



## **DOMINICANS IN SWITZERLAND**

### **PATTERNS, PRACTICES AND IMPACTS OF TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION & REMITTANCES LINKING THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND SWITZERLAND**

## **DOMINICANOS EN SUIZA**

### **PAUTAS, PRÁCTICAS E IMPACTOS DE LA MIGRACIÓN TRANSNACIONAL Y EL ENVÍO DE REMESAS QUE VINCULAN REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA Y SUIZA**

JENNIFER PETREE, TAHIRA VARGAS

A Case Study in the Growing Trend of Latin American Migration to Europe

# Dominicans in Switzerland

## Patterns, Practices and Impacts of Transnational Migration & Remittances Linking the Dominican Republic and Switzerland



By Jennifer Petree and Tahira Vargas  
November 2005

This work is dedicated to our friend and field research assistant

Julio Cesar Ramirez

who passed away unexpectedly on November 1, 2005  
in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic



*Segundo Maldonado (left) and  
Julio Cesar Ramirez (right)*

**“There is no future in our country, there’s no work, everything just keeps getting worse. People say ‘why should I study – for what?’ It doesn’t matter if you have an education, there is no way to get ahead. Because of that, everyone wants to leave the country. Everybody is looking for a better life. I came to Switzerland to see if I could make a future here for myself and my family.”**

Comments by participants in a Focus Group of Dominican Men in Switzerland  
Bern, Switzerland – November 2004

**“I came here (Switzerland) to get ahead, to study, to improve myself. There are opportunities here.”**

Comment by a Dominican migrant who has lived in Switzerland for 20+ years  
Zurich, Switzerland – October 2004

**“My daughter left to work in Switzerland. Here (DR) she worked and studied but there was never enough money. A friend of hers arranged the trip, brought her to Switzerland and got her a work contract in a cabaret bar. Her dad sold a piece of land and used the money to pay for her trip and to pay her friend who helped make the arrangements. Now she (daughter) takes care of me with the remittances that she sends home.”**

Comment by the mother of a Dominican woman from Dona Ana who migrated to Switzerland  
Dona Ana (San Cristobal), Dominican Republic - April 2005

**“The first woman that went to Switzerland from here (Dona Ana) was Ricardo Coco’s daughter. She had to pay 30,000 Dominican pesos to another woman in order to get a work contract dancing in a Swiss cabaret bar and to have her trip arranged. This woman migrated a long time ago, close to 20 years ago. I remember because I was really young when she left. After she went, then the Aquino girls went next, the ones that live in San Cristobal now, and it went on like that. The families that have sent their girls to Switzerland have had to sacrifice a lot – selling cows, land, cars, whatever they have to send their daughters to Switzerland.”**

Comment by the sister of a Dominican woman from Dona Ana who migrated to Switzerland  
Dona Ana (San Cristobal), Dominican Republic - April 2005

**“Work in the cabarets isn’t really accepted, morally, but when the women come back home, they’re accepted because the money that they earned in Switzerland helps fix a lot of problems in their families.”**

Comment by a teacher in Dona Ana  
Dona Ana (San Cristobal), Dominican Republic – April 2005

**“The community has changed a lot because of the remittances. Now there are a lot of nice houses made of cement, telephones, cars, some new businesses. There are also a few new houses to rent. And a lot of young people have the chance to go to the university now thanks to the support of people in Switzerland.”**

Comment by a community leader speaking about the impacts of migration and remittances on Dona Ana  
Dona Ana (San Cristobal), Dominican Republic - April 2005

**“I want to be a lawyer”...“I want to be an architect”...“I want to be an accountant”...“My plan is to go abroad and work, to go to Europe and do something decent and improve my life”...“I want to go to Switzerland to make money, and if I can, I want to stay and get married and live there because the women that really do something with their lives are the ones that migrate.”**

Comments by the participants in a focus group of adolescent Dominican girls from Dona Ana  
Dona Ana (San Cristobal), Dominican Republic - April 2005



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	6
INTRODUCTION .....	9
CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT .....	11
CHAPTER 2 MIGRATION PATTERNS OF DOMINICANS IN SWITZERLAND .....	18
CHAPTER 3 DONA ANA: A PROFILE OF ONE MIGRANT-SENDING COMMUNITY WITH LINKS TO SWITZERLAND .....	23
CHAPTER 4 A SNAPSHOT OF THE DOMINICAN MIGRANT POPULATION IN SWITZERLAND .....	29
CHAPTER 5 REMITTANCES .....	37
CHAPTER 6 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF MIGRATION AND REMITTANCES ON THE CASE STUDY COMMUNITY OF DONA ANA .....	45
CHAPTER 7 LEVERAGING REMITTANCES FOR ENHANCED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT .....	56

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge everyone that has collaborated with us on this on this research project and who have helped make this final report possible. First, a sincere thanks to all of the Dominican men and women living in Switzerland, Santo Domingo and Dona Ana who dedicated time ad energy to talk openly and honestly about their migration experiences. Thank you to Lucy Martínez, Ynés Gerardo and Cornelio Pérez for all of your knowledge, support and for connecting us to so many other people in the Dominican community in Switzerland. Thank you to Victor Saladin from OnTime remittances in Zurich, Doro Winkler from FIZ, Fanny Tonos from the Dominican Embassy in Bern and Urs Treuthardt from the Swiss Federal Office of Migration for all of the important information you provided to us. In the Dominican Republic, we would like to thank: Gina Gallardo, Francisca Ferreira from COIN, MODEMU, Tu Mujer, International Organization for Migration and Luisa Vicioso from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We also want to thank Marleen Then from Vimenca (Western Union), the Mayor of Yaguate and all of the representatives of other NGOs, government institutions, academic centers and international organizations in both Switzerland and the DR (Dominican Republic) who provide us with additional data and information that we needed to complete our analysis. Thank you to our colleagues at EPFL in Lausanne who provided us with office space and institutional support. A generous thank you to our advisory team: Ninna Nyberg Sorensen, Manuel Orozco, Claudio Bolzman and Jean-Claude Bolay who provided innumerable ideas, feedback and advise throughout the entire duration of this project. Your suggestions and support helped strengthen the quality of our work enormously. A very special thanks also to our field research assistants in the DR: Reyita Benzan, Julio Cesar Ramirez, Segundo Maldonado and Andres Suazo whose efforts and good humor contributed enormously to our work.

Finally, we would like to recognize the Foundation for Population, Migration and Environment in Switzerland whose generous financial support made this research project possible.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final research report presents the results of a one-year empirical study documenting the patterns, practices and impacts of transnational migration by people from the Dominican Republic (DR) to Switzerland during the years 1980 to 2005. Discussion of remittances sent by this Dominican diaspora and their use and impacts on one migrant-sending community is given a special focus. This case study is an original contribution to the small but growing literature documenting contemporary migration of Latin Americans to Europe, in particular, to Switzerland. As this is the first large-scale academic study on Dominican trans-migrants in Switzerland, a broad array of topics have been explored and are discussed in limited depth.

This study uses the concept of transnational migration as a key theoretical framework. Social network theories, current debates on leveraging remittances for development, and the use of gendered analysis are other analytical frameworks employed in this paper. Data was gathered through in-depth individual interviews and focus groups involving 180 Dominican migrants, migrant-sending households, and key informants in both Switzerland and the DR. Direct observation and review of secondary sources were two other important data gathering techniques.

Migration from the DR to Switzerland began in the 1980s as part of a larger migration wave of migration to Europe, which brought Dominicans to Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium and Greece, in addition to Switzerland. Several important migration push and pull factors helped create the initial conditions for migration from the DR to Switzerland to take hold. These factors include: (1) Decades of poor economic policy in the DR which brought about economic crisis and spurred migration, (2) New globalization trends which contributed to the collapse of the DR's agro-exports and gave rise to new transnational economic activities and social relations, (3) The birth of the international tourism industry in the DR, (4) Temporary labor migration opportunities for work in Switzerland's cabaret bars, and (5) Growing transnational social networks facilitating migration for marriage and family reunification.

Migration of Dominicans to Switzerland has followed three principle routes, including: short term labor migration for cabaret dancing, marriage migration and family reunification. Tourism has also been a strategy used by Dominicans to enter the country, with some people overstaying illegally or marrying a Swiss resident in order to remain legally in the country. Cases of skilled Dominican labor migration exist but are very rare. Of all of these strategies, migration facilitated by marriage to a Swiss resident or citizen has been the most common immigration pathway. For Dominican women, labor migration for work in Switzerland's cabaret bars has also historically important, while for men, migration for the purpose of family reunification has played a major role. Transnational social networks involving a wide variety of intermediaries in both the DR and in Switzerland are central in this migration chain. Friends, relatives, neighbors, acquaintances, business owners, tourists, strangers, and sometimes even human traffickers, help arrange labor contracts, travel documents or find suitable marriage partners for Dominican men and women who want to go to Switzerland, often at a very high cost. Migrant-sending households are often forced to sell land and/or take out large, informal loans at high interest rates to finance their relative's journey to Europe with the hope that this "investment" will pay off in future income sent from abroad.

Twenty-five years of migration has helped establish a contemporary community of approximately 8,000 Dominicans in Switzerland. This population estimate includes Dominican men and women with temporary, annual or permanent residency status, as well as Dominicans who hold Swiss citizenship through naturalization, 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Dominicans born to bi-national parents, and a small number of undocumented Dominican migrants. Dominican migration to Switzerland came in three waves, with the largest number of people arriving between 1991 and 1998, due mainly to labor and marriage migration. Today, the growth of the Dominican population is driven primarily by family reunification and the growth of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. This shift in immigration patterns has also caused a

shift in the gendered nature of this migrant group, which for a long time, was primarily female, due to the fact that migration opportunities were restricted mainly to cabaret labor contracts and marriage. Opportunities to migrate for family reunification and the emerging second generation is helping to balance out this gender mix.

In terms of geographic concentration, the Dominican community is found mainly in Switzerland's urban centers - Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Bern. However, the canton of Ticino is also home to a large number of Dominican men and women as are several smaller cities, including Lausanne, Lucerne and Aargau. On the sending side, Dominican migration to Switzerland has come mainly from urban and semi-urban areas in the DR. Most migrants come from poor families with low levels of formal education and large numbers of children.

Regardless of their socio-economic status, age or background, the vast majority of Dominicans living in Switzerland send money, "remittances," home to relatives living in their communities of origin. This follows similar remittance trends for Dominicans in other host countries. In 2004, remittances to the DR reached \$2.7 billion, putting the country on the top 10 list of remittance-receiving countries in the world. While most remittances to the DR are sent from the US, approximately 13% of this flow comes from Europe – most importantly, from Spain, Italy and Switzerland. In fact, Dominicans in Switzerland send larger average individual transfers home than Dominicans in any other foreign context, with average transfers estimated at 545 swiss francs (approximately \$400 US). The vast majority of remittances from Switzerland are sent through formal channels – mainly via remittance transfer companies which have been active in the country since the 1990s. Most of the money is sent to and from urban and semi-urban areas, following the same migration patterns described earlier. One important and unique factor about remittances by Dominicans in Switzerland is the fact that the majority (70%) of remitters are women. Recipients in the DR are also most commonly women – mainly the mothers and sisters of migrants, a fact which has been proven to influence the way in which remittances are put to use. Another important finding is that the rate and frequency at which Dominican migrants send money home does not diminish over time. This is likely due to the fact that migrants use remittances as a strategy to maintain their relationships with people in their place of origin – to maintain their social network. So as long as migrants have a parent, sibling and/or child who remains behind in the DR, which is common, they will continue to remit even 15 or 20 years after having left their country.

Food, healthcare, housing and education are the most common uses of remittances from Switzerland. The rest is divided among smaller expenditures. Apart from using remittances to meet daily needs, save or to build or improve a home, a few families have used remittances to invest in small businesses. Only 4% of remittance income is saved.

The migrant-sending community of Dona Ana in the DR was chosen as the case study area where we aimed to measure the impacts of migration and remittances from Switzerland. This semi-rural town of approximately 6,300 people has been sending migrants, mainly women, to live and work in Switzerland since 1990. Once reliant on agricultural production, Dona Ana's economic and employment base has shifted, like so much of the country, towards construction, factory work in export processing zones, services, transportation, the military and domestic work in the capital city. International migration and the remittances it generates has become another important means of economic support for many families in Dona Ana, some of whom are entirely dependent on this income stream for their survival.

In addition to helping meet the daily needs of individual migrant-sending families, remittances to Dona Ana have also generated important economic, ecological and social changes in the community. Most notably, remittances have helped to enlarge and modernize a large portion of Dona Ana's housing stock. This housing boom, consequently, has created a number of new jobs in construction. At the same time, migration and remittances have also caused a huge increase in demand for land to be used for new housing development which has resulted in a dramatic shift in land use across the community. Land all around Dona Ana which was previously dedicated to farming, animal grazing or

open space, has been parceled off and sold for home construction. High demand has caused the price of land to skyrocket and has greatly diminished many families' ability to provide for their basic food needs, and made them reliant on exploitative wage labor and encouraging further migration abroad.

Migration and remittances linking Switzerland and Dona Ana have also generated several important social impacts, including changing gender roles and power relations between men and women in migrant households, new patterns in caretaking roles, enhanced educational opportunities for migrants' children and siblings, and major shifts in the dreams and plans of the next generation, who are more and more focused on making their future abroad. This fact weighs heavily on Dona Ana's future, both in terms of the positive impacts that growing migrant remittances have on the community's development, on alleviating poverty, on improving access to education and on improving gender relations, as well as the negative impacts that the continued loss of human capital is likely to have overtime in this small town.

Clearly, the economic and social impacts of individual remittance flows from Dominicans in Switzerland have been significant. Nevertheless, there is potential to leverage these financial resources for broader development impacts in migrant-sending communities like Dona Ana throughout the DR. The final chapter of this report is therefore dedicated to a discussion of some of the strategies which are currently being used or which could be employed to achieve this enhanced community development impact, both generally and in the Swiss-Dominican case, as well as some suggested changes to Swiss migration policy which could help improve the economic and social situation of Dominican migrants in Switzerland and reinforce their ability to act as agents in the development of their country of origin.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the results of a one-year empirical study documenting the patterns, practices and impacts of transnational migration by people from the Dominican Republic (DR) to Switzerland during the years 1980 to 2005. Additionally, discussion of the transfer of remittances sent by Dominicans in Switzerland and their use and impacts on one migrant-sending community in the DR is given a special focus. This case study is an original contribution to the small but growing literature documenting contemporary migration of Latin Americans to Europe, and in particular, to Switzerland.

In the last few decades, a large and growing number of Latin Americans, Africans, Eastern Europeans and Asians have migrated to western Europe in the search for economic opportunities and an improved quality of life. Growing migration to Europe has stimulated intense debates at the national and regional level between citizens and political leaders, debates which have attracted ongoing media coverage and stimulated public protests. Regardless of its contested nature, new migrants are undoubtedly playing an important role in filling labor market gaps and helping to counteract depopulation trends across the European continent. Population specialists predict that this migration trend will continue for many years to come and suggest that the surest way to counteract Europe's continuing depopulation phenomenon is to open the doors even wider to immigration. (Le Temps, 21 July 2005) At the same time, growing incidents of terrorism and the perceived threats that immigration poses to cultural norms, social systems, wages and employment, continue to generate fear among some Europeans.

In migrant-sending countries, the absence created by migration is felt most strongly in the loss of human capital and in the fragmentation of families, as well as in improvements in the well-being of migrant-sending households which receive financial support from relatives living and working abroad. At the individual level, the contemporary migration experience often means the restructuring of marriage and family patterns, as well as patterns of work, social and economic status, gender roles, language, education and dreams for the future. What contemporary migration no longer signifies however is the abandonment of one life in exchange for another. Today, migrants have the opportunity and the necessity to construct their new lives within and between many different places.

### **Analytical Frameworks and Research Objectives**

Moving between and belonging to multiple societies at the same time is now commonly referred to as « transnational migration. » (Levitt, 2004) “The ways in which migrants forge and sustain multiple social relations linking their societies of origin and destination,” is how migration scholar Nina Glick Schiller first defined the term more than a decade ago. (Sorenson, 2002). Today, “transnationalism” refers broadly to the multiple ties and inter-relationships which link together people and/or institutions across borders and nation-states. This study uses the concept of transnational migration as a key theoretical framework. Social network theories, current debates on ways to leverage remittances for development, and the use of gendered analysis are other analytical frameworks used in this paper to help explain the transnational migration patterns and remittance practices of Dominicans in Switzerland, as well as the impacts of these patterns and practices on their home country.

As this is the first large-scale academic study on Dominican trans-migrants in Switzerland, a broad array of topics have been explored and are discussed here in limited depth. As this is an empirical study, theoretical discussion is limited to its practical application in helping to analyze the data gathered. Ultimately, this paper is intended to be accessible and useful to a broad audience, including: policy makers, migrant leaders, academics, the media, representatives of NGOs, government agencies, international and development organizations and members of the general public.



The specific research objectives for this study include:

1. Present a basic overview of the historical and contextual circumstances which have facilitated migration from the Dominican Republic to Switzerland;
2. Document and analyze the principle transmigratory pathways linking the DR and Switzerland;
3. Generate a basic, qualitative and quantitative profile of Dominican migrant population in Switzerland;
4. Generate a brief analysis and description of the patterns of incorporation and identity transformation among Dominicans in the Swiss context ;
5. Describe and discuss patterns of remittance transfers from Switzerland their use in the DR;
6. Document some of the economic, ecological and social impacts of Swiss-bound transnational migration and economic remittances in one migrant-sending community in the Dominican Republic;
7. Discuss strategies for leveraging remittances sent by Dominicans in Switzerland for enhanced community development impacts in the Dominican Republic;
8. Provide suggestions for future changes in migration policy towards Dominicans in Switzerland;

## **Methodology and Organization**

The information presented in this report was gathered during two distinct field work phases utilizing a variety of both qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques, including: individual interviews, focus groups, and key informant interviews. The first data gathering phase was carried out between September and December 2004, primarily in Switzerland, and included in-depth interviews and focus groups with 45 Dominicans living in five different Swiss cities, as well as five returned migrants living in Santo Domingo. Additional data was gathered through interviews with representatives of a variety of governmental agencies, NGOs, international and diplomatic organizations, remittance companies, universities and migrant organizations. The use of secondary data helped make this analysis more complete.

The second phase of data collection was carried out between the months of February and May 2005 in the semi-urban, small town of Dona Ana, located in the southern province of San Cristobal, Dominican Republic. Dona Ana was chosen as the site for this case study investigation because the town has experienced high rates of emigration to Switzerland over the past 15 years and has a continuous history of receiving remittances from migrants working and living in Switzerland. Data for the study was gathered through individual interviews with 40 households with a migrant relative in Switzerland, 80% of which also receive remittances. Focus groups and semi-structured interviews with key informants at the community, provincial and national level complemented the household data. Direct observation and review of secondary sources were two other important data gathering techniques used during this phase.

Results of this research investigation are presented here in the following seven sections:

Chapter 1	Background and Context: Factors Influencing Migration from the DR to Switzerland
Chapter 2	Migration Patterns linking the Dominican Republic and Switzerland
Chapter 3	Dona Ana – A Profile of One Migrant-Sending Community with Links to Switzerland
Chapter 4	A Snapshot of the Dominican Migration Population in Switzerland
Chapter 5	Remittances from Switzerland to the DR
Chapter 6	Economic, Ecological and Social Impacts of Migration and Remittances in Dona Ana
Chapter 7	Leveraging Remittances for Enhanced Community Development –Remittances for Development Pilot Projects and Complementary Changes in Swiss Migration Policy

# CHAPTER 1      **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

## **Factors Influencing Migration from the DR to Switzerland**

Migration from the Dominican Republic (DR) to Switzerland began in the 1980s as part of a larger migration wave of migration to Europe. These new migration flows brought Dominicans to Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium and Greece, in addition to Switzerland. Several important migration “push” and “pull” factors helped create the initial conditions for migration from the DR to Switzerland (see list below), each of which will be discussed in this chapter.

<b>Migration “Push” Factors (Emigration)</b>	<b>Migration “Pull” Factors (Immigration)</b>
Decades of poor economic policy bring about economic crisis and spur migration	Swiss immigration policies
New globalization trends contribute to the collapse of agro-exports and give rise to new transnational economic activities and social relations	The role of Switzerland’s cabaret industry in creating legal labor migration opportunities
Birth of the international tourism industry in the DR	Continued growth of transnational social networks perpetuate migration flows

### **Decades of poor economic policy bring about economic crisis and spur migration**

Understanding the initial factors that drove Dominican migration towards Switzerland requires a review of recent historical events. Citizens of the DR lived for more than 30 years, from 1930 to 1961, under the dictatorship of General Rafael Trujillo. His assassination in 1961 was followed by a series of short-term presidencies, domestic military coups and an intervention by U.S. military forces. In 1966, Joaquin Balaguer assumed the presidency, thanks in part to strong support by the US government. His 12 years in office was characterized, as was all of Latin America at that time, by an authoritarian regime where democratic behavior was suppressed and many people were persecuted or killed, including a number of well known journalists, left-wing political leaders and young people belonging to a variety of social justice organizations. However, Balaguer’s time in office was also characterized by a wave of new economic development and growth throughout the country. “He introduced protectionist measures, tariffs, tax exemptions, and eased access to credit to promote industrial development. In addition, he encouraged growth by increasing public-sector employment, by launching large public works projects such as highway and public housing construction, and by securing international loans.” (Levitt, 2001)

Balaguer’s policies generated strong initial growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and attracted a significant amount of investment and foreign aid. But this economic boom was short lived and rising inflation and stagnant wages ensued. To make matters worse, “Balaguer pursued policies that favored urban workers, though nearly half of the Dominican labor force still worked in rural areas in the 1970s. He imposed price controls on agricultural products and terms of exchange which hurt rural producers,” (Levitt 2001) and which led to a sharp decline in agricultural production. These policies were aggravated by longstanding inequities in farming conditions. The majority of rural farm workers did not own their own land at this time, and those who did, owned parcels so small that they could not produce sufficient amounts of food to sustain even one family. Unjust working conditions, chronic poverty and an overall low quality of life for many rural farmers and their families added to this crisis. Employment alternatives to farming however were few, particularly as jobs generated by business and industrial production were more and more concentrated in urban areas. These dire conditions triggered mass internal migration from rural to urban areas in the 1970s, and brought forth a population shift so great that today it is estimated that 50% of all urban residents originate from rural areas. But there were too few jobs for those who migrated to urban areas. Falling wages, rising employment, and growing income inequities among people from different socio-economic classes stimulated the first, large wave of emigration from the urban areas of the DR in history, primarily to the United States.

