatives that are implemented mainly through international NGOs or agencies such as the IOM. This creates a dependency on both the presence of these organizations and their funding. By explicitly not doing this, the BAC model builds local (and national) capacity while still taking advantage of the technical assistance and funding provided by the international community.

A difficulty with this approach, however, is that neither the Colombian government (local or national) nor the IOM is going to be outwardly critical of either host country return migration programs or the PRP's implementation (including BAC). Neither are positioned to produce critical analysis in the public discourse as would a program implemented by NGOs, for instance. Many studies have attributed successful reintegration to a migrant's experience in the host

country—and many NGOs working in return migration have built advocacy into their model[76]—something neither the IOM nor the Colombian government can do to the same extent (van Houte MSc and de Koning MSc 2008).

Service Design

BAC's institutional offering to returning migrants is similar to other R&R programs. BAC provides economic, social and humanitarian services to migrants once they have returned to Colombia. Like other programs, BAC attempts to provide humanitarian services as quickly as possible, while social and economic services are only for returnees destined for Bogota. BAC's weakness has been the implementation of these services, especially psychosocial and entrepreneurial services—within social and economic services, respectively.

Humanitarian services provided by BAC are now up to international sphere standards and reflect a commitment on the part of BAC to do so. Economic services are not as well developed as in other programs—such as the Philippines—where there is more planned return (the eventual step in the PRP policy) (Battistella 2004).

BAC services fall short not in their breadth, but in their location. Services are only provided in Colombia, with select services provided to migrants still in host countries. As discussed in the above section this is a serious limitation to both current implementation and especially if the PRP policy is to eventually move to planned return where services will have to be provided in host countries. Travel

[76] NGOs in Afghanistan, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sierra Leone, Togo and Vietnam have all done this (van Houte MSc and de Koning MSc 2008).

services are also not provided by the BAC model, instead are typically provided by IOM, as described in chapter three.

Standard problems are identified in the majority of the programs discussed in chapter three, including lack of information campaigns, housing issues, health/psychological problems, language barriers, economic reintegration, family impacts, social reintegration, home/host coordination, monitoring/evaluation, and timing of service delivery (EuropeAid 2009).

BAC does considerably well in attempting to address all of them (save for information campaigns and monitoring and evaluation), to varying degrees of success. Important to point out is the home/host country coordination. No programs do this well—or even attempt to address the issue—whereas the BAC model through its connection to IOM is able to create a link—albeit indirectly—to host country institutions responsible for return migration, assisted and otherwise.

Theoretical Approaches to Understanding BAC

Just as understanding how the BAC model can be situated within current R&R programs worldwide, the initial theoretical ideas outlined in chapter two can help provide further understanding of the BAC model as well. While many scholars question the ability to "return" in that the notion of being able to return to a past time, home or situation is inherently flawed, others question the simplicity of concepts of "reintegration." It is through program design (and implementation) that we can see if these theories can shed light on program experiences.

Return

While Hammond argues that "return" is a simplified concept and that in fact is not even possible, these are not questions BAC addresses (Hammond 1999). The BAC model starts from the assumption that return is happening, be it assisted, forced, or without host country influence. The model starts from what they know: Colombians living abroad are returning to Colombia. This lack of interaction on part of BAC with notions of return can be understood both practically and theoretically. Practically the BAC model does not have any presence in host countries, as mentioned above, and therefore would have no practical way to influence the "return" of migrants. Theoretically, assisted and forced returns are implemented by host countries, and BAC would have neither voice not vote in this. For BAC to engage in questioning theories surrounding "return" they would have to both create opportunities to contribute to the discussion of assisted and forced returns from host countries (which could be done though the MFA) as well as design and implement services that allowed them to operationalize their interests.

Where BAC does interact with theories of return is through what possibilities arise from the return. The BAC model uses the Social Network theory concept of return migration: return is not the end of the migration cycle, but the beginning of another. "Return" is the beginning of a "return and reintegration" cycle that if ignored could and does lead to vulnerability (Cassarino 2004b; Richard Black and Koser 1999). While the BAC model does not ignore the fact that "return" is the

beginning of another process (reintegration), it does not address Cassarino's deepening of the theory: preparedness and resource mobilization.

