I welcome the proposal to make migration and education the theme of the 2019 GMR and have read with interest the useful concept note. The following comments are based on my experience as a historian, with interests in international student mobility, and a career in international education. They argue that the report needs to look at issues about migration, about student mobility, and about the education of refugee children and young people. Lessons can be learned from current practice and from the historical record.

Migration
In much of the discussion it is important to distinguish between short, medium and long-term migration. This has a bearing on such issues as brain drain, touched on in p.1 of the concept note. In considering the consequences of foreign study it will be useful to consider, alongside the examination of remittances, the evidence on the patterns of foreign student movements. Some return home, some stay in their country of study, some follow careers with time in both, and sometimes in third countries, with important consequences for both education and the economy in their original home countries.

Short and long-term prospects for refugee children also have implications for language policy towards their schooling (see para. 11-12 below).

Student mobility
While students who travel to study abroad form a minority of the migrants with which the report is concerned, their numbers are significant, estimated at over 5 million. Some of the issues of policy and practice raised by foreign study are examined in a recent paper of mine discussing policies in Britain, France, Russia and the United States, and in an earlier book on foreign students in Britain.

Policies have been developed at institutional, national and international level to encourage, discourage, or manage student mobility and there is therefore useful comparative experience for the international community. In examining this experience it will be possible to explore the effects of student mobility on educational quality in both home countries and countries of study. There may be useful conclusions to be drawn from comparisons between:
- countries that have relied heavily on exporting students (e.g. Greece over many years, more recently Malaysia);
- countries or occupations within them that have relied heavily on importing skilled labour, either by retaining foreign students in the workforce or importing those who have qualified in their home countries (e.g. health professionals in UK, information technology specialists in California);
- countries that have attempted to control long-term emigration of their own citizens studying abroad;
- countries that have moved from being mainly an exporter of students a position in which they are attracting significant inward flows (e.g. China).

Questions of brain drain or brain circulation (para. 2 above) matter alongside those of remittances. It has been claimed, for example, that emigration of graduates from India's IITs has produced not only a flow of remittances but also the development of new firms or industries within India with links to peers in advanced industrialised countries. This in turn has a bearing on curriculum where institutions may need to balance demands of the local economy, the interests of foreign students wanting to study there, and the interests of their own students preparing to study abroad.

The concept note points out (p. 5) that grants and scholarships can expand opportunities for talented students and it would be worth exploring this further, taking account of the extensive literature assessing and evaluating scholarship programmes. Questions arise about the extent to which scholarship programmes in
practice select on academic performance and prospects or, given that the acquisition of higher education can be a proxy for wealth, on existing privilege. Similarly there are questions about gender policy and scholarships. All this could usefully form part of a wider assessment of funding for education abroad, bearing in mind the evidence that family money has often been the single most important source of funds. The broad policy questions are about who benefits and who pays.

9 The concept note also refers to the international recognition of qualifications. There are issues here about school-level, higher education, and professional qualifications that merit some exploration. In the past countries that accept foreign professional qualifications have sometimes also required national school qualifications or their equivalents.

10 The development of foreign branch campuses – mainly by universities but also by schools – and cross-border open-learning programmes have a bearing on international student mobility. They also raise questions about cross-border regulation in the interest of educational quality – already of concern to UNESCO.

Education for refugee children and young people

11 There is some old evidence on measures to support this which may be worth revisiting. The International Extension College (IEC), a British ngo and charity that no longer exists, ran a number of programmes which used open-learning materials to support the education of refugee children, particularly in Africa. These included, among others, the establishment of an open learning unit in Sudan and of a unit for Namibian refugees in Zambia, repatriated to Namibia on its independence as the Namibia College of Open Learning. A programme today might use the internet (or might not) where these used print but materials-based education could still be relevant where there is a shortage of teachers for refugee children. The IEC experience was summarised in a report by two of those involved.3

12 Three other findings from that work are still important. First, it was at that time clear that where there were large movements of refugees these would include teachers as well as schoolchildren and, in principle, teachers could therefore be in a position to teach displaced children. Good management protocols are needed to let this happen. Second, and related, it was proposed at the time that agencies working with new refugee emergencies should deploy educational specialists, alongside their health specialists, at the first, emergency, stage. We did not then succeed in getting that done but the idea is worth revisiting. Third, decisions need to be taken about the language of instruction, and other languages to be taught, for refugee children which are influenced by the best available assumptions about where they will continue to live.

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