The growing economic crisis paved the way for the election of Antonio Guzman in 1978. Guzman's major achievement was a process of disarmament and the beginning of a new democracy in the country. However, Guzman could not reverse the deep economic crisis which he had inherited. The late 1970s and early 1980s was a period of severe economic depression in the DR. The country experienced high inflation and rapid monetary devaluation, unmanageable external debt, high consumer prices, commercial bankruptcies, power outages and food riots. It was not long before half of the country's population had incomes below the poverty line. At this point in time, more than 60% of Dominicans lacked access to public services and unemployment had risen to 25%. In response to this crisis, Dominicans continued emigrating abroad in large numbers – to the United States, to other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, and eventually to Europe, including the first migrant flows to Switzerland.

### **New globalization trends contribute to the collapse of agro-exports and give rise to new transnational economic activities and social relations**

Apart from poor economic policy which gave birth to the first large waves of Dominican emigration, the crisis of the 1970s and 1980s was also the result of shifting macroeconomic forces in the region which contributed to the deconstruction of the DR's agro-export industry and redefined the country's economic base. This shift quickly led to the formation of transnational economic and social relations between the DR and Switzerland, and laid the foundation for migration in the 1980s.

In the 1970s, the Dominican economy was based fundamentally on the production and export of agricultural products, mainly sugar. The sugar industry was commonly referred to as the backbone of the Dominican economy because of the important contribution it made to the country's gross domestic product, to exports and to job creation, as well as because of its capacity to stimulate demand in other sectors of the national economy. In the 1980s, the sugar industry began to show signs of crisis. The price for sugar on the international market began to fall dramatically, fundamentally due to competition from European-produced sugar-substitutes and from the growing preference for synthetic sweeteners in the North American market. This market shift was the beginning of the ensuing collapse of a large portion of the DR's sugar production and export.

The collapse of the sugar industry in the DR is just one of numerous examples of agro-economic collapse in countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean in the 1980s. As Dr. William Robinson, Professor of Sociology, Global Studies and Latin America Studies explains in his recent book, *Transnational Conflicts*, this was largely due to new globalization forces. Globalization, as he defines it, "is a qualitatively new stage in the history of world capitalism. It is characterized by the rise of transnational capital and by the supersession of the nation-state as the organizing principle of the capitalist system. This new state conditions development and social change in novel ways." He explains that there have been four distinct phases of world capitalism, the third of which was characterized by the rise of agro-exports after WWII and which came into crisis in the late 1970s. The fourth stage of capitalism, which continues today, began in the early 1980s when the forces of globalized capital facilitated and accelerated a major shift in the economic base of most Latin American and Caribbean countries, a shift away from agriculture towards services. Countries like the DR came to rely on a new set of wealth creating activities, including non-traditional exports, maquilas (export processing zones), migration and remittances, and tourism.

"The shift to the new model can be traced to the world economic shocks of 1979. These shocks dramatically affected macroeconomic performance in the (Latin American and Caribbean) region, undermined financial and exchange rate stability and triggered a cyclic downswing unprecedented since the 1930s...recession in core countries, mounting debt burden and rising interest rates in the 1970s brought international borrowing to an end." (Robinson 2003) In the late 1970s, the world market was saturated by agricultural exports from Latin American and Caribbean countries, and a failure of the region's agro-export producers to organize and control global surpluses led to a fall in world prices, a shift aggravated by a change in market demand. "...fiscal and foreign exchange crises,

which led to cycles of foreign borrowing in order to sustain production and a rising debt burden” marked the beginning of the end for the agro-export industry in the DR and other countries in the region. (Robinson 2003)

In his book, Robinson goes on to explain how Latin American and Caribbean countries like the DR dealt with this huge debt burden and collapsing agro-export market, he explains, “countries entered into negotiation with the IFI (International Financial Institutions), particularly with the IMF (International Monetary Fund), and embarked on adjustment (economic restructuring) programs... The IMF, the World Bank, IDB (InterAmerican Development bank) and the AID (US Agency for International Development) and other institutions of a transnational state began to press (Latin American and Caribbean countries) to turn towards “outward-looking” (economic) strategies. Using the region’s escalating external debt and balance of payments crisis as leverage, they emphasized liberalization and non-traditional export-promotion, including export tax exemptions, credits and the use of Free Trade Zones.” (Robinson 2003)

“The solution to the debt crisis and stagnation was not just increased exports but export diversification. Non-traditional’ exports such as maquila production, tourism and new agricultural and agro-industrial products (were) introduced utilizing the region’s comparative advantage in cheap labor as the basis for rearticulation into the world economy.” (Robinson 2003) The adoption of these new economic activities allowed Latin American and Caribbean countries to integrate themselves into the newly emerging global market place defined by new globalized circuits of production and accumulation, which rely on transnational capital flows and the availability of deregulated and mobile labor pools. Robinson’s explanation of how macroeconomic forces contributed to the reorientation of the core economic activities of most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in the 1980s helps explain the emergence of the DR’s contemporary economic base – the growing importance of services, mainly in the export processing zones and international tourism, and the export of labor generating large inflows of remittances. Two of these activities – international tourism and labor emigration, helped establish the first transnational ties between the DR and Switzerland – ties which facilitated new migration in this transnational corridor.

### **Birth of the international tourism industry in the DR**

The rise to the tourism industry in the DR has been a major factor in the history of Dominican migration to Switzerland. “An intensive propaganda campaign was directed at the less developed countries, which were enjoined to place the tourist sector high on the list of priorities for their economies, to open their frontiers to tourists, to welcome foreign capital for investment in the tourist domain, and to concede tax advantages and guarantees to it.” (Robinson 2003) This was the route taken by the DR and as a result, international tourism now constitutes a core part of the country’s transnational service sector and is a key activity inserting the DR into the global economy.

“The tourist industry is organized as a complex and multi-tiered global service commodity chain connecting activities and groups from the most local and isolated tourist sites to the headquarters of global cities.” (Robinson 2003) This is of critical importance because the rise of tourism in the DR allowed for the development of contemporary transnational relations between Dominicans and Europeans. Starting in the early 1980s, a large number of middle class Europeans began to visit the DR, among them, a large number of Swiss tourists. According to the Dominican Embassy in Bern, approximately 40,000 Swiss tourists have been visiting the DR every year for the past two decades. Visitors are lured by the “4s” of conventional international tourism – sea, sun, sand and sex. The commercialization of sexual images, specifically beautiful and exotic black-skinned Dominican men and women, contribute to the DR’s touristic mystique, and has helped to transform the country into a major destination for sex tourism, attracting North Americans and Europeans to Santo Domingo and to tourist hotels and resort areas along the coast.

Twenty years after its initiation, transnational tourism linking the DR and Switzerland has resulted in a large number of personal relationships and many marriages between Dominicans and Swiss

residents. These personal relationships helped to establish transnational social networks linking the two countries which many other Dominican men and women have used to facilitate their own subsequent migration, either for tourism, marriage or for family reunification. (Lilon y Lantigua, 2004) This bi-continental tourism has also played an important role in the development of labor migration from the DR to Switzerland. Transnational relationships, established initially through tourism, eventually helped give rise to a network of men and women who have helped to recruit thousands of Dominican women to work in Switzerland's cabaret night clubs, as we will discuss later.

This is the historical link between the rise of transnational tourism and the migration of Dominicans to Switzerland. Simply put, tourism attracted Swiss men and women to the DR in large numbers beginning in the 1980s, which gave way to the development of transnational social networks which have facilitated labor migration as well as migration for the purpose of marriage and family reunification. As we will discuss later, this migration pattern has subsequently generated a large and growing flow of remittances from Switzerland to the DR, benefiting thousands of migrant sending families. Perhaps then, the economic and transnational migration history of the DR and Switzerland offers a perfect example of what the contemporary global capitalism model is designed to achieve. At the same time, most Dominicans now face an economic future with few choices, either at home or abroad, forcing them to compete for an insufficient number of exploitative jobs at home, or emigration abroad under conditions which are often equally undesirable.

### **Impact of Swiss Immigration Policy and Rise of Cabaret Industry on Dominican Migration**

Apart from the impact of regional economic crisis and the rise of tourism, there are other important "pull" factors which have influenced the migration of Dominicans to Switzerland, one of which is Swiss Immigration policy. The shifting nature of Swiss immigration policy is outlined here first in general terms and then applied to the case of Dominican migration. The following summary of Swiss immigration policy since the end of WWII is taken from Hans Mahnig and Etienne Piguet's essay entitled, "La politique Suisse d'immigration de 1948 à 1998: evolution et effets," published in 2003.

In the 20th century, Switzerland experienced the highest level of immigration in all of Europe with the result that today, nearly 22% of the Swiss population are foreigners. In the past 60 years, in an effort to manage this large immigration flow, Switzerland has implemented a series of progressively restrictive policies which determine the number and origin of immigrants allowed to enter the country each year. This policy evolution can be described in three distinct phases.

*Phase I - 1950s and 1960s:* After the end of the second World War, when the demand for industrial production to rebuild Europe was high, Switzerland was confronted with a work-force shortage. To meet this demand, the Swiss government signed short-term labor migration accords with neighboring European countries such as Italy, Spain and Portugal. This opened the door to two decades of seasonal labor immigration. Over time, many of these seasonal workers qualified for annual and permanent residency and by 1970, the percentage of foreigners in the Swiss population reached 17%, up from 6% in 1950. This huge jump in the number of foreigners sparked a wave of xenophobic, anti-foreigner movements among Swiss citizens and brought about new restrictions in immigration laws.

*Phase II - 1970s and 1980s:* Beginning in 1970, Swiss immigration was defined by a new "stabilization" policy, which aimed to strike a balance between the threat of the growing foreigner population and the continued need for immigrant labor to fuel the Swiss economy. Annual quotas were established dictating the number and type of immigrants allowed into Switzerland each year and by 1990 the foreigner population in Switzerland had stabilized. Quotas had worked to limit the number of newcomers and the seasonal work permit had been slowly phased out. Simultaneously, the number of asylum seekers in Switzerland began to grow rapidly. This sparked new public debate, which was further aggravated by a new wave of immigration from Eastern Europe after the collapse

of the Soviet Union. These two factors led to the next change in Swiss immigration policy – the adoption of the “Three Circles” approach.

*Phase III – 1990s to the present:* Introduced in 1991, the Three Circles policy was based on the idea that the impact of immigrants in Switzerland not only depended on the number of immigrants, but also on how culturally close those immigrants were to the Swiss population. In an effort to minimize the heterogeneity of new immigrants, three circles were defined. Circle 1 included citizens all countries in the European Union and the EFTA (European Free Trade Association). Circle 2 included citizens of the USA, Canada and eastern European countries. Circle 3 included citizens of all other countries. Under this policy, immigrant permits were distributed based on a migrant’s country of origin, giving European citizens from Circle 1 priority over citizens from other regions of the world. The Three Circles policy however was quickly criticized as being racist and discriminatory. Furthermore, Switzerland began to develop a growing need for more highly qualified migrant workers, a demand not sufficiently met by the Three Circles model. Therefore, in 1998, in anticipation of joining the European Free Circulation Zone, Switzerland moved to a Two-Circle model, which continues today. The Two-Circle model currently in effect gives citizens of the European Union countries preference in the Swiss labor market and prohibits labor immigration by citizens of all other countries, with the exception of high skilled workers in a small number of specialized areas.

Within this general historical context, Swiss immigration policy towards Dominicans can be explained and the effects of these changing policies on Dominican immigration patterns understood and analyzed. Labor market forces, specifically, the growing cabaret dancing industry, also played a major role as we will explain briefly here, and in greater detail in Chapter 2.

The growth of international tourism in the DR and the subsequent transnational relationships formed between Dominican and Swiss citizens brought the first wave of Dominicans to Switzerland in the early 1980s. At this time, the previously mentioned, annual quotas for Swiss work permits were in place, strictly limiting labor migration opportunities, but tourist visits for up to three months were allowed without any visa requirement. In some cases, Dominicans used touristic visits as the first step in their migration strategy, overstaying their legal visitation period and remaining in the country unauthorized. In other cases, Dominicans came as tourists to visit Swiss men and women they met in earlier tourist visits to the DR, visits which sometimes led to marriage, giving these Dominicans legal rights to residency in Switzerland.

Another migration “pull factor” was the growth of the cabaret dancing industry which utilized the emerging transnational relationships between Switzerland and the DR to bring Dominican women to work in Switzerland’s cabaret nightclubs. According to Doro Winkler of FIZ<sup>1</sup> in her 2004 article “Von der Variété Künstlerin zum Go-go-Girl,” Switzerland’s cabaret industry dates back to the 1920s. Cabaret dancing was first legalized in Zurich where musical bands accompanied a variety of exotic dancers in nightly performances. After WWII, these group performances were replaced by individual dancing acts, evermore exotic, erotic and sexual as the growing number of cabaret clubs competed for customers. Recruitment of dancers from Africa, Asia and Latin America became another new business strategy and countries with a history of sex tourism, like the Dominican Republic, were prime recruitment targets. Until the mid 1970s, cabaret owners were free to recruit and hire whomever they wished for this work and no restrictions or regulations were put on their employment. But in 1974, when the Swiss government introduced their new regime of annual quotas, the cabaret industry was obliged to follow suit. For a while, the number of permits for cabaret dancing was limited the same way seasonal agricultural work permits were controlled. But successful lobbying by the cabaret owners union (ASCO) soon led to a lifting of these restrictions. At this point, labor migration laws for cabaret dancers diverted from general Swiss migration policy, and still today remain an anomaly.

---

<sup>1</sup> Zurich-based NGO which works to protect the rights of foreign women in Switzerland



According to the Swiss Federal Office of Migration (FOM), in 1981, in an attempt to better protect the rights of women working in cabaret bars and to regulate their employment, Switzerland established a short-term labor permit specifically for cabaret dancers, which was adapted from an earlier 8-month “Artistic Performance” permit for theater actors and other entertainers. This permit was first negotiated among government representatives and cabaret club owners, and a standard work contract was developed stipulating the nature of the work required and the minimum salary to be paid, placing a limit on the costs that can be levied against each dancer’s salary and ensuring dancers some basic rights, such as health insurance. This short-term “L” permit and the standard contract were also established to enforce minimum age requirements and provide women a legal basis to lodge a complaint or seek help in the case of abuse.

Throughout the 1980s, in the era of strict annual migration quotas and strong public pressure to reduce the number of short term labor contracts offered, the Swiss government curiously continued to provide cabaret clubs with an ample supply of cabaret dancing permits. Transnational relations established mainly through growing tourism linking Switzerland and the DR contributed to the recruitment of Dominican women for this purpose. Given the economic crisis in the DR, high rates of unemployment and a growing number of poorly paid jobs in the emerging export processing industry, it is not surprising that a number of Dominican woman opted for this legal labor migration opportunity.

**L Permits awarded to Dominican women from 1993 to 2004**

Source: Swiss Federal Office of Migration

	1993	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04
Dominican citizens with L Permits on 12/31	337	412	286	294	292	317	225	212	201	139	158	196
Total # of L Permits Granted Annually to Dominicans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	794	720	725

NOTE: Data not available for annual permits from 1993 through 2001

With the exception of a few improvements in working conditions for these migrant workers, this situation remains more or less the same today. Important shifts in Swiss migration policy from an annual quota regime to a three and two circle policy has had little impact on this labor migration anomaly. For Dominicans, the L Permit for cabaret dancing has proved to be the only significant legal labor migration opportunity to come to Switzerland and Dominican women continue to be recruited for this work, although their numbers have been reduced as market preferences now favor women from the former USSR and eastern Europe. The majority of Dominican men and women are excluded from other types of labor migration opportunities as they are not EU citizens and because most do not fulfill the requirements for highly qualified workers in designated special areas. There have been a few exceptions of Dominican migrants with special skills in areas such as nursing and professional athletics, but these migration experiences remain the grand exception.

In direct opposition to the continued openness of the cabaret labor permit, laws regulating tourism of Dominican citizens to Switzerland have been severely restricted. In the mid 1990s, when the Swiss government began to require Dominican citizens to obtain a tourism visa, and significantly increased the requirements for obtaining these visas, tourism from the DR to Switzerland was drastically reduced.

At the same time, Swiss policies regulating the rights to residency and citizenship have also been tightened. In the 1980s, Dominicans who married Swiss residents were immediately granted the same immigration status as their spouse – an annual (B ) or permanent (C ) residency permit. Dominicans who married a Swiss citizen were given an immediate opportunity to apply for citizenship. Today, a Dominican who marries a Swiss citizen or permanent resident only becomes eligible to apply for permanent residency after five years of marriage. This change of status is very important as only a permanent residency permit allows a Dominican man or woman to divorce and remain legally in Switzerland. Divorce during the annual residency period usually results in expulsion from the

country. As for obtaining Swiss citizenship, this is only possible for Dominicans married to Swiss citizens, and only after a very extended period of legal residency.

What can be concluded then is that the narrow and restrictive policies of the Swiss state towards Dominicans in the areas of tourism, marriage, and labor immigration, have fundamentally shaped migration patterns among Dominicans in Switzerland over the past 20 years. The fact that labor immigration is, for all practical purposes, limited to cabaret dancing, has defined the gendered nature of this migrant group and steered large numbers of women towards work they would not likely choose if other legal labor migration opportunities were available. Finally, the fact that marriage to a Swiss resident is the only viable option for most Dominicans to remain in the country legally explains why many Dominican women, and a growing number of men, use this strategy to migrate and establish residency.

Dominican migration continues today mainly thanks to the ever-expanding transnational social networks linking Dominicans in Switzerland to friends, relatives and acquaintances in the DR. This transnational network feeds a vibrant transatlantic marriage market and helps facilitate a continual flow of young Dominicans who come to Switzerland to be reunited with their migrant parents who have established legal residence in Switzerland. The rise of second generation Dominicans in Switzerland, most of which are the children of bicultural couples established in the 1980s and 1990s, is also an important and complex new trend.

## CHAPTER 2      MIGRATION PATTERNS OF DOMINICANS IN SWITZERLAND

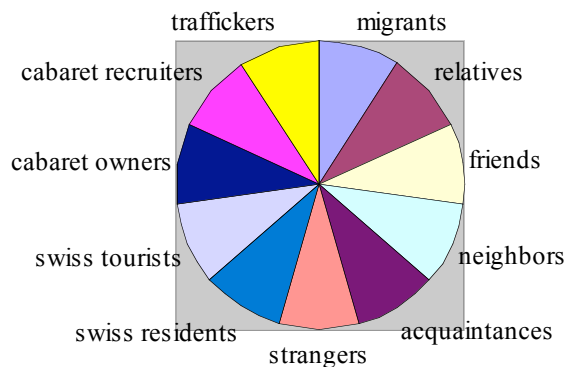
This chapter is dedicated to a more indepth discussion of each of the migration patterns introduced in Chapter 1. We use social network theory as an analytical tool to help understand the formation, functioning and growth of these migration pathways, all of which were described by migrants and their families in our interviews both in Switzerland and in our case study community of Dona Ana in the DR.

The migration of Dominicans to Switzerland has been based, primarily, on a vast transnational social network. A social network is a distinct group of actors or group of actors and the web of relations between them., a web which is formed and held together by the direct and indirect experiences, responsibilities, favors and information that are shared by the group. Social network theory allows for an analysis of the relations that exist between different actors within the context of a more global social structure where these same kinds of relationships are replicated. Social network analysis helps to show how different factors (information, influence, resources, help, etc.) circulate between on actor and another and how these factors are linked to a larger network. (Requena Santos, 1991 ) (Wasserman and Faust, 1994)

Migration patterns linking the DR and Switzerland are well explained by this sort of social network theory which is detailed in the works by Requena Santos, Wasserman and Faust. The migration pathways which we have identified in this case study are highly dependent on the flow of information, resources and responsiblities among and between people in both places. In this chapter and in Chapter 3 we will discuss the specific elements that connect these migration sending and receiving societies and the role that social networks play in the development and sustenance of these transnational migration pathways.