As *preparedness* is comprised of both their willingness to return as well as their readiness to return, both BAC and PRP need to expand their model to incorporate this. This can be done by including services pre-departure as well as creating more legal options for migrants abroad with various host countries (the latter would be in coordination with planned return programs). To be *willing to return* touches on issues of voluntary vs. involuntary return. While lacking the possibility of remaining in the host country legally does not preclude a migrants interest in returning—it certainly makes it more difficult. PRP fifth stage—programmed return—will be an important step in creating the willingness to return in migrants as the migration experience will start with the understanding that it involves return, and when migrants don't feel it will be their only opportunity to stay in the host country they are more willing to return (this is the logic that IOM's TCLM program is based on). BAC currently does not contribute to migrants preparedness but could do so with such simple first steps as information campaigns described above.

Resource mobilization includes the portability of tangible and intangible resources cultivated before migrating and while abroad. The BAC model does attempt to mobilize migrant resources—but starts the process once they have already returned to Colombia—thus missing an important opportunity. The project bank within the entrepreneurial component of economic services is a prime example of

building and fostering relationships and social capital, and MFA agreements with host countries on social security and health are examples of creating portability of tangible resources.

Reintegration

Returning to Gmelch's (1980) distinction from etic and emic perspectives we see that R&R programs, and specifically BAC—only address reintegration from an etic perspective and not from an emic perspective. The etic approach views reintegration in terms of social and economic adaptation (employment, adequate housing, personal relationships, participation in groups and organizations, etc.). BAC services address these issues, and thus view reintegration with an etic perspective.

An emic perspective views (re)adaptation from the returnee's own perceptions of his or her adjustments to the new home environment, how the homeland fulfills their expectations of the return environment and their sense of well-being. It is within the emic perspective that concepts of *satisfaction* and *dissatisfaction* are typically uncovered, the latter of which is often associated with re-migration (G. Gmelch 1980).

Given that host and home governments use the concept of sustainable return to mean a prolonged stay in the home country, the emic perspective should also be used when evaluating return programs. Programming—for reasons related to the structure of reporting—will need to focus on etic approaches (such as the services currently provided by BAC), but the results should also be evaluated from an

emic perspective to fully grasp if returnees are indeed "sustainably" returning. By only using indicators based on program outputs there will be no way to connect program effects to sustainable return. Diving deeper into the outcomes of the BAC and other R&R programs by using evaluations also based on emic perspectives will allow these programs to capture the experience of the returnees, not just the experience of the program.

Using the frame of embeddedness we can see the different aspects of reintegration that are and are not addressed by the BAC model and other R&R program models. As covered in chapter two, embeddedness contains three components: economic, social networks, and psychosocial.

Economic embeddedness refers to the creation of sustainable livelihoods through the provision of or access to material preconditions. BAC services clearly address this in design, though less in practice. Dual economic tracks (workforce linkages or business start-ups) are important services to connect returnees to livelihood strategies.

As can be seen in other assisted return programs (such as the IOM administered programs in Colombia from Italy, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Spain) many R&R programs only provide financial assistance. Although important, "this kind of assistance can only be successful when combined with human assistance, such as phased guidance and information" (van Houte MSc and de Koning MSc 2008). Services pertaining to other livelihoods as defined in chapter two are also

present in BAC: including housing, education, and health care.

Social network embeddedness is the extent to which one has access to and information on social relations. These social networks can range from one's acceptance into a community to whether one will be kept up to date with current information. BAC has services that border contributing to social network embeddedness, but none address it head on. The project bank includes the creation and deepening of social networks in business settings, but there are no such services for social settings. There are no "returnee support groups" established in BAC, nor are there methods for allowing returnees to come together in social situations to build a common identity or to provide mutual support. These services are offered by some forced migration return programs (returning asylum seekers or refugees) but not for voluntary migrants.