The specific migration patterns that we will describe and analyze in this chapter include: labor migration for cabaret dancing, marriage migration and family reunification. All of these migration pathways are facilitated by social networks. These networks are composed of migrants, friends, relatives, neighbors, acquaintances, strangets, traffickers, Swiss residents, Swiss tourists, labor migration recruiters, cabaret owners, and probably many more. We discovered that at different points in the migration process, any one of these network members can play the role of an intermediary, helping to make the connection between migrants in the DR and the Swiss society - facilitating the acquisition of a labor contract, a marriage offer, a tourist visa or a residency permit. Sometimes the role of an intermediary is voluntary and informal. Other times, these social networks are facilitated by formal, paid intermediaries, who sometimes operate under false pretenses for the purpose of human trafficking and exploitation.

### Social Network Members (and Intermediaries) Linking Dominicans to Switzerland

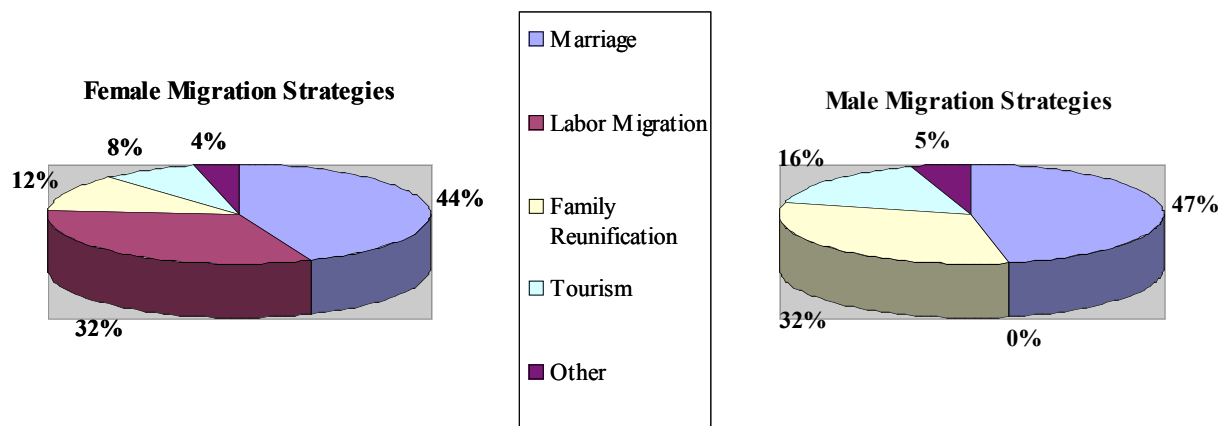


Migration is an experience that has become a dream for a large part of the Dominican population. As many authors have discussed, migration is a complex phenomenon, more than anything, because of the many factors and processes which facilitate the movement of people across space and time. As migration scholar Alejandro Portes explains, “Migratory movements evolve out of a series of rational economic decisions by individuals who want to leave their immediate situation behind, the origins of which lie in the economic, political and power relations between migrant sending and receiving countries.”

In the case of Dominicans in Switzerland, the migration process has been defined by the migration of people out of the country for economic reasons but which is facilitated by informal social networks. The graphs below detail the primary migration pathways which have brought Dominican women and men to Switzerland over the past 25 years (1980 to 2005) and which have been perpetuated by growing transnational social networks. These primary migration pathways include: labor migration for cabaret dancing, marriage, tourism and family reunification.

As the charts below show, labor migration for work in cabaret bars was a strategy reported by 32% of the migrants we interviewed. A more common strategy was migration to Switzerland for marriage purposes, reported by 44% of women and 47% of men. Migration to Switzerland for family unification purposes was the most important pattern found among the men we interviewed (32%), but this strategy only represented 12% of female cases. Finally, entering Switzerland as a tourist, finding informal work, and remaining in Switzerland without legal residency was a strategy employed by 8% of the women and 16% of the men we spoke with.

Looking at these statistics, we can conclude that migration for the purpose of marriage is the most common migration pathway for both Dominican men and women coming to Switzerland. In the case of women, labor migration for work in cabaret clubs is the second most common migration pathway. In the case of men, family regroupment is the second most common route. Entering on a tourist visa is the third most important migration strategy for men, while a much smaller percentage of women report entering Switzerland for either family regroupment or tourism purposes. The “other” category is composed mostly of Dominicans who migrated to Switzerland for other kinds of employment opportunities. We will discuss three of these migration pathways in more depth in the sections that follow.



### Labor Migration for Cabaret Dancing

For about 25 years, Dominican women have been migrating to Switzerland to work as exotic dancers in the country’s many cabaret night clubs. According to SwissInfo, Switzerland’s largest online newspaper, “Switzerland is the only country in Europe that offers an artistic visa specifically for cabaret dancing, the L Permit, in which the person is allowed to migrant to Switzerland on a

temporary basis to work in a musical performance in which s/he becomes partly or entirely undressed.” (Swissinfo)

As we discussed in chapter 1, the link between Dominican migrants and cabaret clubs in Switzerland was first established in the early 1980s as an extension of the transnational social relations that were the outgrowth of tourist visits by Swiss residents to the DR. These initial transnational relationships formed the base of what is now a large network of migrants and intermediaries who facilitate the recruitment of Dominican women to work in the cabaret clubs in Switzerland. Most Dominican women who migrate to Switzerland through this means obtain a short term labor contract through her connections in a web of friends and relatives who are already residing and working in a Swiss cabaret club or who have done so in the past. These friends and relatives, acting as migration intermediaries, negotiate with the owners of the Swiss cabaret clubs to obtain new cabaret work contracts which they then offer to their sisters, cousins, neighbors, friends, etc. in the DR. It is also common for these women who are working as intermediaries to loan money to the new migrant to cover her migration costs. We interviewed a number of Dominican women whose initial migration experience mirrored this description. Unfortunately, in addition to the social networks of relatives and friends that serve to bring Dominican women to Switzerland to work as cabaret dancers, we were also told of several cases in which women were trafficked for this work. In these cases, the intermediaries were more commonly strangers and distant acquaintances who promised the interested Dominican migrants a legal labor contract and legal emigration papers, but instead, lured them into a situation of forced labor and sexual exploitation with false contracts, visas and passports

Dominican women who enter Switzerland on a Permit L for cabaret dancing are allowed residency and a working contract for up to eight months. At the end of that eight month period, migrants are required to leave the country, either to go back to the DR or to go elsewhere in Europe, a policy which is strictly enforced by Swiss authorities. Migrants may re-enter on a new contract at any point. In our interviews, we spoke with several women who have migrated to Switzerland multiple times under these terms, particularly women who leave children and husbands behind when they migrate to Switzerland to work.

In other cases, migrants reported entering Switzerland on a cabaret contract, and then during the eight month work period, meeting a man with legal Swiss residency and making arrangements to marry him. In this cases, most women returned home to the DR at the end of their labor contract or before, got married to these men in the DR, and then re-entered Switzerland as their wives with legal residency rights.

Besides patterns of circular labor migration, coming and going on different cabaret contracts, or initial labor migration leading to marriage, we also spoke with a few migrants who had entered Switzerland as cabaret dancers, or as tourists, overstayed the legally authorized period, found new work, most often in the service sector (restaurants, hotels, beauty salons), and continued to live and work in Switzerland without legal authorization. However, the number of these cases in recent years has declined dramatically.

**Common patterns of labor migration (for cabaret dancing) and subsequent migration/residency strategies**

Source: migrant interviews

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Pattern 1	Cabaret contract	Cabaret contract	Cabaret contract
Pattern 2	Cabaret contract	Marriage to a Swiss Resident	---
Pattern 3	Cabaret contract	Undocumented residency/work	Marriage to a Swiss resident

In some, but certainly not all of the cases of Dominican women who migrated to Switzerland to work in the cabaret clubs, we found that the practice of prostitution in its many forms was another income-generating strategy used by migrant women, either because they were undocumented and could not find other kinds of work, or as an additional income-generating activity to supplement the income they earned working in the cabaret clubs. In a few cases, we found that women who were married to

men who did not allow them to work outside the home sometimes engaged in prostitution activities in order to generate money which they could send home to their families in the DR.

In a very small number of cases we spoke with Dominicans who had migrated to Switzerland for other kinds of employment opportunities, specifically as nurses and professional athletes. Nevertheless, as we mentioned in Chapter 1, current Swiss immigration law restricts labor migration to EU citizens and other very high skilled professions in a small number of strategic areas. As most Dominicans do not fall into these categories, either because they lack the necessary education and training or because their educational credentials are not considered equivalent, legal labor immigration continues to be limited mostly to cabaret dancing.

## **Arranged Marriage**

Given the extremely limited nature of legal labor migration opportunities for Dominicans who want to come to Switzerland, marriage has become the primary migration strategy for both men and women as it is the only way for many people to obtain long term legal residency status in Switzerland. The extent to which this strategy is employed is evidenced by in the fact that el 80% of the Dominicans we interviewed are married, the majority of them with Swiss citizens or permanent residents. Our discussion with Dominicans revealed the presence of these particular marriage patterns, each of where we discuss here. There are of course a few cases of marriage migration that fall outside of these three patterns, but these are the exception to the rule.

The first kind of marriage migration commonly observed is one that results from direct personal relationships between Dominican migrants and Swiss residents which are often initially established through touristic visits in the DR. If the couple meets in Switzerland, it is usually because the Dominican man or woman has entered the country on a tourist visa or short term labor contract. These terms however do not allow Dominican citizens to remain in Switzerland more than a few months, so marriage becomes the only viable long term option if they wish to remain legally in the country.

The second kind of marriage migration results from the intervention of a close friend or relative who serves as an intermediary. This intermediary helps facilitate the connection between the two people, one in Switzerland and the other in the Dominican Republic, and initiates the marriage process. In these cases, the intermediary also sometimes provides the Dominican partner with a loan to finance his or her trip to Switzerland.

In the third case, the marriage is a business arrangement for the sole purpose of facilitating legal migration to Switzerland. In this cases, the intermediary is sometimes a friend or relative, but more often is an acquaintance or even a stranger who charges a fee for his or her services. The fact that so many Dominicans want or need to emigrate allows these intermediaries to charge an enormous fee for their service. In addition to paying the intermediary, the migrant must also pay a large sum to the Swiss citizen or permanent resident that has agreed to marry them and facilitate their migration and legal residency. At the time of our interviews, the price for this type of arranged migration marriage was 30,000 swiss francs.

For many Dominicans who wish to reside legally in Switzerland, marriage has proven to be a successful long-term migration strategy. Sometimes these marriages result in long lasting love relationships. For others, it is simply a mechanism for obtaining a more stable legal status. In many cases, basic differences in age, socio-economic status, culture, traditional gender roles and/or language present serious barriers to the success of these relationships. Several of our interviews revealed situations in which the two people who got married could barely communicate with each other as they did not speak a common language. Several Dominican men and women reported that in order to cope better with their situation, they maintained other parallel relationships in the Dominican Republic and/or in Switzerland during the course of their marriage. Regardless of these difficulties however, the frequency of marriage as a long term migration strategy continues unabated.



## **Family Reunification/Regroupment**

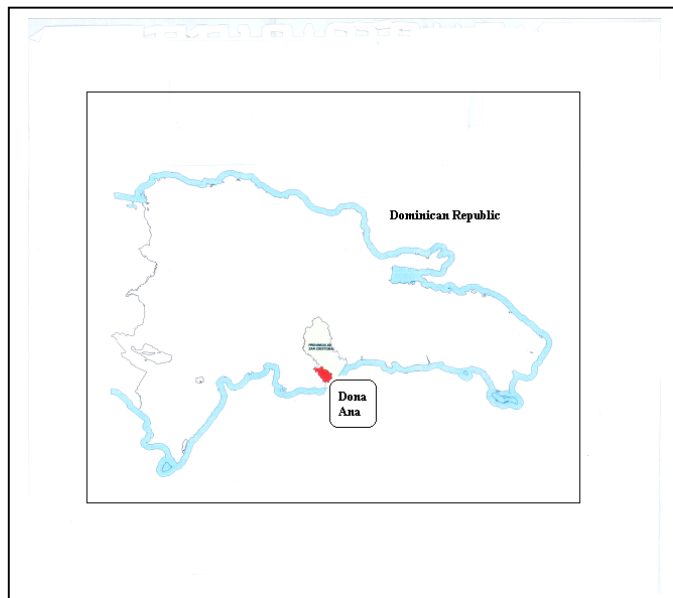
The third important migration pattern linking Dominicans to Switzerland is family reunification/regroupment. Under Swiss law, Dominicans with legal annual or permanent residency have the right to bring their dependent children and/or spouse to join them in Switzerland in a legal process known as “family regroupment or reunification.” A large number of the young Dominicans we interviewed have come to Switzerland through this route, joining their mothers who migrated years earlier. In fact, family regroupment has been the most important migration pattern among Dominican children and adolescents in Switzerland. Additionally, in a small number of cases, Dominican women and men who have obtained legal permanent residency through a previous marriage to a Swiss resident or citizen, and then divorced, remarry and use this strategy to bring a new Dominican spouse to Switzerland.

## CHAPTER 3 DONA ANA: A PROFILE OF ONE MIGRANT-SENDING COMMUNITY WITH LINKS TO SWITZERLAND

In this chapter, our analysis takes a different direction. Here we examine this migration chain from the perspective of one migrant-sending community in the Dominican Republic with strong links to Switzerland – the community of Dona Ana.

### Economic Profile of the Community of Dona Ana – Past and Present

Dona Ana is officially classified as a rural community, although given its level of physical infrastructure, it is better described as a semi-rural/semi-urban town with a population of approximately 6,300 inhabitants. (National Census of Population and Housing – 2002). The community is located within the province of San Cristobal, one of the most populated provinces in the DR.



San Cristobal was one of the most important centers of activity for the sugar industry in the DR in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, the province was home to one of the oldest and largest sugar processing factories and vast acreage of sugar cane fields which supplied the factory with its raw material. Numerous people from the area were employed in the fields and at the factory. Others made their living raising animals (pigs, goats, chickens), growing and selling mangos, or in the lumber industry.

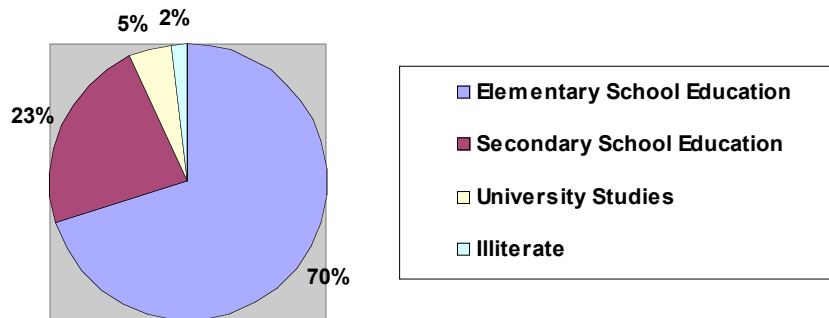
The economic well being of the province of San Cristobal was heavily affected by the economic crisis of the 1980s. When the sugar industry collapsed, the economic base throughout the province, including in Dona Ana, shifted radically to adjust to this new reality. Formal and informal employment in construction, export processing zones, commonly referred to as “La Zonas Franca,” services, transportation, the military and domestic work in households in Santo Domingo became the economic mainstay of most families. Agricultural work and the raising of animals became progressively less commonplace. This situation continues today.

## Income and Education

Like so much of the Dominican population, the majority of inhabitants of Dona Ana live in conditions of poverty, with 57% of the population below the poverty line. In terms of their level of education, 70% of residents possess only an elementary school education. 23% have completed secondary school, 5% have completed a university degree and 2% of people are illiterate.

### Levels of Education of the Residents of Dona Ana

Source: DR National Census



## Housing and Basic Services

It's important to point out that while the population of Dona Ana is economically poor, housing conditions in the community do not reflect the same kind of extreme poverty that exists in many places around the country. The vast majority of homes in Dona Ana are made from concrete or wood, most often with tin roofs and cement floors. However, some of the poorest families in town live in homes made from scrap materials while some of the wealthier families enjoy homes made entirely from concrete.

In our interviews, people described Dona Ana twenty years ago as a rural farm area with only a small number of homes made exclusively from palm wood. Most families lived in homes separated by large distances, connected by narrow roads made of dirt or small stones and placed within the landscape of sugar cane fields, palm and mango groves and open space where animals grazed. Most families lived primarily from what they could generate on their land. Water was gathered from the nearby river and electrical services were minimal and inconsistent. There was no formal system of waste removal so everyone used outdoor latrines and the unavailability of gas meant that people cooked on wooden fires. Besides farm land and residential housing, the community also had a very small number of local businesses, mainly family stores selling food and drinks.

## Patterns of Migration and a Profile of “Las Viajeras” (the migrants)

In the last 15 to 20 years, like many rural communities and small towns in the DR, Dona Ana has become a place largely affected by international migration. The first people to leave Dona Ana went mainly to the United States, to Venezuela and to the other islands in the Caribbean. More recently, emigration has been focused towards Europe, more specifically, to Italy, Holland, Switzerland and most recently to Spain. Earlier waves of migration to the US was predominantly a male phenomenon, but the more recent migration to Europe, above all to Switzerland, has been, by and large, feminine in nature.

As we described earlier, migration of Dominicans to Switzerland has been characterized by three main patterns, one of which is labor migration for cabaret dancing. This has been the principal migration pathway linking Dona Ana to Switzerland. In fact, in every household where we conducted interviews in Dona Ana, in which the family had a migrant relative in Switzerland, the migrant was a women who had originally gone to Switzerland on a cabaret labor contract. Given the nature of their

migration, these migrant relatives are all relatively young women between the ages of 21 and 39 years old, with an average age of 33. We also interviewed a small number of families whose migrant relative was very young, between the ages of 16 and 19 years, a finding that reflects previously mentioned cases of underage women being recruited for cabaret labor contracts and whose identity documents are falsified in order to facilitate their migration to Switzerland.

The vast majority (78%) of families interviewed has a migrant relative who went to Switzerland sometime between 1991 and 2001 (4 to 12 years ago) as shown in the chart below. We did not find a single family whose migrant relative had left Dona Ana before 1990 and we only interviewed two families whose migrant relative had left for Switzerland after 2001. This is due to three factors: (1) the fact that it is now very difficult for Dominicans to obtain tourist visas for Switzerland, (2) the fact that the number of cabaret labor contracts offered to Dominican has been significantly reduced, and (3) because most women from Dona Ana migrated to Switzerland at a very young age and did not leave children or spouses behind that could later migrant to Switzerland under family reunification laws.

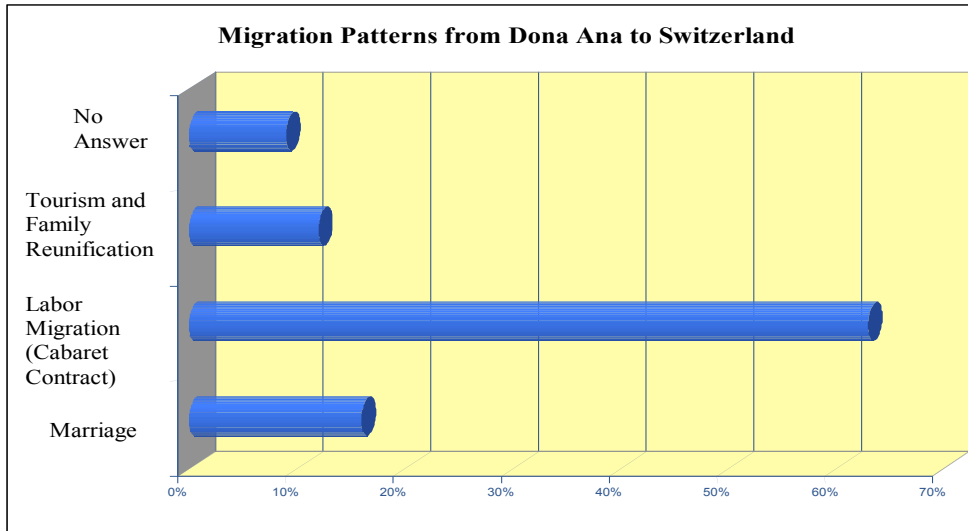
<b>Time in Switzerland</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b> (Total = 32 cases)	<b>Percentage</b> (100%)
Less than 1 year	1	3%
1-3 years	1	3%
4-6 years	9	28%
7-9 years	8	25%
10-12 years	9	28%
13-15 years	3	9%
More than 15 years	0	0%
No answer	1	3%

Another important characteristic of the migrants from Dona Ana who went to Switzerland is that they come, primarily, from families that are in relatively good financial condition, particularly from the four or five extended families with an elite socio-economic status in the community. This is likely due to the fact that travelling to Switzerland involves significant cost for migrant families, costs which include obtaining labor contracts through intermediaries as well as the cost of the flight to Europe. To cover these costs, most families are forced to sell land, animals and/or to take out loans at high interest rates. “The women that go (to Switzerland) are the ones that can afford to pay to get a contract (cabaret) which they get through their friends and family,” commented one informant, “most of them come from Dona Ana’s most powerful families.”

Migration of women from Dona Ana to Switzerland has followed three particular patterns as described by the families we interviewed. The first is a pattern of circular labor migration – a back and forth pattern in which migrants come and go between Dona Ana and Switzerland on a series of short term labor contracts. Migrants from 13% of the families we interviewed followed this pattern.

The second pattern, and the most common, is migration for work or tourism, which later leads to marriage. This was the pattern found in 78% of the households we interviewed. In this case, women spend a few months in Switzerland, either working in a cabaret club or as a tourist, return to the DR, and then through contacts they made in their travels, they return to Switzerland to marry a Swiss citizen or permanent resident and establish a new life in Switzerland. As one informant explained, “She went (to Switzerland) on a (dancing) contract, and she went back and forth until she found a Swiss man to marry.”

We also found a few cases in which women from Dona Ana migrated originally to other European countries, such as Greece or Italy, and from there, went to Switzerland. As one migrant’s mother explained, “At first, she went to Greece on a (cabaret) contract, but she didn’t like it so she went to Switzerland where she got a new (cabaret) contract, and after that, she went back and forth between Dona Ana and Switzerland.”



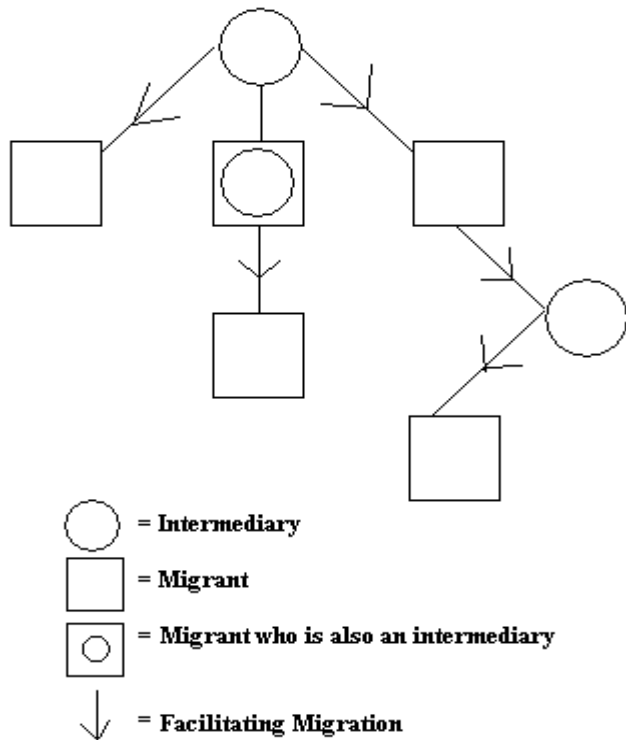
One final point to mention here is the link that Dona Ana has to certain migrant destination points in Switzerland. In several cases, families claimed not to know where their migrant relative lived in Switzerland. Among those who knew, the largest number (22%) told us that their relative lived in Basel. Other cities mentioned included Zurich, Lucern and Aarau, all cities in Switzerland’s German speaking cantons, demonstrating the strength of social networks connecting Dona Ana to a specific migrant receiving region.

### **The role of social networks in facilitating migration from Dona Ana to Switzerland**

Our interviews in Dona Ana highlighted the important role that social networks composed of relatives and neighbors have played in facilitating and supporting migration between Dona Ana and Switzerland. Many of the first migrants from Dona Ana, who left for Switzerland 15 years ago, came from Dona Ana’s wealthiest families, families who owned a majority of the land in Dona Ana and who could afford the costs of migration to Switzerland. These women initially obtained their work contracts through friends in other parts of the province of San Cristobal. Once their own migration experience was successful, they began to negotiate labor (cabaret) contracts for others – friends, relatives, neighbors – one after the other until a large network of labor migrants from Dona Ana was established. This is the social network that has facilitated labor migration to Switzerland ever since. As one informant explained, “My daughter found a way to migrate with the help of our neighbor who arranged her trip and took her to Switzerland. Her father sold a piece of land, and with the money he made, he was able to pay the person who arranged her trip and her work contract. Later, my daughter negotiated a second contract for her sister. “ Another informate explained, “My sister left on a work contract that she got through a friend, and after that my sister got contracts for my other sisters and our cousins. Now everyone is there (Switzerland).”

The model the follows demonstrates, in more general terms, how social networks facilitate the migration of Dominicans from Dona Ana to Switzerland. The intermediary role can be played by many different people, including migrants themselves, cabaret owners/recruiters, Swiss spouses, or the neighbors, friends, relatives or acquaintances of migrants. The migrants, as represented in this diagram, are often friends, neighbors or close relatives.

**Model Demonstrating How Social Networks Facilitate Migration of Dominicans to Switzerland**



Another place in which social networks play a critical role is in determining costs related to migration. In order to obtain a work contract, many migrant families from Dona Ana report having paid between \$700 and \$1,000 US. Today, the price has tripled, reaching \$3,000 US in some cases. Fees like this are found in most cases where the intermediary is a neighbor, acquaintance or friend of the migrant. In cases where migration is facilitated by a family member, there is normally no intermediary fee, but rather the expectation of future reciprocity of some sort.

In sum, our observations in Dona Ana help to confirm our earlier findings regarding the primary migration pathways connecting Dominican migrant-sending communities and Switzerland, and reinforced the important role that social networks have played in building and sustaining these migration flows. These complex social networks, which now permeate a large percentage of the Dona Ana population, are fed by a continual exchange of favors and a persistent sense of obligatory reciprocity among nearly all the migrant-sending families we spoke with.

**The role of voodoo practices in helping to facilitate migration**

One final note which we include here, because it is both unique and important, is the role that voodoo practices play in facilitating migration from Dona Ana to Switzerland. During our field work in both Switzerland and in Dona Ana, we encountered a number of cases in which voodoo rituals played a role in the migration experience. In a few Dominican homes in Switzerland, we found religious alters featuring voodoo symbols which are linked to practices commonly found among poor and working-class populations throughout the DR. These voodoo practices exist in Dona Ana as well, side by side with formal, main stream religious practices and the more than ten protestant and catholic churches scattered throughout the town.

Unlike formal religion, the practice of voodoo remains clandestine. It is practiced in private spaces and identified most commonly by the presence of small, home-based alters. These alters are most commonly found in the homes of voodoo “witches,” who are sometimes also referred to as “servidores

de misterios.” In Dona Ana, these voodoo witches offer “magic services” which people believe help fix problems and bring about desired changes in their lives. Many migrants use the services of these witches to try and influence their attempts to arrange for a labor migration contract or to find someone to marry abroad. Some migrants visit voodoo witches just before leaving Dona Ana to help guarantee the success of their migration experience. The fact that so many woman in Dona Ana have succeeded in obtaining visas and work contracts has reinforced many people’s belief in this practice, one which is generously paid for in both cash and in gifts brought back by migrants when they return home.

## CHAPTER 4 A SNAPSHOT OF THE DOMINICAN MIGRANT POPULATION IN SWITZERLAND

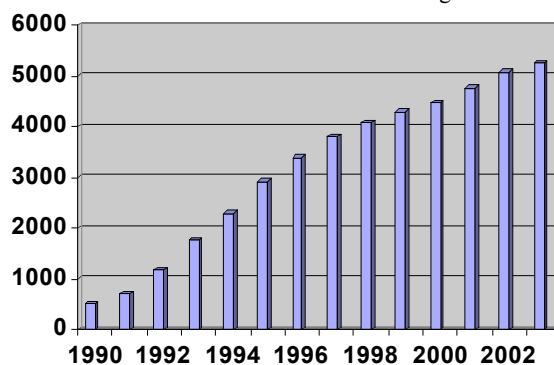
Having explained and analyzed the history and migration patterns linking the DR and Switzerland, here in Chapter 4 we present a snapshot of the Dominican population in Switzerland as it exists today.

### Population Size

Perhaps most basic to any population profile is the question of size. The number of Dominicans in Switzerland today we estimate to be approximately 8,000 people. This number is derived by combining official Swiss statistical data and other available sources. In December 2003, the Swiss Federal Office of Statistics published a report which estimated the total size of the Dominican population to be 5,249. When this figure is combined with the 1,387 Dominicans who have obtained Swiss citizenship since 1990, undocumented Dominicans (estimated at no more than 500 people), and a growing number of second-generation Dominicans who are Swiss citizens because one of their parents is Swiss, the total Dominican population is likely to be around 8,000 people. If our estimate is correct, Dominicans in Switzerland are the third largest diaspora in Europe, after Spain and Italy.<sup>2</sup>

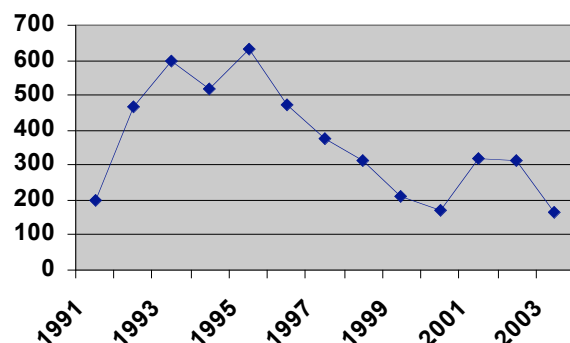
The charts below show the growth of the Dominican migrant population from 1990 until 2003. Dominicans who enter and/or reside in Switzerland unauthorized are not represented here. Neither do these charts include Dominicans who were born in Switzerland and who hold Swiss citizenship. Besides the total size of the community, these charts also demonstrate that Dominican migration to Switzerland has experienced three distinct waves. The first group, not shown here for lack of official statistical data, came to Switzerland between 1975, the first known case, and 1991. The second and more important immigration wave was between the years 1992 and 1998. The third migration wave began in 1999 and continues today.

**Growth of the Dominican foreigner population in Switzerland: 1990-2003**  
Source: Swiss Federal Office of Migration



*Figures exclude Dominicans with Swiss nationality and those who are undocumented*

**Annual Net Growth of New Dominican Migrant Arrivals: 1990 – 2003**  
Source: Swiss Federal Office of Migration



*Figures only include documented arrivals*

### A Snapshot of Contemporary Growth Patterns in the Dominican Population - 2003

While labor migration, mainly for cabaret dancing, was the original pathway by which most Dominicans migrated to Switzerland in the 1980s and 1990s, growth in this migrant population is now

<sup>2</sup> Dominicans in Spain estimated by the Spanish National Institution of to be 45,000 in 2003; Dominicans in Italy estimated by IOM to be 11,400 in 2000;



driven almost exclusively by “family reunification” which encompasses both marriage migration and the reunification of adolescent children with their migrant parents as well as reunification of spouses. This contemporary migration pattern is clearly demonstrated in the charts below. Another very important fact shown by these statistics is the large number of Dominicans acquiring Swiss nationality each year. Once a Dominican man or woman acquires Swiss nationality, they are no longer counted in Swiss foreigner statistics. This means that the total Dominican foreign population census, as seen in the first chart below, is therefore grossly underestimating the real size of the Dominican-born population.

### Patterns of Growth in the Dominican Population in Switzerland in 2003

Source: Swiss Federal Office of Migration

<b>Overall Growth in the Dominican Population in the year 2003</b>	
Total Dominican population in Switzerland on December 31, 2003	5,216
Total Dominican population in Switzerland on December 31, 2002	5,048
Absolute growth in population in 2003	+168
% growth in population in 2003	+3.3%

<b>Reasons for Population Increase</b>		
Family Reunification (for marriage and joining children or spouses)	543	83%
Births	63	10%
Other (mainly for labor migration)	49	7%
Total	+655	100%

<b>Reasons for Population Decrease</b>		
Acquisition of Swiss Nationality	252	57%
Departure	108	24%
Other	79	18%
Death	3	1%
Total	442	100%

NOTE: Adjustment exists in these statistics of -45 people, to bring the total growth in line with figures given in the top box

### Gender Division

Over the years, Dominican migration to Switzerland has been predominately a female phenomenon, mirroring patterns of Dominican migration to other European countries. The gendered nature of this migrant population reflects kinds of migration opportunities that have been available to Dominicans in the Swiss context over the past two decades. Nevertheless, in recent years, the percentage of Dominican men migrating to Switzerland has risen dramatically, mainly due to the growing frequency of men and boys coming to Switzerland to be reunited with their Dominican-born mothers and wives. The growing number of Dominican men who have come to Switzerland in recent years to marry Swiss women has also contributed to a shifting gender balance.

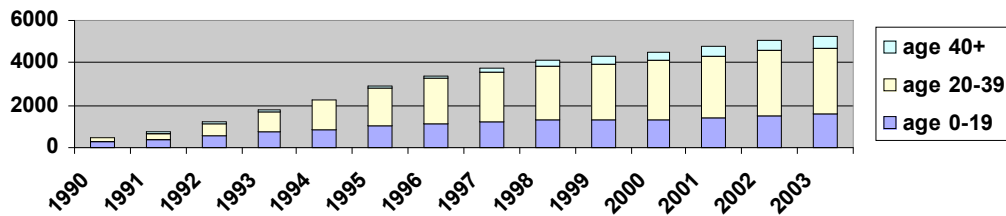
### Emergence of the 1.5 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation

Another important demographic trend among this population is the slow but steady growth of the youngest contingent of Dominicans in Switzerland – those under the age of 20. Today’s Dominican community in Switzerland includes two distinct groups – the “1.5 Generation” - Dominicans that migrated to Switzerland as children following the earlier migration of their Dominican mothers, and the emerging “2<sup>nd</sup> Generation” - Dominicans born in Switzerland, principally to parents of mixed nationality (one Dominican parent, one Swiss parent). Continued growth among these younger generational groups is now substituting for diminishing labor migration of Dominican adults. Today, the total population of Dominicans under the age of 20 years is estimated at between 2,000 and 2,500 people, a figure which represents close to 30% of the total Dominican population in Switzerland. The chart below shows the growth of this population, although it is important to note that Dominicans who

are the children of bicultural (Swiss and Dominican) couples and who hold Swiss citizen are not included in these statistics.

### Growth of Dominican Immigrant Population By Age Category, 1990-2003

Source: Swiss Federal Office of Statistics



*Important Note: Chart does not include Dominicans with Swiss citizenship*

### Migration Sending and Receiving Points

In terms of geographic origins, Dominicans in Switzerland come from a variety of places, five of which stand out above the rest. These predominant places of origin include: (1) the urban neighborhoods of Santo Domingo, (2) Santiago – the country’s second largest urban area, (3) the industrial province of San Cristobal, (4) La Vega, and (5) the touristic province of Higuey. Generally speaking, there is a tendency towards migration to Switzerland from urban areas, but not exclusively.



- Most Important Migrant Sending Points Between the DR and Switzerland**
1. Santo Domingo
  2. Santiago
  3. San Cristobal
  4. La Vega
  5. Higuey

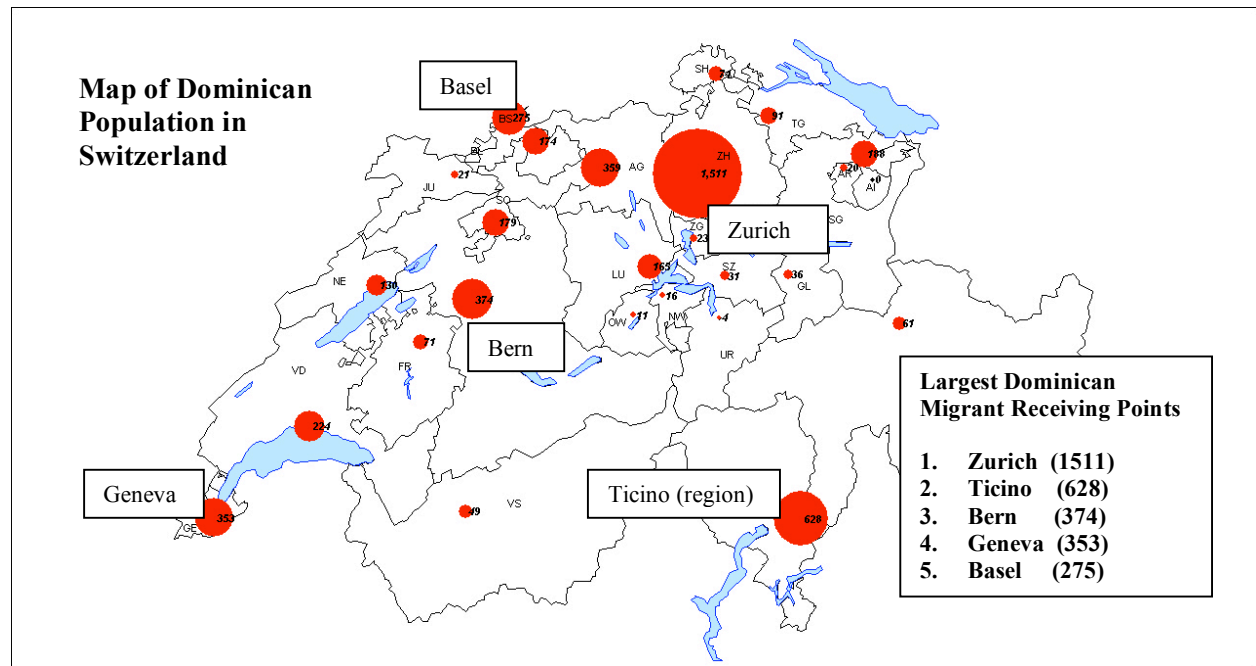
Regardless of where they come from, the vast majority (more than 70%) of Dominicans in Switzerland come from families which they describe as “poor” or “very poor,” with low levels of formal education and large number of children. These findings reflect the patterns of internal Dominican migration from poor, rural areas to urban areas in the 1980s and 90s and the subsequent emigration from these urban centers to international destinations that we discussed in Chapter 1.

When Dominicans come to Switzerland, the largest number of people end up in Zurich, which according to Swiss census data, is home to 30 % of the Dominican population. The Canton of Ticino is the second largest receiving point. Tertiary receiving cities include: Basel, Bern, Aargau and Geneva. Information collected about undocumented Dominicans in Switzerland suggests that there are likely more Dominicans living in Geneva and in the Ticino region that are reflected in the official statistics due to the proximity of these two places to the border with France and Italy, making them more likely to house unusually large numbers of migrants who cross the border clandestinely by foot and establish themselves in Switzerland with out legal authorization. In addition to these general

settlement patterns, we also found a few more specific links between sending and receiving points. For example – many Dominicans from Higuey living in Geneva, and many people from Santiago, La Vega and San Cristobal living in Zurich and the canton of Ticino. Once again, these patterns reflect the important role that transnational social networks play in linking together specific migrant sending and receiving points across long distances and over many years.

**Residential distribution of all legal Dominicans (without Swiss citizenship) by Swiss city/canton**

Source: Swiss Federal Office of Statistics 2002



**Shifting Legal Migration Status**

Another important characteristic of this migrant population’s profile is their shifting legal status. The chart below shows the various patterns we found among the Dominicans we interviewed. The largest number of people report having entered Switzerland initially on a tourist visa and then over time, obtaining legal residency status (B or C Permit) through marriage to a Swiss citizen or legal resident. Another pattern commonly reported was to enter Switzerland on an L Permit for short term work, mainly for cabaret dancing, and then acquiring a B or C residency permit through marriage. Other reported patterns are detailed below.

**Patterns of Changing Legal Status Among Dominican Migrants**

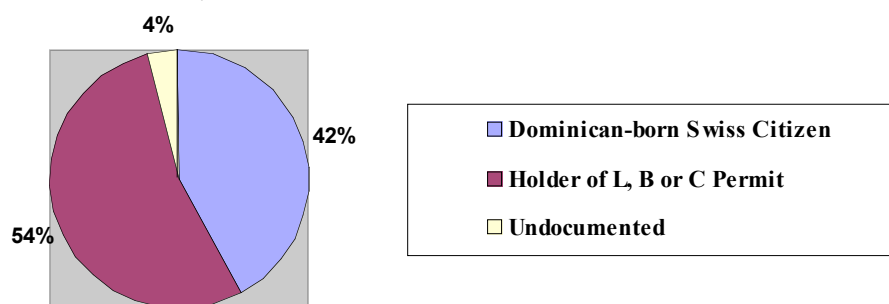
Source : Individual Interviews

Status At Entry	Intermediate Status	Actual Status	Cases (24 in total)	%
Tourist Visa	B, C or L Permit	B or C Permit	7	29%
B, C or L Permit	B or C Permit	Citizen	5	21%
Tourist Visa	B, C or L Permit	Citizen	4	17%
B, C or L Permit	B or C Permit	B or C Permit	4	17%
Tourist Visa	Undocumented	B, C or L Permit	1	4%
Tourist Visa	Undocumented, then B and C Permit	Citizen	1	4%
B, C or L Permit	Undocumented	B, C or L Permit	1	4%
Tourist Visa	Undocumented	Undocumented	1	4%

Among this group at the present time, 40 % are Swiss citizens and 54% enjoy legal foreign residency status – short term, annual or permanent. These figures are represented in the chart below.

### Current Legal (Migration) Status of Dominican Sample Set

Source: 24 Dominicans Interviewed for this Study



As shown in the chart above, our interviews did not reveal the presence of a large number of undocumented Dominicans in Switzerland. Various informants suggested that a much larger number of undocumented Dominicans had been present in Switzerland in the early and mid 1990s when Swiss immigration policy was more open, allowing Dominicans to enter Switzerland as a tourist without a visa and overstay their scheduled period. Our interview with SIT, the worker’s union in Geneva, confirmed this finding. SIT works to improve the conditions and protect the rights of workers, both Swiss and foreign. For the past 3-4 years, SIT has led a campaign to regularize the status of foreign workers who maintain regular employment in Geneva. Among their more than 3,000 clients, less than 20 are Dominicans, a fact which suggests a relatively small undocumented Dominican population in the city, particularly when compared to other Latin American groups such as Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Brazilians, Colombians and Bolivians, who are residing in Geneva without authorization in much larger numbers.