Psychosocial embeddedness is a much more elusive form of embeddedness, if not simply for its intangibility. Psychosocial embeddedness hinges on concepts (and constructs) of identity: to what extent is an individual able to express his or herself within the larger societal context, including identities relating to culture, religion, diet, interests and activities, language. This level of embeddedness cannot be directly addressed with services, but it can be used as an evaluation tool to more fully understand how effective services are. By including the returnee's perception of their reintegration moves the evaluation from a technical and "objective" lens to an albeit subjective stance—but the stance of those that ultimately have the choice of making the return sustainable or not by staying in

their home country or re-migrating.

Although this thesis does not address the actual effects migration can have on development, the idea of social change in relation to returnee reintegration has strong theoretical implications that are worth elaborating. The BAC and other R&R models are supported by the logic of Social Network and Transnational theories' approaches to return migration—that returnees bring resources and varying types of capital and can be agents for home country development. Using van Gendt's concepts of the two types of reintegration (top-down or bottom-up) the BAC model provides individual services—a bottom-up model—but links these service outcomes to national development gains—a top-down model. This hybrid is exactly what van Gendt emphasized (van Gendt 1977). This is a positive picture to paint, but it only reevaluates the returnees position (albeit an important reevaluation) and does not consider the home country context.

Taking as given that returnees do possess and return with a variety of capital that can be used for development, it is up to the home society or community to accept said capital. Returnees coming back with new ideas about social organization, new business ventures, and simply new ways of interacting on personal levels can create divides between returnees and communities—rending their capital useless, because it is not well received. Thus for the logic of R&R programs and Social Network and Transnational theories to function they require an open and accepting society to receive the returnee's ideas, their capital and the returnees themselves.

Final Conclusions

The embeddedness framework allows R&R programs to take a more nuanced and detailed approach to both program and policy design as well as evaluation. By incorporating both objective—economic embeddedness and the etic perspective—and subjective—social and psychosocial embeddedness and the emic perspective—concepts, the embeddedness framework creates possibilities for program design that focus on both. Direct services will reflect the objective concepts more, but can be supported by objective and subjective rationale. Services, therefore, have two goals: to complete their objective outcomes (economic embeddedness) and to complete their subjective outcomes (social and psychosocial embeddedness). Together sustainable returns are created as returnees have the livelihoods to sustain themselves in their home country, as well as feeling like they have the means to sustain themselves and feeling emotionally and personally connected to their communities in the home country.

Because of this dual focus in program design, a similar dual focus is possible in program evaluation. As programs can be designed with objective and subjective objectives, there can be objectively and subjectively verified evaluations. Program outputs are used for evaluating *objective* objectives. To evaluate *subjective* objectives more interaction and qualitative methods can be used. An index can be created of various facets of social and psychosocial embeddedness and can be inquired about using proxy questions.

Although CRORE does not use the embeddedness framework to design or

evaluate its return migration centers, the model stands out in several ways that could contribute to better policy design in other countries. Most innovative are the connections between the home government and the international community, the latent potential for collaboration with host governments and the model's exit strategy which prioritizes capacity building and ownership.

The connection the CRORE model makes between the international community and home governments is positive. Linking these actors allows for more informed decisions regarding the future of policies and uses the institutional knowledge of the IOM and MFA. It also creates a platform on which the MFA can engage with host governments to further their (and host country) policy agendas of programmed return.

Similarly, within the local context the IOM and MFA exit strategy allow and promote local ownership of the return migration centers allowing programs to be tailored to the specifics of the local return migration environment. It also builds the local capacity both of the local government institutions as well as within the returnees themselves by accompanying them in accessing services, not simply providing them.

This thesis illustrates the necessary policy, institutional and migration contexts necessary for the success of this model in Colombia. The current BAC experience is the result of several years of institutional interest on the part of the government of Colombia as well as the IOM, and coupled with a new return migration policy environment in host countries (particularly in Spain for the

Colombia case) has shown how this interest can be translated into action. Overall the CRORE model, illustrated in this thesis by the BAC experience, has the potential as a model for other home countries interested in creating a more functional environment for the return and reintegration of their international migrants.

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