### Active Cases of Undocumented Dominicans in Geneva and Registered with SIT

Source : SIT

Number	Type of Work	Year Arrived in Switzerland	Monthly Salary	Age	Married (Yes or No)	Gender
1	Concierge	2002	4000 CHF	40	No	Male
2	Domestic worker	1998	3000	38	No	Female
3	Domestic worker	1999	3000	44	No	Female
4	Domestic worker	1994	3500	39	No	Female
5	Domestic worker	1999	1300	40	No	Male
6	Resturant	1989	3600	39	Yes	Female
7	Resturant	1999	3200	31	No	Female
8	Domestic worker	2002	2000	30	No	Female
9	Domestic worker	2002	2000	36	No	Female
10	Domestic worker	1991	2100	32	No	Female
11	Resturant	1991	2000	40	No	Female
12	Domestic worker	1989	3000	50	No	Female
13	Domestic worker	2002	1500	37	No	Female
14	Domestic worker	2001	800	22	No	Female

### Progressive Incorporation and Identity Transformation

Although this study does not focus specifically on the integration experiences of Dominicans in Switzerland, we present here a short analysis of the progressive incorporation of Dominicans in the Swiss society that we observed in our interviews. Taking the term “integration” to mean “individual participation in the social and economic structure of society,” (Bolzman, 1997), we can measure the progressive integration of Dominicans into the Swiss society using the following indicators: language, employment status, legal migration status, friendships, social networks and plans for the

future. In applying these indicators to the Dominicans we interviewed for our study, three distinct patterns of incorporation and identity transformation occurred and are summarized in the chart below.

### Progressive Levels of Insertion/Incorporation into the Swiss Society

Source: composite profiling of 25 Dominican adults living in Switzerland

Indicators	Category 1: Fragile	Category 2: Functional	Category 3: Integrated
<b>Legality</b>	Tourist, Permit L or undocumented	Permit B or C	Permit C or Citizenship
<b>Local Language</b>	Minimal	Functional for daily life and work	Advanced. Often speak a mix of languages in the home.
<b>Work</b>	Informal work mixed with short periods of temporary & part time formal work &/or unemployment. Unstable income.	Steady formal employment, mainly in the service sector. Stable income.	Managers, skilled professionals and business owners. Good income.
<b>Friendships</b>	Friendships only with Dominicans and other Spanish speakers	Limited circle of friends. Lack close relationships.	Large circle of close friends from mixed backgrounds.
<b>Social Networks</b>	Keep very close contact with family & friends in the DR and rely on them for daily support and solidarity. In CH, socialize exclusively in Dominican/Latino locales.	Minimal social life in CH. Some involvement with Dominican associations. Active communication with family & friends in the DR but minimal investments or visits to the DR due to lack of vacation time & heavy financial responsibilities in CH and the DR (remittances).	Active social life in CH and involvement in a variety of Swiss institutions (schools, sports teams, etc). Some participation in transnational politics and/or leadership roles in Dominican associations. Maintain active communication and visits with family in the DR. Investments in vacation homes, rental properties &/or businesses in the DR.
<b>Future Plans</b>	Clear plans to return to the DR in the near or medium term.	Unclear.	Plan to remain in Switzerland for foreseeable future. Some consider return but only for retirement or after children are educated.
<b>Identity</b>	Dominican only	Confused - Feel like foreigners in both Switzerland and the DR	Feel at home in both CH and DR. Strong sense of double belonging - 50/50.

Note : CH = Switzerland

The incorporation experience of first generation Dominican migrants in the Swiss society can be categorized into three phases – Fragile, Functional and Integrated. Most people begin their incorporation process in the first “fragile” category. In this phase, migrants rely exclusively on Dominican social networks for socialization and employment assistance, using Spanish language skills and nonverbal communication to navigate their social and work environments. Interaction with Swiss people, institutions and society at large is minimal, due in large part to their lack of local language skills and understanding of the practices of the dominant society. Most migrants in this stage hold fast to their plans to return to the DR as quickly as possible and express an exclusively Dominican sense of identity.

Marriage and family reunification laws most commonly move migrants into the second “Functional” category with the acquisition of stable legal status, and consequential access to more stable employment. While some migrants in this phase still combine informal work with formal employment, most people achieve a modest level of financial stability and regularity in their work lives. Holding down two jobs or working extra hours is not uncommon. Economic insertion in Swiss

society however is not accompanied by the same level of social insertion in this phase, but rather, a high level of social marginalization. Long working hours leave very limited time for socializing or participation in more formal structures or institutions, and consequently, migrants in this phase have very few close friends. Participation in Dominican associations helps to counterbalance this social isolation as does regular contact with family and friends in the DR, in some cases, calling relatives in the DR on a daily basis. Over time, the acquisition of legal and economic stability weigh heavily on people's future plans and most migrants express confusion or lack of commitment over if and when they will return to their country of origin. They also express a confused sense of identity, commonly saying that they feel like an outsider in both the Swiss and Dominican contexts.

These observations corroborate the theories of Claudio Bolzman and Rosita Fibbi with regard to Swiss migration policy, arguing that Swiss immigration policy favors a model of incorporation of first generation immigrants in the host society below the margin of citizenship which is characterized by the recognition of the economic role that migrants play in Swiss society, while at the same time, making little effort to facilitate insertion into the socio, political or cultural dimension of the host society, leaving migrants on their own to find their way. At the same time, the "New Foreigners Act," introduced in Switzerland in February 2005, while attempting to regulate illegal activity and non-EU immigration more strictly, also states improved integration as a central aim. The Swiss Federal Office for Migration (formally the Swiss Federal Office for Immigration, Integration and Emigration) has similar stated intentions.

Nevertheless, until now, integration of Dominican migrants in Switzerland has been mainly a consequence of individual efforts to insert themselves into the local context beyond their economic function. For the small number of Dominicans who have done this successfully, moving themselves into the third "integrated" phase, the data shows obvious and important differences in their social lives. At this level, many migrants have become naturalized Swiss citizens or have obtained permanent residency. Consequently, their employment options and earning capacity become greatly expanded and many assume managerial positions, practicing a skilled profession or starting their own business. Fluency in the local language contributes to the creation of a large circle of friends from mixed backgrounds, including many Swiss friends. Furthermore, as most Dominicans in this phase have lived for an extended period of time in Switzerland (for most, more than 10 years), they have a clear understanding of the social norms, values and practices of the dominant society as well as experience with local systems and institutions. As a result, they are involved in a variety of formally organized activities and enjoy active social lives. Their participation in Dominican associations remains high and they are able to offer the rest of the community a precious cultural fluency in the Swiss context which serves the entire group.

Once they reach this level, most Dominicans express clear intentions of remaining in Switzerland for the foreseeable future and only consider returning to the DR for retirement or after their children complete their education. Having a Swiss spouse and/or children with Swiss citizenship, particularly if those children were born in Switzerland, reduces the eventual likelihood of returning even further. At the same time, people in this group are also the ones most likely to buy vacation homes, businesses or apartments in the DR to be used as rental properties – a consequence of their improved financial situation and perhaps a trade off for giving up the dream of permanent return. Their greatly improved social and economic situation is also expressed in a peaceful and confident sense of double belonging, with many people articulating a feeling of being at home both in Switzerland and in the DR, or of an identity even more broadly defined.

It is important to point out that while these three levels of incorporation generally apply, they are not applicable to every individual case. Time in the host country does not necessarily bring about an improved integration status in every case. Rather, it is the level of insertion into the labor market and the extent to which people's social relations transcend the Dominican community that seem to be some of the most important factors in determining whether or not people achieve a significant level of local integration.

"Both in the US and in Europe, progressive insertion of immigrant communities in receiving societies has not led to the disappearance of the community, but rather to their transformation." (Bolzman, *Identidad Colectiva*) This is certainly the case with Dominicans in Switzerland. Conversations with dozens of migrants reveal clear patterns of progressive insertion and identity transformation that cut across the vast array of individual experiences in the host society. For Dominicans in Switzerland, social and economic insertion does not commonly lead to loss of cultural identity, but rather to the emergence of a plural identity which accommodates their growing cultural fluency in the Swiss society and at the same time, allows for the maintenance of their Dominican identity, constantly rejuvenated by the vast array of transnational practices which keep these Dominican migrants actively linked to "El Pais."

## CHAPTER 5      REMITTANCES

In this next chapter, we describe and analyze patterns of remittance transfers from Dominicans in Switzerland and their use in the DR. Our findings are intended to complement the significant remittance data that already exists describing transfers from Dominicans in the US as well recent data on Dominican remittance flows from Spain. Our work is also intended to help expand the very small body of existing research on remittance flows from other migrant diasporas in Switzerland to various migrant-sending countries around the world.

In addition to filling gaps in the remittance literature, we have also chosen to focus our attention on the topic of remittances because of all the transnational practices that link migrants abroad to their families and communities of origin, the sending of remittances is one of the most visible and widespread. (Guamizo, 2003). Just as we have used transnational theory to help explain the history and patterns of Dominican migration to Switzerland, we can also apply this analytical framework to the sending of remittances.

Economic remittances are sums of money which migrants earn abroad and send home to relatives in their countries of origin, usually to help their family's meet basic, daily needs. In just two decades, remittances have quickly become one of the major sources of income for many migrant-sending countries, including the DR, making it one of the most important "transnational practices" linking Dominicans in Switzerland to their home country. Once again, we refer to Nina Glick Schiller's definition of transnational practices, "the process by which migrants forge and sustain multiple social relationships that link together their society of origin and their country of residence," as well as "the many links and interactions that connect people and institutions across borders and nation-states."

### **The Growth of Remittances from Switzerland to the DR**

"The dramatic growth of international remittances is testimony to the hard work and commitment of migrant workers seeking better lives for themselves and their families. It also reflects the increasing integration of labor markets across national borders, as the economies of developed countries require the skills and dedication of workers from other countries. Nowhere are these trends better illustrated than in Latin America and the Caribbean, which constitutes the highest volume remittance market in the world." (IDB/MIF report – Sending Money Home, 2004)

We begin here with a general overview of the growth of remittance flows to the DR. In 2003, remittances to the DR totaled \$2.3 billion dollars (US), representing 2% of worldwide remittance flows, estimated by the World Bank at \$93 billion dollars in 2003. According to the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB), this very large flow has made the DR one of the most important remittance-receiving countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, along with Mexico, Brazil and Colombia. In 2003, the IDB announced that remittances represented around 10% of the Dominican Republic's gross domestic product (GDP), and were the third-largest source of hard currency after tourism and export-processing zones. In 2004, this figure had grown to represent 15% of GDP. To help put the size of these financial flows in a global context, data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2002 put the Dominican Republic in the top 10 remittance-receiving countries in the world, both in terms of total remittance flow and in terms of remittances per inhabitant, as shown in the table below.



## Top 10 Remittance Receiving Countries Worldwide

Source: IMF 2002

Total Remittance Flow (US\$)		Remittances per Inhabitant (US\$)	
Mexico	\$9.8 billion	Jamaica	\$432
India	\$8.3 billion	Barbados	\$372
Spain	\$4.0 billion	Jordan	\$371
Pakistan	\$3.6 billion	Portugal	\$317
Portugal	\$3.2 billion	El Salvador	\$302
Egypt	\$2.9 billion	Samoa	\$227
Morocco	\$2.9 billion	<b>Dominican Republic</b>	<b>\$225</b>
Bangladesh	\$2.8 billion	Albania	\$204
Colombia	\$2.4 billion	Cape Verde	\$175
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	<b>\$2.3 billion</b>	Croatia	\$149

According to the IDB, 70% of Dominicans living outside their home country send money home. Given the large size of the Dominican diaspora, this means that there are an estimated 1.4 million Dominicans sending remittances home from various countries around the world : 710,000 from the US, 440,000 from Europe and 180,000 from Puerto Rico. (IDB 2004) And while remittance flows from the US continue to dominate, research shows an important shift in the percentage of remittance flows coming from Europe.

In 2003, according to the Dominican Central Bank, 13 % of remittances to the DR came from Europe. Approximately \$25 million of those dollars came from Dominicans in Switzerland, making Switzerland the third most important remittance sending country in Europe after Spain and Italy (see chart below). In 2004, according to a report by the IDB, remittances to the DR grew to \$2.7 billion. Most of this growth was due to major increases in remittance transfers from Europe.

### Remittance Flows to the DR from Various Countries of Origin – 2003

Source : Dominican Central Bank, April 2003

Source Country	% of Total Remittances to the DR	Estimated Totals (\$2.3 billion)
United States	78.7%	\$1.81 billion
Puerto Rico	6.7%	\$154 million
Spain	6.1%	\$140 million
Italy	3.1%	\$71 million
Switzerland	1.1% (grew to represent 3-4% in 2004)	\$25 million
Other	4.5% (includes other EU countries)	\$104 million

## History of the Remittance Market linking Switzerland and the Dominican Republic

Remittance flows from Switzerland began with the first wave of Dominican migration in the 1980s. At that time, there were no formal remittance transfer services available, and consequently, remittance transfers were commonly hand carried by migrants or their friends during visits home or sent through regular mail. The formal remittance business between Switzerland and the DR was not established until the 1990s when a Dominican man started the first remittance transfer company in Zurich known as “Servicios Olivos.” In 1994 Western Union, in partnership with the Swiss postal and train systems, began to offer Dominicans more expanded transfer services. In 2001, a local telephone company called TelefonCorner entered the remittance transfer market. Working in partnership with Vigo, the 3rd largest remittance transfer company in the US, this small company quickly won a large portion of the remittance market by offering economical fixed rates and home delivery services to remittance recipients in the DR.

## Comparing Transfer Costs of Leading Remittance Transfer Companies serving Switzerland and the DR

Source: Western Union and OnTime

	Western Union		OnTime (Telefoncorner)		Average Transfer Costs	
<b>100 francs</b>	21 francs	21%	20 francs	20%	21 francs	21%
<b>250 francs</b>	30 francs	12%	20 francs	8%	25 francs	10%
<b>500 francs</b>	50 francs	10%	20 francs	4%	35 francs	7%

Today, the remittance transfer corridor linking Switzerland and the DR is dominated primarily by TelefonCorner (also named OnTime) and secondarily by Western Union, each of whom control geographically specific parts of the market. MoneyExchange, a Spanish remittance company, is another popular but less dominant competitor, along with several other less frequently used transfer companies such as MoneyGram and Quesqueyana. On the other end of the remittance chain, in the DR, the remittance delivery market is controlled by Caribe Express (OnTime & Vigo partner) and Vimenca (Western Union's Dominican subsidiary). The remittance company Hemispherio and BHD bank are two additional smaller players.

Given the reliable and well-established nature of this remittance transfer market, most Dominican migrants in Switzerland choose to send money home using the large money transfer companies, even if these transfer services continue to be expensive. The fact that both of these companies offer home delivery service to remittance receivers in the DR is also a major factor in migrants' choice of services. Informal transfers and bank transfers are much more rarely employed. This phenomenon is also the case for Dominicans living in other countries. In Spain, according to the IDB, "of the 706 million euros sent annually to Latin America (by Ecuadorians, Dominicans and Colombians), about 615 million (87%) was sent through money transfer firms." (IDB January 2005) In the US, a 2004 IDB study concluded that 84% of remittances from Dominicans are transferred through this channel. This fact has some important consequences, as Colombia University researcher Lenora Suki points out, "Banks have nothing to compete with this overwhelming popular product and home delivery is a culture that is difficult to change. The problem is that it disconnects the people who receive remittances from the banking system. As a consequence, they may be less likely to save or invest."

One final point in the history of the remittance market linking Switzerland and the Dominican Republic is the important role that transnational relations have played in this case. The owners of OnTime, the remittance company currently dominating the market in Switzerland, include a Swiss man married to a high profile Dominican woman who has lived in Switzerland for nearly 25 years. The personal relationships that this couple has with a large part of the Dominican population in Switzerland, their understanding of the cultural practices and norms of their clients, and the close transnational relationships they maintain in the DR, has undoubtedly helped them gain the upper hand in this remittance corridor.

### Estimating the Size of the Total Flow and Individual Transfers

Fueled by a growing Dominican migrant population in Switzerland, remittances from Switzerland to the DR have grown rapidly over the years. The \$25 million dollar annual flow reported by the Dominican Central Bank to have arrived from Switzerland in 2003 continues to rise. According to Vimenca, the subsidiary of Western Union in the DR, remittances from Switzerland grew to represent 3-4% of the total remittance flow to the DR in 2004, a huge increase over the figure reported by the Dominican Central bank in 2003 when 1.1% of total remittances to the island were reported to have come from Switzerland.

Estimating the size of individual transfers from Switzerland is a bit harder given the disparity in the data available (see chart below). Reported average transfer sizes range from 445 to 700 Swiss francs (approximately \$335 to \$525 US). Given the data available, we estimate average size of a remittance transfer from Switzerland to the DR is therefore approximately 545 Swiss francs (\$410 US).

## 2004 Remittance Transaction Statistics – Switzerland to the Dominican Republic

Source: Vimenca (Western Union) and Ontime (Telefoncorner) representatives and migrant survey data

	Total # of Annual Transactions	Total Amount Transferred	Average Transfer (US\$)	Average Transfer (Swiss francs)
Vimenca (Western Union)	36,604	\$12,310,297	\$335	445 swiss francs
OnTime (Telefoncorner)	60,000	\$32,000,000	\$525	700 Swiss francs
Our migrant surveys	-	-	\$370	490 Swiss francs
<b>Average individual transfer</b>	-	-	<b>\$410 US</b>	<b>545 Swiss francs</b>

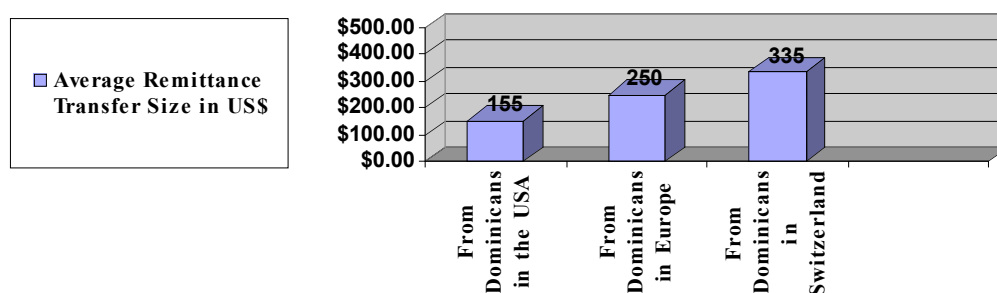
Note 1 : figures calculate using an exchange rate of \$1 = 1.33 francs / \$0.75 = 1 franc

Note 2: figures for OnTime are estimated based on 6 months of data (January through June 2004)

Given these estimations, it seems that individual remittance transfers from Switzerland to the DR are larger than transfers made by Dominicans in any other remittance-sending country around the world. The reason why transfers from Switzerland are so large is likely due to multiple factors, including: high average salaries, stable employment, the fact that many Dominican migrants are young adults without significant economic commitments in Switzerland, and/or because the stable earnings of people's spouses/partners allow Dominicans to send more of their own earnings home.

### Comparing Average Remittance Transfers Sent via Western Union

Source: Vimenca (Western Union representative in the DR), April 2005



### Remittance Sending and Receiving Points

As in all remittance corridors, there are clear patterns of important sending and receiving points between Switzerland and the DR, which are detailed here in the chart below:

Important Remittance Sending Points	Important Remittance Receiving Points
Zurich (including Aargau and surrounding suburbs)	Santo Domingo (the nation's capital city)
Ticino region (also serving Dominicans living in northern Italy)	San Cristobal (a provincial capital city)
Geneva (including nearby smaller cities and Lausanne)	La Vega (small city in country's inner region)
	Santiago (the DR's second largest city)

Source: migrant survey data, Vimenca and OnTime

Generally speaking, these remittance sending and receiving points are very similar to the places that we found to be key migration sending and receiving points linking the DR and Switzerland. These findings also seem to confirm our earlier estimation that while many Dominican migrants originate from small towns in rural areas, in many cases, their relatives have migrated to the country's larger

cities and semi-urban areas, which is why remittance flows from Switzerland are sent predominantly to urban and semi-urban areas rather than to migrants' places of origin. This is important because remittances flows, as we will discuss in the next chapter, often have significant impacts on the social and economic well being of families, and often affect the development status of entire neighborhoods, towns or cities. Therefore, if remittances are being mainly channeled to urban and semi-urban areas, then we can expect that the impacts of this resource flow will also be concentrated in those places. One final comment here is that for some reason, flows from Dominicans in neighboring Spain do not follow these same patterns. "In the case of Dominican transmigrants in Spain, their impact is particularly noticeable because they flow to mostly poor, rural communities located far away from Santo Domingo and Santiago, the country's major urban centers." (Lilon and Lantigua 2004).

### **Remittance Senders and Receivers – A Female Phenomenon**

One important characteristic of migrants sending money to the DR from Switzerland is that a vast majority of them, 70%, are women. This is not a surprise, given that an estimated 70% of Dominicans in Switzerland are female. Nor is this fact unique among Dominican Diasporas. According to a research report by the MIF/IDB in 2004, 58% of remittances from Dominicans in the US are sent by women. In Spain, female Dominicans are responsible for 78% of the annual remittance flow (Lilon and Lantigua 2004). The reason why gender matters is that gender has been found to be a key characteristics in a migrant's propensity to remit. Data shows that female migrants remit a higher proportion of their earnings than single men. The fact that the Dominican Diaspora in Switzerland is primarily female therefore helps explain why average transfers sent by Dominicans in Switzerland are high, although relatively high average incomes probably play the biggest role.

Our research also shows that Dominican migrants remit most commonly to women in the DR – mainly mothers and sisters. Male siblings and husbands also receive money but less often. This finding is important for different reasons, but perhaps most importantly because the dominant female nature of this transfer corridor (female migrant to mother, grandmother, sister or daughter) could have significant implications for the way in which this money is used. Remittance studies have shown that households in which a woman is the recipient of the remittance, the money is more commonly used to pay for food, education and healthcare - primary needs that positively effect the well-being of family members, particularly children.

### **Frequency of Remittance Transfers**

Interviews with Dominicans in Switzerland, as well as with remittance company representatives in Zurich and Santo Domingo, helped to uncover other important aspects of the population sending money home. For example, 80% of the people we interviewed commented that they send money home, most commonly on a monthly basis. For those who don't send remittances monthly, remitting in the case of emergency, for special occasions or at the beginning of a new school year was also commonly reported. This frequency pattern was also reinforced by similar findings among migrant households in Dona Ana where 80% of households with a migrant relative in Switzerland reported receiving remittances. If this number is generalized to the total Dominican migrant population in Switzerland, we can estimate that approximately 6,500 Dominican migrants are active remitters.

Among Dominicans who don't send money home, common explanations included: (1) insufficient income due to unemployment, the inability to work or large financial obligations in Switzerland, (2) absence of family members in the DR needing support, (3) absence of close relationships with relatives in the DR, or (4) a belief that remittances have negative impacts on families – most importantly creating long-term dependency on remittance income in place of locally-earned wages. This final point is corroborated by our findings which showed that 50-60 % of remittance receivers in the DR live exclusively from this flows, a situation most commonly found among households where remittances were being sent to elderly parents or to support a migrant's children left behind in the DR. Others families reported that remittances represent only a part of their total household income.

Our interviews with families in the DR also revealed that 3/4 of migrant-sending households have been receiving money from Switzerland for 4 to 12 years, a pattern which closely reflects the peak migration period of women from Dona Ana to Switzerland (1993 to 2001). In most cases, the exact size of these remittance transfers has fluctuated over time due to the changing needs of their migrant relatives in Switzerland or the needs of the remittance-receiving household. However, very few families mentioned a cease in remittance flows. Even in cases where their migrant relatives stopped working and generating an income in Switzerland, often due to the birth or arrival of children from the DR, remittances to family members in the DR continued, often with money earned by the migrant's spouse.

#### **Pattern of Remittance Fluctuations Over Time**

Source: migrant surveys in Switzerland

<b>Years in Switzerland</b>	<b># of migrants interviewed</b>	<b># who remit</b>	<b>#who don't remit</b>	<b>Average remittance size</b>
1 to 3 years	1	1	0	400 francs
4 to 6 years	4	2	2	600 francs
7 to 10 years	6	5	1	550 francs
11 to 15 years	10	8	2	500 francs
More than 15 years	4	3	1	500 francs

#### **Future Prospects for Remittances Flows from Switzerland to the DR**

An important question for the future is whether or not remittances from Switzerland to the DR will continue at their current rate? A long-standing hypothesis in remittance research is that a migrant's time abroad is an important factor in his or her propensity to remit. If this trend is true for Dominicans in Switzerland, then we could expect to see a decline in remittance flows in the very near future, as the largest wave of migrants, which arrived in the mid and late 1990s, have now lived abroad for 5-10 years. This phenomenon is known as "remittance decay." However, our research findings did not support this hypothesis. In fact, our findings indicate that time abroad is not a factor among this migrant community. Dominican migrants who have lived in Switzerland for a long time continue to remit regularly and in similar amounts to migrants who have arrived more recently (see table above). Can we conclude then that remittances from Dominican migrants in Switzerland will continue to flow at a constant or growing rate over the next several years? Transnational and social network theories can help provide an answer.

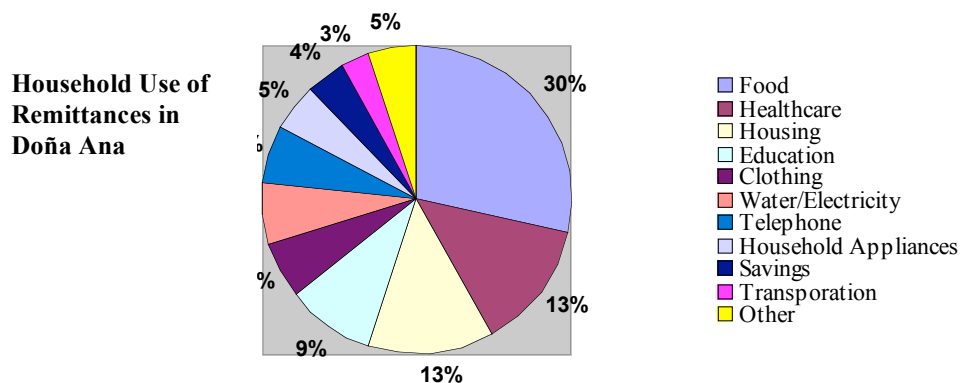
Based on the premise that remittances are an exchange between members of a social network made up of family members living in different places, then remittance flows can be said to rely on a migrant's desire and/or need to maintain his or her relationships with other people in this social network. Besides the important financial impacts that remittances produce, sending money home also helps migrants preserve their relationships with their relatives. Viewed like this, time abroad is likely not the key determining factor in whether or not remittances will continue to flow. Rather, the continued need for maintaining social relationships is most important. As most Dominican migrants in Switzerland are sending money to primary family members in the DR – mothers, daughters, sisters – we can assume that these migrants will wish to maintain these relationships with over the long term, and therefore, remittances will also continue to flow over the long term.

What is more likely to affect flows is family reunification. A 2004 study by Elizabeth Grieco concludes the following: "Remittance levels increase as the migrant household works to support dependent family members in the country of origin and to assist in their eventual emigration. As the process of family reunification is gradually completed, fewer and fewer immediate kin remain abroad and remittance levels begin to decline. When the last migrant joins the household and all the dependent family members have joined the earliest migrant, the flow of remittances sent back home ends." This explanation more closely reflects patterns found in the case of Dominicans in

Switzerland. For this migrant group, family reunification is a very slow process and Swiss immigration law limits migrants to bringing only those family members who are direct dependants – usually children or spouses. Therefore, since parents, siblings, grandparents and other relatives that are important members of a migrant’s social network are likely to never migrate to Switzerland, the need to sustain these relationships through remittances continues. If this is true, then we can expect Dominican remittances from Switzerland to continue to flow at a fairly constant rate for the next several years.

## Use of Remittances

The final point in this discussion about remittances from Switzerland to the DR is the question of use. Our data shows that the decision for exactly how remittances are spent from month to month is most commonly made by the person receiving the transfer, which in the case of Dona Ana, is usually the migrant’s mother. As is the case with remittance patterns in most parts of the world, money received by families in Dona Ana is used primarily to meet basic needs. Food, healthcare, housing and education, in that order, are the top priorities. The rest is divided among smaller expenditures.



Apart from using remittances to meet daily needs, save or to build/improve a home, a few families in Dona Ana have also used remittances to invest in new small businesses. These types of remittance-investment decisions are usually made by the migrants themselves, rather than the remittance recipient, close family members still living in Dona Ana are commonly responsible for looking after these businesses ventures in the migrant’s absence. Interviews with Dominicans in Switzerland suggested that a significant number of migrants, 30 %, have some sort of investment in the DR and the vast majority of the others have plans to invest in a house, a piece of land or a business in the future, investments which are often related to their plans for retirement, or to help keep them and their children connected to home.

It is important to note that while investment, or planned investment was a popular use for remittance transfers, only 4% of remittance income was reportedly used for savings, although research on remittances from Dominicans in the US reveal a similar figures (5% savings rate). Two factors are likely to influence this pattern – household income and banking access. Households in Dona Ana receiving remittances from Switzerland are neither the poorest nor the wealthiest in the community. Still, average monthly income among these families is only \$300. Therefore, remittances are critical in helping families meet their basic needs and it is likely that only a very small percent, if any, of a family’s remittance income is left over each month for savings. A second explanation for the low savings rate is limited banking access. There are no banks in Dona Ana and families have to travel to the provincial capital, San Cristobal, to deposit or withdraw savings. This inconvenience is likely to be a major deterrent to saving. This is also likely to be the reason why very limited numbers of families report having a bank account and explains why bank-to-bank remittance transfers are so infrequent. We can probably assume that if remittance receivers had easier access to banks and banking services, it likely that bank-to-bank transfers, which often cost less, would be more popular.

Moreover, migrants receiving money from abroad might also tend to save a larger percentage of their remittance income, which could eventually help these migrant-sending families have better access to bank credit for investments in housing, education or business development.

In the following two chapters we will discuss the impacts of these remittance flows on the community of Dona Ana as well as strategies for better leveraging this important transnational resource for additional family and community development purposes.

## **CHAPTER 6      ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF MIGRATION AND REMITTANCES ON THE CASE STUDY COMMUNITY OF DONA ANA**

Over the past 15 years, remittance flows to Dona Ana from Switzerland have had significant economic and social impacts on migrant-sending households and have stimulated important economic and social changes in the community. In this chapter we will first discuss the economic and ecological impacts of remittance flows from Switzerland on housing, employment, business investments, land use and land prices in Dona Ana. In the second part of the chapter, we discuss some of the social impacts we observed during our interviews with migrants, their families and other Dona Ana residents.

### **Economic and Ecological Impacts**

#### *Housing Transformation*

The size and quality of a family's home is a visible, public sign of their economic well-being. Owning a large, good quality home is an important status symbol in Dona Ana, which families use to mark their privileged position in the community. Owning such a home also ensures greater physical security in the case of a natural disaster such as Hurricane David which damaged or destroyed a large number of homes in Dona Ana when it swept through the community in 1978.

Hurricane David marked a turning point in the history of Dona Ana's economic development. In addition to wiping out large crop areas, the disaster also destroyed many homes made from traditional palm wood materials. Over the past 25 years, many of these homes have been slowly replaced with new structures made from concrete and other more durable materials, thanks in large part to income generated by migration and remittance flows. In addition to improving a family's socio-economic status and physical safety, home ownership also improves a family's economic security. A family that owns their home is less threatened by unstable employment income, unreliable pension flows and general lack of social support from the state.

For all of these reasons – social status, physical safety, economic security, as well as general overall comfort – it is not surprising that nearly every household interviewed for this study reported using part of their remittance income for investments in new housing construction or improvement to the family's existing home. Over the years, these investments have generated widespread changes in Dona Ana's overall housing stock.

Observational data collected through a visual mapping of Dona Ana show radical differences in the size and quality of housing among families with migrants in Switzerland versus those without. Most families without relatives overseas continue to live in small, palm-wood housing with fragile tin roofs and sometimes with dirt floors. The poorest families live in tiny structures built with scrap materials, which often house an entire family in one or two small rooms without sanitation facilities, water or electricity. In contrast, many families in Dona Ana with a migrant relative abroad have managed to build or rebuild a much larger home using part of their remittance income.

Among the households we interviewed with a migrant relative in Switzerland, 60% had used remittance income to improve or build their home. These remittance-funded homes are all made from cement blocks, have water (non-potable) and electrical services, in-door bathrooms with flush toilets, permanent roofing and floors, cement patios, furniture and several large home appliances. Some of these homes are very large. The majority of these homes are inhabited by the parents of migrants in Switzerland or by the migrants themselves. Some of these homes are only occupied when the migrant returns to Dona Ana for an annual visit. Other migrants have built homes which they only plan to use when they return to the DR for retirement. In one case, a migrant woman built two additional homes



with her remittances which she rents to other families in Dona Ana. In all cases, new homes offer migrants and their family members a new level of comfort, safety, social status and economic security. They also signal to the rest of the community that a migrant's experience has been a "success" and encourage other young women to follow suit.

**Houses in Dona Ana owned/occupied by families without a migrant relative in Switzerland**

Source: observation data from field work



**Housing in Dona Ana which has been newly constructed or expanded using remittances from Switzerland**

Source: observation data from field work



*Job Creation and Small Business Investment*

One of the effects of the housing boom in Dona Ana has been the creation of new jobs in construction. Separate from the money that migrant women from Dona Ana send home to their relatives, some women also send money to the owner of Dona Ana's largest construction company to help make their dream of home ownership a reality. The owner of this company works directly with these migrant women while they are living and work in Switzerland. He helps them find an available parcel of land and then works with a local architect to design and build these homes in the migrants' absence, remaining in frequent phone contact with them to report progress or problems. Over the years, he has employed a number of men from Dona Ana for this housing construction work.

Remittances to Dona Ana from Switzerland have also been used to finance a few small community-based businesses. Some examples include: a pharmacy, a cafeteria, a small store ("colmado"), a motorcycle repair shop and a "guagua" which is a van used for transportation services. As these are mainly family businesses, they have not generated additional employment for others in the community, but they have expanded the variety of services available to Dona Ana residents. Our investigation also uncovered a few cases of people using remittance income to capitalize micro loan funds parceled out to others in the community with interest, for example, for the purchase of motorcycles used by young men as income generating activity.

### Examples of the remittance-backed business investments in Dona Ana

Source: observation data from field work



Clearly remittances have had some important economic impacts for migrants and their families, and to some extent, for the broader Dona Ana community. The fact that the vast majority of home construction and businesses development has occurred in Dona Ana, rather than elsewhere, such as in the provincial capital or in Santo Domingo, means that new employment and increased money flows have also remained local. Nevertheless, economic investments in projects other than personal housing construction remains limited. Further investigation is needed to understand more about the motivations and aims of the few migrants who have made business-oriented investments, as well as to understand why more migrants have not made similar kinds of income-generating investments. It would also be useful to identify the kinds of services and administrative or financial infrastructure needed to help direct larger amounts of individual remittances into investment-oriented activities.

### *Land Use, Land Prices and Ecological Consequences*

Apart from the impacts that remittance flows have had on housing, employment and business development in Dona Ana, the migration/remittance link with Switzerland has also contributed very significantly to changes in land use and land prices. Parcels of land all around Dona Ana are currently for sale. The vast majority of this land has, until now, been dedicated to farming and animal grazing, or simply to open space. Many of these land parcels, which are now being sold for home construction, are still covered with palm trees or remnants of old crops, signaling a major change in the way land is used now in the community.

### **Land for sale in Dona Ana – To be converted from open space, agricultural fields or grazing land to housing**

Source: observation data from field work



The process of land use change in Dona Ana began in 1980 but accelerated most rapidly starting in the mid 1990s. In just 10 years, from 1995 to 2005, about 80% of the land formally dedicated to agriculture, land largely owned by just 3 or 4 families, has been parceled off and sold for housing construction. Still today, demand for these housing plots remains high as remittance income continues to flow into Dona Ana, putting continual pressure on this land use transformation process. Internal migration is also a contributing factor as very poor families, most of whom have migrated to Dona Ana from the country's more rural areas, informally occupy a dwindling amount of vacant property. Continual demand for land has driven prices up dramatically, putting property ownership out of the

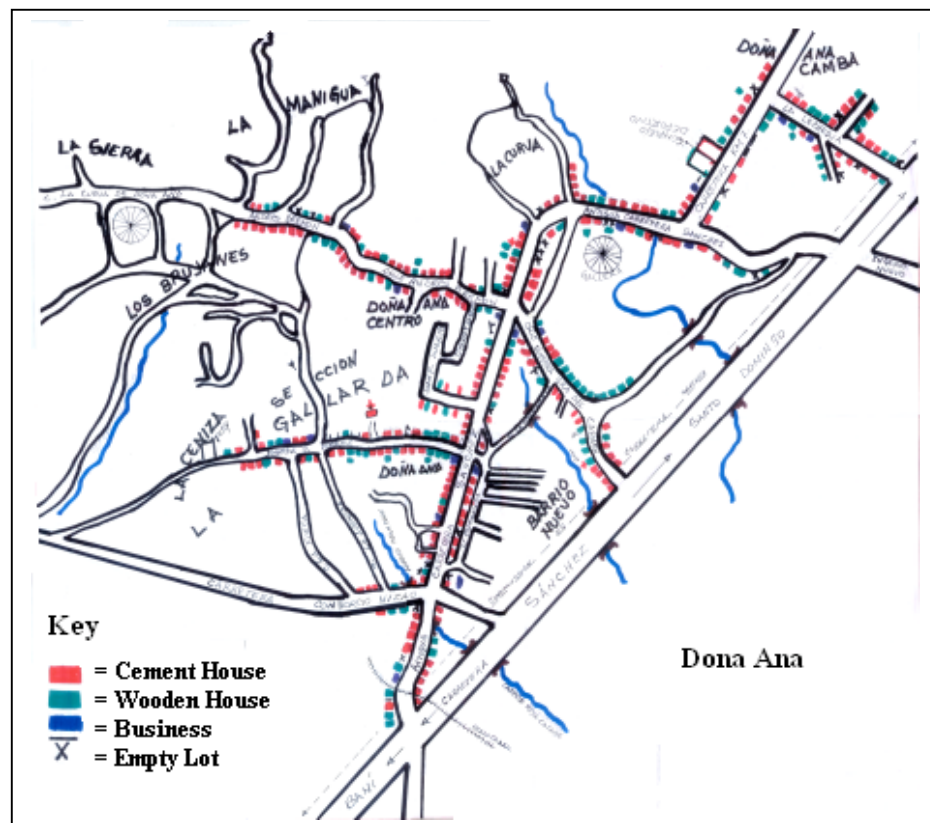
financial reach of most residents, particularly families who do not receive remittance income. A parcel of land in Dona Ana which cost \$500 US in 1990, costs \$30,000 in 2005 – 60 times its original price, bringing the average cost of building a new home in Dona Ana to \$85,000 US.<sup>3</sup>

However, these new patterns of land use and the extraordinarily high price of land are not only the result of migration and remittances processes. The economic shift away from an agricultural economy is another very important factor. As fewer and fewer families now make their living from the production of sugar cane and other food staples, less and less land is needed and preserved for local food production or raising animals. As a result, families are selling their land for other income-generating purposes, such as housing construction. Consequently, with less open land for farming and animals, many families in Dona Ana have lost their ability to provide for their own basic food needs and have become increasingly dependant on income from local wage labor, which is often highly exploitative and unreliable, and thus encouraging more migration away from Dona Ana to destinations abroad.

Changes in land use from agricultural and pastoral to housing plots is part of an overall transformation of Dona Ana from a small rural community to a semi-urban town. This urbanization process, stimulated in part by the migration/remittance flow, has resulted in the destruction of large amounts of plant life in the area. Additionally, more people and larger, more modern housing infrastructure has increased the demand for water, electricity, sewage treatment and other household services. But this demand goes unmet as the region suffers from a complete lack of urban planning support and insufficient physical infrastructure, including an almost complete lack of paved roads, electrical power or drinking water. When these problems are coupled together with recent periods of extreme drought threatening the dwindling plant, animal and water resources, which still exist in the community, a serious environmental crisis threatens.

#### Map of Dona Ana in the process of land-use transformation

Source: observation data from field work, Author: Segundo Maldonado and Julio Cesar Ramirez



<sup>3</sup> Estimates given by Japa construction company owner in Doña Ana



## Social Impacts

In addition to these economic and ecological impacts, migration and remittances between Switzerland and Dona Ana have also generated some important social impacts. In this section, we will discuss three specific areas of social impact which we observed in our interviews, including: (1) Creation of a dual and conflicting social status, (2) Changes in gender roles and power relations, and (3) Impacts of migration on caretaking roles, educational opportunities and the next generation.

Information reported here reflects qualitative data gathered through interviews and focus groups with migrants, migrant-sending households, community leaders and other Dona Ana residents. As we had originally intended to only gather data on the economic impacts of migration and remittances on this community information, no pre-determined questions or measurement indicators were developed to gauge social impacts. Nevertheless, similarities and patterns in comments made by multiple informants during our interview sessions brought these important social impacts to light. For this reason, our results are presented here in fairly general terms. Further research into these social impacts, using pre-determined interview questions and impact indicators would help to make these findings more robust.

### *Definitions of social impacts and why they are important*

In the remittance literature, the social impacts of migration and remittance flows are most commonly linked to the term “social remittances.” According to migration scholar Peggy Levitt, “social remittances are the ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities.” (Levitt, 1998) Ninna Nyberg Sorensen comments that, “...(social remittances) may affect family relations, gender roles, class and race identity as well as have a substantial impact on political, economic and religious participation. Social remittances constitute a so far neglected local-level counterpart to macro-level global monetary and cultural flows, although they are key to understanding how migration modifies the lives of those who remain behind. To the extent that social remittances flow together with economic remittances, changes in normative structures and general practices may be pertinent to ensure the continuation of economic remittances.” (Nyberg Sorensen, Development Dimension of Migrant Remittances, 2004)

Nyberg Sorensen goes on to say that, “the advantage of adopting a financial as well as a social definition of remittances is that it allows us to understand migration as a social process in which migrants are potential agents of economic, social and political change. This is relevant for the design of appropriate policies, as an understanding of gender specific migration and remittance practices may help make policies more relevant to respectively women and men’s livelihood strategies and may help to devise measures in which positive migration-development links can be supported.” (Nyberg Sorensen, Development Dimension of Migrant Remittances, 2004)

### *Creation of a Dual and Conflicting Social Status*

One of the most important social impacts that we observed in Dona Ana is the creation of a dual and conflicting social status, a “double moral” characterized by both admiration and social critique. On one hand, women from Dona Ana who migrate to Switzerland are the subject of severe social critique based on the widespread belief in Dona Ana that all the women who leave the community and migrate to Switzerland to work in the country’s cabaret bars are also involved in prostitution, commonly referred to by people we interviewed as “indecent work.”

Denise Brennen, in her book chapter entitled “Selling Sex for Visas,” discusses this common stigmatization, saying: “With all the attention in the European press and on the internet associating Dominican women with the sex industry, fear of a stigma has prompted many Dominican women who have never been sex workers to worry that the family and friends of their European boyfriends or spouses might wonder if they once were. And since Dominican women’s participation in the overseas

sex trade has received so much press coverage in the DR, women who have lived or worked in Europe have become suspect at home.”

At the same time that these women are critiqued for the nature of their work abroad, they are also credited for contributing significantly to the economic well-being of their families, a contribution which everyone we spoke with considered to be very positive. In the end, migrant women from Dona Ana living and working in Switzerland must live with accusations of “immoral” behaviour, while at the same time, enjoying widespread, positive recognition for the economic benefits they provide to their families. As one community leader told us, “Cabaret work is not morally accepted by people here, but when the women come home (from Switzerland), they are accepted back into the community because the money they have earned helps to solve people’s problems.”

No where is this dual and conflicting social status better exemplified than in the case of one of Dona Ana’s Evangelical Pastors whose daughter migrated to Switzerland on a cabaret contract. This young woman’s choice to migrant and engage herself in this work has allowed her to send large sums of money home which she and her family have used to vastly improve the conditions of the family’s home as well as her father’s church. In this case, the family and the community seem to have accepted this woman’s migration and labor choices, given the positive economic benefits it has awarded them all. The source of these funds, however, is not openly discussed.

The fact that the flow of remittances from Switzerland to Dona Ana has brought about positive economic changes for many families in the community ultimately allows migrant-sending households to view the migration of their relative to Switzerland as “a good investment,” apparently outweighing the associated social critique. As one informant told us, “The first women that went (to work in Switzerland) came back with a lot of money and opened everybody’s eyes, and people saw that the investment their families had made had paid off.” This man is referring to the fact that, in order to send someone to Switzerland to work, families are required to come up with large sums of money to cover the costs of obtaining her work contract, to pay for the flight and to make sure she has some money to get started once she gets there. In many cases, these high migration costs have meant that families have had to sell plots of farmland, animals, or taken out large loans. Ultimately, most families we interviewed felt satisfied with the investment they had made because their migrant relatives had not only recuperated these costs but had generated income sufficient to significantly improve the family’s living conditions and overall wellbeing.

The important contribution that migrants in Switzerland make to both the well being of their families and to the economic development of the community, ultimately enhances their social status, in spite of the nature of the work they do (or believed to do) abroad. The very difficult economic reality of present day life in the DR, and the important role that remittances play in the survival of many families, seem to help mitigate critiques of the “indecent” and “immorality” of cabaret work, especially among migrant-sending families and among other young women who hope or plan to follow suit.

There are many similar cases to be found in the literature of female migrants facing dualing social praise and critique as a result of their migration and labor abroad. In one comparative case, migration researcher Petra Dannecker explains the situation faced by Bangladeshi female labor migrants in Malaysia. She states, “Whereas households of male migrants proudly present the symbols of the successful journey or stay of their family members, for example, a new tin roof, a TV or a huge picture of their relative abroad, these symbols are hardly to be seen in households of female migrants. These families are very reluctant to speak about their female members abroad, or they even try to hide the fact that female members have lived or currently live and work abroad. A family member abroad is perceived as a danger to the status of the family. One father said, ‘we are very embarrassed that our daughter went to Malaysia even though we need the money she earns. We all know how the women behave there and that the environment is not good for them. Probably she will not find a husband after coming back.’” (Dannecker, 2005) Dannecker goes on to explain, “For (Bangladeshi) male migrants, the transnational community provides the arena where their status and social position have

increased, whereas they have to cope with stigmatization and marginalization in the receiving country. The contrary can be observed for female migrants. Their social position and status in the transnational space have decreased with their migration. Thus, it is not surprising that female migrants have to be successful abroad in order to cope with negative images and to legitimize the ‘violation’ of the gender order.”

This case provides some interesting comparisons to the case of Dominican migrants in Switzerland. Unlike the Bangladeshi female migrants that Dannecker describes, female migrants from Dona Ana must ultimately cope with a dual social status in both their home community and in their host country. At home, they are critiqued for their “immoral” work abroad, and at the same time, praised for the positive impacts that their migration and remittances have on their families of origin. In their host country, Switzerland, these same women face a different dual social status. On the one hand, Dominican women in Switzerland are stigmatized for their assumed connection to the cabaret industry and to prostitution activities, and on the other hand, they are renowned for being exotic, beautiful women with warm personalities and who are eager to please. This reputation provides a stark contrast to criticism some Swiss men, particularly those married or partnered with a Dominican woman, make of European women whom they claim are overly independent and cold. We also found examples of this same kind of duality among a few of the European men in Switzerland married to Dominican women. In these cases, the men prohibited or discouraged their wives from socializing with other Dominicans so as to distance them from the widespread image in Switzerland of Dominicans as prostitutes, while at the same time, these men claimed to have married their Dominican wives because they were “good women” who were willing to assume traditional roles in the home in addition to offering desirable physical and sexual qualities.

### *Changing gender roles and power relations within migrant households*

The second social impact that we observed among Dominican female migrants in Switzerland and their families in Dona Ana was shifting gender roles and relations between men and women in the household, particularly between female migrants and their husbands, fathers and/or brothers.

We begin with a definition of gender, by migration scholar Patricia Pessar: “Gender involves the ways in which cultures imbue biological differences with meaning such as demarcating between male and female domains in activities, tasks, spaces, time, dress and so on. People are enculturated to view these distinctions as natural, inevitable, not as human constructs. But conceptualizing gender also as a process, as one of several ways humans create and perpetuate social differences, helps to deconstruct this myth...through gendered practices and discourses they reproduce and/or contest hierarchies of power and privilege.” ... “gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexuality and so on shape and discipline people’s ability to move and how they think about and act toward migration. Thus we are not satisfied by merely counting the movers and the stayers; we want to understand how gender controls options available to individuals and to groups, determining who stays and who moves – how often, when, where and why. Moreover, we need to address whether or not gender factors into people’s post-migration lives.” (Pessar, *Transnational Migration: Bringing Gender In*)

In Dona Ana, we observed that the migration of a daughter or wife to Switzerland for work and/or marriage, often results in a household shift away from the traditional situation in which men are the principal economic providers. In Dominican households where migrant women were earning money abroad and sending it home in the form of regular remittances, the traditional role of men as the principal provider passed to the woman. In some cases, we observed that the men (fathers, husbands, brothers) became nothing more than passive recipients of the remittances sent by their wives abroad. In other cases, husbands, fathers or brothers continued to contribute economically to the household through labor earnings or pension income, but this income played only a complementary role to the regular remittance income which largely sustains the family. By assuming the principal role of providing economically for their families, female migrants from Dona Ana often seem to improve their status within the power structure of the family which, in many cases, threatens and ultimately transforms the dominant weight of paternal authority which is traditional in Dominican culture.

Many migrant women use their increased authority in the family to influence decisions over the way that money is spent in the household. The increased power and status of migrant women in relation to the men in their families has also given way to a redefinition of marital relationships. Several of our informants for this study described a situation whereby migrant women maintained simultaneous intimate relationships with more than one person. In several cases, we were told of women who maintained one partner in the DR and at the same time, was married to a Swiss man and living in Switzerland. The presence of these kinds of parallel relationships is a stark departure from traditional patterns of monogamy that exist (supposedly) among women in Dominican culture. The DR is a society which traditionally permits men to have more than one intimate relationship simultaneously but this same practice is usually severely sanctioned if done by a woman. But the situation has changed slightly because of female migration abroad. Some men married to female migrants sometimes now permit and accept this situation within their relationship, most likely because of the important and continuous economic support that these women provide for their partners.

We also observed another important shift in gender relations as they related to patterns of domestic violence towards women by their husbands or fathers. Our interviews revealed that the increased power and social status of migrant women within their families, which is gained through their migration and remitting behavior, sometimes helps to change this abusive pattern. Some of the people we interviewed described how the women who migrated to Switzerland returned with a raised consciousness and a new level of intolerance towards domestic abuse and they introduced this new attitude into their families. We heard of cases in which migrant women, upon their return from Europe, confronted their violent fathers, in one case, throwing the man permanently out of the house for his abusive behavior towards her mother. In another case, the mother of a migrant woman who had been a victim of extended spousal abuse explained that she did everything possible to arrange for her daughter's migration to Switzerland in order to extract her from continual abuse by her husband. She commented, "I am very happy now because I know that my daughter is not being mistreated anymore by her husband. I found a way to send her to Switzerland to save her from that situation." In this case, the act of migration itself provided relief from a violent relationship. In a third reported case, the sister of one migrant woman who has come and gone between Dominican Republic and Switzerland on cabaret dancing contracts commented that her sister's cyclical migration to Switzerland was the way in which she escaped the regular violent abuse by her husband.

To help understand and analyze the meaning of these findings further, we can compare how the migration of Dominican women to Switzerland has impacts on gender roles and power relations in ways which are similar or different to Dominican migration in other contexts. Peggy Levitt, in her 1998 article, "Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local-Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion" describes the social impacts of migration by women from the Dominican town of Miraflores to the US city of Boston. She notes, "In Miraflores, notions of gender identity were particularly in flux. Migrant women modified their ideas about women's roles in response to their more active engagement in the workplace and with the public sector in Boston. They transmitted these new ideas about identity back to Miraflores. Nonmigrant women used these social remittances to construct new versions of womanhood. While their ideas were often somewhat romanticized, they still represented a marked change in thinking about male-female relations."

In contrast, Eugenio Georges 1990 book, *The Making of a Transnational Community*, offers a different, comparative view of the impact that male migration to the US has on the Dominican town of Los Pinos. She remarks: "In Los Pinos, US migration had done very little to challenge traditional gender roles. Rather, it strengthened them in two related ways. First, when a woman's husband 'behaved well,' that is remitted regularly, the higher standard of living her household enjoyed removed the economic necessity for her to work. Indeed, women who headed migrant households in Los Pinos were less likely to work for pay than nonmigrant women. The fact that they did not need to perform remunerated work was a sign of status. At the same time, a secure income from remittances served to bind these women more tightly to the domestic circle in conformance with the norms of proper feminine conduct." She goes on to say, "...regular remittances perpetuated the dominance of

husbands in household decision making. Despite their absence, by remitting regularly men retained and reinforced their position and principal decision making power within the household. Thus, US bound migration was not a source of change in the structure of gender roles in Los Pinos. Rather, it reinforced existing norms of conduct which perpetuated the subordination of women left behind in the community.”

These comparative cases suggest that shifting gender roles and power relations come about when it is the women who migrate abroad. In the case of Los Pinos, where it was Dominican men leaving and the women staying behind, gender roles and power relations did not shift, but rather, traditional roles and relations were even more strongly reinforced. On the other hand, in Miraflores, as was the case in Dona Ana, female migration to two distinct destinations, the US and Switzerland, generated very similar shifts in gender roles and power relations, both in migrant-sending households and in the imagination of other non-migrant women in the community. All of this suggests then that the female nature of a migrant group is likely to be a much more important characteristic in terms of facilitating changes in gender roles and power relations than other variables, such as a migrant’s age, marital status, type of work, time abroad or migrant destination.

### *Impacts of migration on caretaking roles, educational opportunities and the next generation*

The third category of social impact that we observed in Dona Ana was the impact of female migration to Switzerland on the caretaking roles and educational opportunities in migrant-sending families, as well as on the dreams and plans of the next generation.

The impacts of contemporary migration by women to overseas destinations on their traditional caretaking roles, particularly the raising of children has been the subject of much public scrutiny and academic investigation. As Ninna Nyberg Sorensen explains, “The migration of Dominican women goes against the grain of established notions of domesticity, morality and motherhood. Their employment abroad is often connected with the problem of the ‘broken home’ and other ‘coded’ narratives of ‘family values.’” (Ninna Nyberg Sorensen, *Longing, Belonging and Caring*, 2004)

Author Rhacel Salazar Parrenas makes a similar comment about female migrants from the Philippines, “The dominant gender ideology, after all, holds that a women’s rightful place is in the home, and the households of migrant mothers present a challenge to this view. In response, government officials and journalists denounce migrating mothers, claiming that they have caused the Filipino family to deteriorate, children to be abandoned, and a crisis of care to take root in the Philippines.” She explains that recommendations have been made in the Philippines to keep mothers from migrating, stating: “economic programs should be targeted particularly toward the absorption of the female labor force, to facilitate the possibility for mothers to remain in the family. Yet the return migration of mothers is neither a plausible nor a desirable solution. Rather, it implicitly accepts gender inequities in the family, even as it ignores the economic pressures generated by globalization.” (Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, 2004)

The fact is however, as Nyberg Sorensen points out, “It is not only female-initiated migration that affects the ways in which men assert their masculinity, children face emotional deprivation, and relations of care and love become unfairly distributed between North and South, as the care drain approach would have it. Family disintegration also happens in the DR, as well as in the diaspora, even when the traditional pattern of male migration and later family reunification with wives and children is being followed.” (Nyberg Sorensen, *Longing, Belonging and Caring*, 2004) Nevertheless, male migrants rarely face this same degree of harsh public scrutiny when they move abroad, leaving dependent children behind.

In the case of Dona Ana, the nature of the migration opportunity to Switzerland for cabaret dancing or for marriage means that many women leave for Switzerland when they are still single and childless, making this care-gap less severe. We did however interview some families in both Dona Ana and others in Switzerland in which migrant woman had left their children behind in the care of their



mothers or sisters when they migrated to Switzerland. In these cases, the primary childraising role falls on the shoulders of aunts and grandmothers who are often left in charge of these children for many years. Only after the migrant women had obtained stable residency could they then bring their children to Switzerland. Although Dona Ana has not seen large number of mothers migrate abroad leaving children behind, there is still a feeling shared by many of our informants that crime and delinquency among young people, which is on the rise in Dona Ana, is due in large part to absent migrant parents, mainly mothers.

In her essay on the subject, Salazar offers a solution: “If we want to secure quality care for the children of transnational families, gender egalitarian views of child rearing are essential. Such views can be fostered by recognizing the economic contributions women make to their families and by redefining motherhood to include providing for one’s family. Gender should be recognized as a fluid social category, and masculinity should be redefined, as the larger society questions the biologically based assumption that only women have an aptitude to provide care. Government officials and the media could then stop vilifying migrant women, redirecting their attention, instead, to men. They could question the lack of male accountability for care work, and they could demand that men, including migrant fathers, take more responsibility for the emotional welfare of their children.”

Posing a stark contrast to the care-loss critique that many migrant women receive when they “abandon” their children to migrate abroad, we also observed that migration of Dominican women to Switzerland and their corresponding remittance flows sometimes have very positive impacts on the educational opportunities of migrants’ younger siblings and/or on their children. In several cases, people described to us how migrant women sent additional money home in order to pay the university fees for their younger brothers and sisters and/or to send their children to better quality, private schools. Dona Ana’s one private elementary school, which is considered the best educational option in the town, but which charges a fee too high for most local families to pay, is filled mainly with the children of migrant parents, many of who often spend their vacation periods in Switzerland visiting their mothers.

The final point of our analysis here concentrates on the impact that migration from Dona Ana to Switzerland has had on the dreams and plans of the next generation of adolescents. Focus groups with adolescent girls and boys between the ages of 13 and 17 in Dona Ana provided very interesting data.

In the case of the girls, when asked about their plans for the future, their initial comments included: “I want to be a lawyer,”...”I want to be an architect,”...”I want to be an accountant,”...”My plan right now is to go abroad and work...in Europe, doing some sort of decent work that allows me to make a good living,”...”I want to go to Switzerland to make money, and if I can, I want to get married and stay there...because the only women that really get ahead around here are the ones who migrate.”

Upon further questioning, several of the participants in our focus group explained that they have clear plans to go to Switzerland and some of them even mentioned that they were preparing themselves physically for the experience. According to one young girl, “you have to take care of your body, you can’t let yourself go, because if you do and you become ugly then you’ll never get a (cabaret) contract.” You have to pay attention not to be too thin or too fat because then when you send in your picture (to the cabaret owner) they will never offer you a job.” Our focus group conversation revealed the fact that these young girls know an enormous amount about Swiss cabaret dancing, including details of these labor contracts. They are able to explain, in detail, how “the girls (migrants) work in night clubs there and they dance, they dance around poles to music and they take off their clothes and throw them into the crowd.” But even if they understand the nature of the work, they still want to go themselves one day because, as one girl explained, “it is the surest way to be able to make money to buy food and a house for my family.”

As one school principal in Dona Ana told us, “The young people around here want to migrate and work abroad because they think it’s a quick and easy way to make money and to get ahead. They only have short term plans. They don’t think of their long term future. A lot of young people aspire to be

professionals but the lure of migrating abroad competes with their dreams and many times, in the end, they leave school to go abroad. These days, girls who are 8 or 9 years old talk about the fact that when they are old enough, they are going to leave school to go to Switzerland. In the end, a lot of these girls do go to Switzerland and when they come back to Dona Ana they are really changed. Their personalities are different, they talk differently, and their characters in general are changed into something hard and bitter.”

Given that migration to Switzerland from Dona Ana has been, until now, a purely female migration opportunity, impacts of the dreams, expectations and future plans of boys in the community are quite different, but equally one-dimensional. Focus group discussions with adolescent boys of all ages revealed that the most popular dream is to be professional baseball player, particularly in the American leagues. In Dona Ana, there is a large baseball training center. Every year, 2 or 3 of the boys from that center are chosen for the professional leagues. At any given time, there are about 500 young people from the community training there, all dreaming of being selected to go to the US to play in the big leagues. Although these boys don't speak of emigration abroad in the same terms as the girls, nevertheless, it is obvious that this generation of young boys continue to hold onto the migrant dream.

In both cases, the expectations and future plans expressed by the majority of these young men and women are centered in the idea of leaving the country, the girls to go to Switzerland to work and the boys to go to the US to play baseball, always with the expectation that the community's large, existing social networks will facilitate their dreams. As Ninna Nyberg Sorensen comments, “massive Dominican out-migration has led to a veritable migration culture and a collective belief that in order to move up you need to move elsewhere.” (Ninna Nyberg Sorensen - Longing, Belonging and Caring, 2004) While some young people in Dona Ana talk about plans to study at the university and make a career in the DR, many others simply cannot imagine a local future. The impact that this outward looking perspective will have on Dona Ana is potentially enormous as more and more of the community's young, productive population are likely to look for opportunities to leave, if not to Switzerland, to Spain or the US or to what ever is the latest popular international destination. This growing movement out weighs heavily on Dona Ana's future, both in terms of the supposedly positive impacts that growing migrant remittances could have on the community's economic development, on household poverty, on access to education and on gender relations, as well as the negative impacts that the continued loss of human capital is likely to have overtime on this small town.

## CHAPTER 7 LEVERAGING REMITTANCES FOR ENHANCED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Recommended Remittances-for-Development Pilot Projects and Complementary Changes in Swiss Migration Policy

Clearly, the economic and social impacts of individual remittances flows from Dominicans in Switzerland have been significant. Nevertheless, there is potential to leverage these financial resources for broader development impacts in migrant-sending communities like Dona Ana throughout the DR. In this chapter we discuss some of the strategies which are currently being used or which could be employed to achieve this enhanced community development impact. We will first present a general discussion of these strategies and will then apply them to the Swiss-Dominican case.

#### Strategies for Enhancing the Community Development Impact - A General Discussion

When speaking about ways in which remittances can be leveraged for enhanced community development impact, we are referring, in this case, to ways in which the money sent from migrants living abroad can contribute both to the wellbeing of migrant-sending families and to the collective good of their broader communities of origin. However, if remittances are, first and foremost, private income and savings for migrants and their families, the vast majority of which is used to cover the daily, recurring expenses, how can this money be leveraged for this kind of collective good?

*Individual remittances naturally have some trickle-down, collective impacts*

One answer is that on their own, the impacts of multiple individual remittances on migrant-sending households have a natural aggregated development impact on the broader community. Some examples of these aggregated effects are listed here in the chart below.

#### Trickle Down Effect of Individual Remittances for Community Development

Source: World Bank publication, Remittances – Development Impact and Future Prospects

Remittances contribute to human and economic community development via: (1) Increased support for healthcare and education, (2) Diminished hunger and poverty, and (3) Housing and small business development.
Remittances generate demand for other goods and services in migrant-sending communities.
Remittances sent through banks and micro-finance institutions help people build savings, which can be leveraged for future investments in housing, business development, education, etc.
Remittances invested in the acquisition of land, property or small businesses can spur economic growth in areas neglected by the public and private sectors.

In his article, Transnationalism and Development, Manuel Orozco discusses additional ways in which individual migration and remittance transfers contribute to broader-scale development. He speaks specifically about migrants’ demands for telecommunications, consumer goods and travel, all of which have a development multiplier effect on regional and national economies. Luin Goldring, in her 2003 article: “Re-thinking remittances: Social and Political dimensions and collective remittances,” suggests that remittances not only contribute to economic development in migrant-sending communities and countries, but also have organizational, social and political development effects. She explains that remittances in the form of knowledge, skills and technology brought back home can contribute to the development process, as can social remittances – the sending of different social practices home and the transformations they generate, or political remittances – the transfer of changed political identities, demands and practices.

*Financial and political strategies for enhancing the development impact*

Recognizing that individual remittances can have aggregated community development impacts, there is a growing discussion of how to employ new strategies to increase overall remittance flows. Efforts

to reduce transaction costs, bank the unbanked and link remittances to microfinance institutions are some of the strategies commonly discussed, all of which we explain here in further detail.

Reducing remittance transfers is one commonly-agreed upon strategy that can lead to larger amounts of money in the hands of remittance-receiving households. According to World Bank economist Dilip Ratha, “Exorbitant fees – 13% on average and frequently as high as 20% - charged by many transfer agents are a drain on hard-earned remittances. These fees especially affect poor migrants who remit only small amounts and are forced to pay proportionally more. Reducing remittance fees would significantly increase annual remittance flows to developing countries, especially to the poorest recipients.” (Remittances – Development Impact and Future Prospects) Ratha explains that remittance transfer fees can be reduced through a number of means. One strategy is to allow for increased competition in the remittance transfer market. This can be done by lowering the administration costs and legal requirements to encourage new players into the market. Over time, increased market competition will usually force transfer costs to fall. Another way to lower costs is to harmonize regulatory and compliance requirements between source and destination countries, which reduces the costs of administrative inefficiencies, a cost savings which can be passed on to remittance-sending clients. A third cost-reducing strategy is to bundle several small, individual transfers and send them as one larger sum so that migrants remitting small amounts can benefit from the same cost savings awarded to remitters of larger amounts.

Besides lowering costs, another strategy to increase the flow of individual remittances is to bank the unbanked. A large number of migrants and remittance-receiving households have no access or formal relationship with a bank. This is due to a number of factors, including: lack of a presence of banks in some migrant-sending communities, lack of legal access to banks for undocumented migrants in host-countries, lack of confidence in the reliability of banking services, and/or requirements for high minimum balances which are often impossible for poor migrants and their families to maintain. Providing migrants and their relatives more opportunities to have a bank account can encourage the transfer of remittances through electronic bank to bank networks, a transfer method which is commonly less expensive than sending money through other formal means. Alternatively, as Manuel Orozco suggests, strategic alliances between banks and remittance companies can give remitters the opportunity to use debit card technologies and automatic teller machines to transfer their funds. In addition, once they are part of the formal banking system, migrants and/or their relatives can be encouraged to save a portion of their remittances, savings which can be used as collateral for educational, housing or small business loans.

A third strategy to increase the flow of individual remittances is to link remittance transfers to microfinance institutions. Microfinance institutions provide remitters some of the most cost-effective transfers services. Additionally, as many microfinance institutions concentrate on serving poor and marginalized populations, they often have a well established presence in rural and marginalized communities and can deliver remittances to families in these hard-to-reach areas more successfully than traditional banks or even some remittance transfer companies. Simultaneously, microfinance institutions can offer their clients complementary financial services similar to a bank such as savings accounts and access to credit for education, home loans or business development, using the remittances as collateral.

### *Home Town Associations (HTAs) and Collective Remittance Philanthropy*

In addition to enhancing the development impact of remittances by increasing individual flows, remittances also contribute to development in migrant-sending communities and countries of origin when the money is bundled by migrant associations abroad and sent home to support philanthropic community development projects. Bundled remittances of this kind are commonly referred to as “collective remittances.”

The phenomenon of collective remitting began mostly with small amounts of cash and supplies sent to local communities by migrant associations abroad following natural disasters or other emergencies. It

grew from there to include larger amounts sent on a regular basis for more permanent kinds of projects. The literature on remittances and development contains many examples of the ways in which collective remittances have supported local economic development such as affordable housing and business development. In many countries, collective remittances have been used to improve physical infrastructure or provide residents with basic services, such as potable water, waste removal or electricity. Apart from economic and infrastructure development, collective remittances can contribute to social or human development goals, such as the provision of higher quality education or healthcare, or to enhance the cultural, recreational or artistic life of a community. Collective remittances can also contribute to environmental endeavors such as reforestation, restoration of a river or lake, or the preservation of open space.

Migrant groups sending collective remittances are commonly referred to as migrant “Home Town Associations” (HTAs). HTAs are grassroots organizations formed in migrant host countries by people who seek to support their places of origin, maintain relationships with their country and retain a sense of community as they adjust to life abroad. Latin American and Caribbean HTAs are usually non-sectarian organizations that depend entirely on volunteers and donations to do their work. Some groups have a large, well-organized structure led by a volunteer board of directors. Other groups are small, ephemeral and unstable. In many cases, only a small number of active members do most of the work, although most HTAs attract financial support and occasional participation from a much larger number of people. “HTAs are growing in importance in Latin America and the Caribbean due to the sheer size of the support they give to their communities of origin. They illustrate an example of the relationship between transnationalism and development, a relationship which is complex and which reflects a combination of initiatives and motivations – cultural, economic, political and social.” (Orozco, transnationalism and development)

HTAs are commonly engaged in a variety of different kinds of activities that may be social, cultural, political and/or economic in nature. For those groups who engage in transnational philanthropy, their work commonly focuses on providing financial support to one particular home-town community. This kind of singular, geographic focus is much less common however among European-based HTAs which more often support projects in multiple migrant-sending regions. HTAs most commonly raise the funds for their philanthropic development work through dances, community dinners, and through small contributions by individuals. Donations from most HTAs total less than \$10,000 on average each year.

In many cases, HTAs work closely with a counterpart organization in their hometown, a parallel board or a community leader when selecting and carrying out collective remittance funded projects. These counterparts are often the ones to suggest ideas for new initiatives. Ultimately however, it is usually the HTA leaders abroad who make the final project selection. The driving force for selecting projects is often directly related to the occurrence of a disaster (hurricane, flood, earthquake), a particularly good cause (healthcare, new school) or based on a request from an important member of the community. When it comes to project selection and execution, some but not all HTAs carry out their development work in partnership with local government institutions, community planning bodies, or local NGOs, although this varies widely.

Since most HTAs have only small amounts of funding to support their philanthropic development work, they are inclined to choose projects that have concrete and tangible results in the short term. HTA projects commonly focused on basic physical infrastructure and services, but can also support human development initiatives, most commonly health and education. Collective remittances have been used to help start new local businesses, fund educational scholarships, cover the cost of local religious festivals or to address other important social, cultural, economic or practical needs in the community. Job generating ventures and collective investment in micro-enterprises occurs as well but to a lesser degree. (Lowell)

The ever-expanding presence of HTAs in North America and Europe, and the continual growth of remittance flows has been the engine behind a growing number of more sophisticated and high-profile

remittances-for-development initiatives in migrant sending communities. The “Three for One” initiative in Zacatecas, Mexico is perhaps the most well known collective remittance financing scheme. In this initiative, remittances sent collectively from the Mexican diaspora in the US to their home towns are matched by federal, state and local government funds (thus 3 x 1) to support large scale community development initiatives. As this matching scheme quadruples the size of collective remittances sent by migrant groups abroad, the development impact of this financial flow is greatly enhanced. This unique opportunity to leverage collective funds for greater development impact has encouraged continual, philanthropic support from the diaspora abroad. To date, monies from this matching fund program have provided potable water, built schools and recreational facilities, paved streets, and built churches, plazas and parks. The state government of Zacatecas, Mexico is now working to build microenterprises and other economically productive projects with some of these funds. Since it began in 2001, this program has had a tremendous impact on development at the state level and has now been transformed into a national program. A similar matching fund scheme has also been established recently in El Salvador.

Although the volume of collective-remittances pales when compared with private remittances, their aggregated value can have significant developmental impacts. (Lowell) As a result, collective remittances, which according to Manuel Orozco commonly amount to approximately 1% of private remittance flows to a country, have now become seen as a viable and promising indirect engine of local and regional economic development in migrant-sending communities around the world.

### **Dominican HTAs in Switzerland: Structure, Development Experience and Future Potential**

The practice of collective remitting by HTAs and the potential to leverage these flows for enhanced community development impact exists as well in the case of the Dominican community in Switzerland. At the moment there are three Dominican associations in Switzerland which can act as agents for transnational development. None of these groups is linked to one particular hometown or region. Rather, they attract support and participation from Dominicans originating from all parts of the DR and who are living in different regions in Switzerland. As a result, their transnational activities are not focused specifically on one hometown, but rather, are spread out among many migrant-sending regions.

The Association of Dominicans in Switzerland (ADES) and the Union of Dominicans in Switzerland (UDES) claim to have a combined membership of more than 1,000 people. ADES was the first Dominican association in Switzerland, created more than 10 years ago in Geneva. Several years after it was first established, the group expanded to include a sister organization in Bern. In 2001, a third chapter was formed in Zurich. However, internal disputes between the leaders of these three groups caused the Zurich chapter to break away from the others and in 2003 a new organization, UDES, was born. This Zurich-based group has now become the largest and most active of the three associations.

Although each of these three migrant groups operates independently, each one under the direction of a charismatic leader, the three groups are dedicated, more or less, to the same kind of work. Within all three organizations, socio-cultural activities predominate and are the one thing that unifies the entire membership on a few occasions each year. Social events which correspond most commonly with Christmas and Dominican Independence Day, are the only time in which large number of Dominicans get together with their families to enjoy celebrate and enjoy a bit of Dominican food, drink and music together. Apart from these occasional special events, both ADES and UDES also try to organize small activities designed to conserve and share their cultural roots and identity. The groups also offer occasional activities aimed at helping to facilitate the orientation and integration process of Dominicans in the Swiss context. They also make some attempts to generate positive coverage for their community in the Swiss media to counteract their generally negative image, which is often associated with drug dealing and prostitution. Another important function of both ADES and UDES is to provide support to members of the Dominican community in times of crisis – organizing funerals

and arranging for the return of bodies in the case of a migrant's death, or arranging for legal representation and support in case of arrest or incarceration.

Apart from their social and cultural roles, both ADES and UDES also engage periodically in transnational philanthropic activities. Using funds collected at special events and through small membership fees, the groups have supported a variety of emergency and community development activities in the DR over the years. Schools, churches, retirement homes and hospitals have received needed equipment, materials and cash to make needed repairs. Families living in conditions of extreme poverty have received clothing, food, medicine and school uniforms. Cash donations have been given to NGOs that care for children with AIDS and to help with emergency relief efforts after hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters.

While these three associations have a loyal following, the majority of Dominicans in Switzerland remain disconnected and uninvolved in one or more of these groups. Nevertheless, our research pointed to a broad interest among individual Dominican migrants to participate in philanthropic or community development endeavors. In fact, more than half the people we interviewed in Switzerland commented that they had already made some sort of contribution to a philanthropic initiative in the DR. An even larger number of people, 88% of everyone we interviewed, expressed interest in contributing to larger, longer term development projects in their country of origin.

### **Current transnational development initiatives providing a basis for future endeavors**

Before constructing recommendations for ways in which individual and collective remittances by Dominicans in Switzerland can be better leveraged for enhanced community development impacts, we present here a brief discussion of some of the current, related initiatives underway in the DR and among the Dominican diaspora in the US which provide a basis for future endeavors involving Dominicans in Switzerland.

#### *Transnational Collaboration – Columbia University and FUNGLODE*

The Earth Institute at Columbia University's Center for Globalization and Sustainable Development in New York is currently collaborating with the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (FUNGLODE) in the Dominican Republic to promote sustainable economic development in the DR. Similar to a previous project between FUNGLODE and the Center for International Development (CID) at Harvard University which examined the roots of Dominican competitiveness in export processing zones and tourism, this current collaboration aims at generating a deeper understanding of the DR's future development challenges, some of which can be addressed, in part, through partnerships with the Dominican diaspora and remittance-linked initiatives.

One of the key activities in this transnational collaboration is a conference series to address topics key to the Dominican Republic's future economic development challenges. As part of this series, on October 13, 2004, more than 300 participants from the public sector, the business and finance community, civil society, the media and academia attended a one-day event entitled: "Dominican-American Relations: Building Bridges for Development." This day-long academic forum examined the Dominican-American relationship and economic development in the DR from several perspectives including global partnerships, trade relations, democratic political transitions, capital flows and transnational cultural development.

In addition to the conference series, Columbia University and FUNGLODE have also collaborated on the publication of an academic study, published in November 2004, entitled "Financial Institutions and Remittance Market in the DR." In this report, author Dr. Lenora Suki evaluated the financial institutions that channel remittances between immigrants in the United States to their friends and family in the Dominican Republic. Suki found that this poorly served population transfers over \$2

billion a year in remittances, pays higher service fees and receives fewer services than most of Latin America resulting in missed opportunities for economic and community development.

For the study, Suki interviewed 25 major financial institutions from the United States and the Dominican Republic. In addition to unusually high costs, Suki also found that 80-85% of remittances are home delivered to customers in the Dominican Republic with service fees as high as 5% to 8% in local currency and 7% to 15% for delivery in US dollars. Furthermore, Suki concludes that in the DR, remittance customers rarely go to the financial institution and therefore receive few value-added services from these institutions such as ATM cards and small loans. “The spillover effect is that there are few options for people who want to save or invest some part of the money they receive. Nor is there any outlet for community investment,” says Ms. Suki.

Suki claims in her report that “the need to examine remittances from a development perspective in the DR is pressing for a number of reasons.” She explains that remittances are increasing at both the macroeconomic and household levels. Remittances represent 13% of GDP in 2003, are one to two times larger than foreign direct investment, are four times the DR’s foreign portfolio investment, and represent approximately 20% of people’s disposable income. And while high costs reduce the amount available for savings and investment, remittance receivers are still able to spend 17% of their remittances on education, save 5%, invest another 5% in small businesses and making housing investments with an additional 4%. Suki suggests that improving the intermediation of remittances can increase savings mobilization and relieve credit constraints for low and low-middle income groups. She also suggests that the use of remittances can be harmonized with government objectives in other areas such as relieving hunger, raising access to education at all levels, increasing gender equality, improving rural development and raising health standards.

In terms of the way in which remittances have already contributed to development in the DR, Suki explains that, “Remittances may fuel as much as US \$135 million in small-scale savings, small business investment and housing investment and expenses” every year, and adds that “The potential proportion of remittances spent on education alone could be as much as US \$460 million in the DR. Given the failure to achieve basic universal primary education, bring down high rates of illiteracy, and guarantee an adequate level of secondary and tertiary education even among countries at similar income levels, it should be possible to link remittance-fueled education expenditures with national education policy goals.”

Suki’s work also provides a detailed analysis of the increasing role of commercial banks in the Dominican remittance market and includes examples of how their participation can reduce costs and increase transfer options. As one example, she explains how “Banco Popular Dominicano, the largest bank in the DR with approximately 30% market share, is participating in the remittance market in a limited fashion in partnership with MoneyGram. Using MoneyGram branches, remitters anywhere can send funds to be received in Banco Popular branches or deposited directly into an existing Banco Popular account.” Suki explains however that banks do not yet offer migrants additional value-added services, such as savings products, loans or other types of credit, services which would increase their development impact, partly, they claim, because the small number of users make these services too expensive at the moment. Suki suggests that increased involvement by savings and loans, credit unions and MFI could help to have this same sort of impact, perhaps more easily than the participation of large banks.

#### *ADOPEM – Dominican Association for the Development of Women*

Another good example of an already existing remittances-for-development initiative in the DR is the work of ADOPEM, Asociacion Dominicana para el Desarrollo de la Mujer. ADOPEM is an affiliate of the Women’s World Banking network, is both a development bank and NGO based in the DR. Their mission is to incorporate women and their families into the economic and financial system through the provision of credit and training, and to strengthen the position of micro, small and



medium women entrepreneurs. ADOPEM serves primarily low income women from urban areas of the DR, offering them loans for business investment, working capital and housing, as well as savings mechanisms and business training. ADOPEM has more than 68,000 active borrowers and savers, 97% of which are women and 94% of which come from urban areas. ADOPEM loans are targeted at families in extreme poverty and struggling businesses that lack collateral. Currently, ADOPEM is embarking on a strategy to integrate remittances into its current business lines in partnership with Quisqueyana, a private remittance transfer company. The organization's future vision is to leverage remittances into micro-health insurance, programmed savings, home improvement loans and other projects.

### *Comer es Primero (Food is First)*

One final initiative in the DR which has the potential to further leverage remittances for development is the initiative "Comer es Primero." This government initiative, launched in the DR in August 2004, is a pilot program subsidized by the World Bank which makes use of rechargeable "smart cards" to distribute government subsidies for food to Dominican citizens living at or below the poverty line. 6000 families currently receive an monthly stipend as a credit on the card, which they can use to buy food at participating stores. The government hopes to expand the program to 150,000 families by the end of 2005. In the future, the government is considering the possibility of allowing the card to be used to access other government social services, including health services, employment and training. It is possible that this same card network could help link very poor families to other programs and services supported by Dominican HTAs abroad or other remittance-financed activities.

### **Strategies to leverage individual and collective remittances sent by Dominicans in Switzerland for enhanced community development impacts in the DR**

We present here a list of potential strategies to leverage the individual and collective remittances sent by Dominicans in Switzerland for enhanced community development impacts in the DR. While this list is far from exhaustive, it offers a number of potential strategies that build on current activities, existing institutional partnerships and several strategies discussed earlier in this chapter.

#### 1. Build HTA Project Management capacity:

Offer a project management training course to Dominican HTA leaders in Switzerland and other EU countries to enhance their ability to design, fund and execute philanthropic transnational co-development projects in the DR. HTA leaders lack formal training in development project assessment, design, management and financing. Enhanced project management skills are needed if these groups are to engage successfully in larger-scale development projects, particular those at a regional or national level, and/or projects which require close collaborations with the Dominican government and other strategic partners, such as the private sector, NGOs, and migrant-sending communities.

Because the number of Dominican HTAs in Switzerland is very limited, a training project of this kind should be carried out at the European level and should include the leaders of Dominican HTAs in other neighboring countries such as Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands. It would also be possible to use this kind of event to expand the number of migrants playing leadership roles by offering a "team" of active HTA members the chance to participate. Such an approach would help both to democratize leadership of these groups and improve the long term sustainability of these newly acquired skills within each migrant organization.

#### 2. Develop a multi-party matching fund:

Develop a multi-party matching fund program to enhance the size and impact of philanthropic donations made by Dominican HTAs in Switzerland for development projects in migrant-sending

communities. This scheme would follow the 3x1 program currently in place in Mexico. Matching fund partners should include the Dominican federal government, but could also include international development agencies such as SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), private foundations, the private sector, etc. If this matching fund scheme was made available to the broader Dominican HTA community throughout Europe, matching fund partners could also involve the development agencies of other countries such as Spain and Italy, as well as the EU. Project development could naturally follow the capacity building training course suggested above, in which case, multiple Dominican HTAs could develop one or more joint project proposals together to be submitted for matching fund support.

Clear guidelines for the kinds of projects that can be supported by such a matching should be developed to ensure that projects lead to collective goods that local residents and the Dominican government consider of high priority. Projects should also engage the involvement of NGOs working in key areas, to provide technical assistance and project management roles, such as those groups working in rural or municipal development, health, education, housing or environmental protection. Up to now, most NGOs have had little contact or collaboration with migrant organizations. A matching program which engaged the participation of relevant NGOs could greatly enhance the sustainability and success of HTA-sponsored development initiatives.

Another special focus of this program could be to support the development of community owned cooperative enterprises which have the possibility of generating long-term sustainable financing and administration. One concrete example is the creation of a community-owned solar energy cooperative for rural and semi-urban communities to address the chronic shortage of electric power in the DR. HTA donations, matched by multiple partner organizations, could provide the initial capital to purchase solar panels, which could then be rented out and maintained by a community cooperative. Rental income could be reinvested in the maintenance of the panels and in the purchase of additional panels, allowing for increased service to a growing number of households. An NGO with expertise in solar energy technologies could provide technical assistance and support to the cooperative staff. This particular project could work wonderfully in a community like our case study area of Dona Ana.

3. Partner with ADOPEM to pilot the joint venture between Quesqueyana and MoneyGram in Switzerland:

The interest and capacity of ADOPEM in using remittances as capital for microfinance for business development, education, housing and health insurance provides another opportunity for partnership. The focus of this organization on supporting the needs and endeavors of poor women is particularly appropriate given the primarily female nature of the Dominican diaspora in Switzerland and the fact that the vast majority of relatives receiving remittances from Switzerland are women. It might be possible to use Switzerland as a test site for the proposed new collaborative initiative with Quisqueyana and ADOPEM. In this case, a Dominican migrant in Switzerland could use the services of the remittance transfer company to send money to a savings account held by ADOPEM in the DR. The migrant or the migrant's relative could then leverage this money as a guarantee for a loan to be used for one or more pre-specified activities, such as: supporting the costs of starting or growing a business, paying for education or constructing, repairing or expanding a home.

4. Replicate MoneyGram-Banco Popular initiative in CH:

Given the existing partnership between MoneyGram and Banco Popular in the US and the DR whereby remittances transferred by MoneyGram are delivered through Banco Popular locations throughout the DR, it may be possible to replicate this program or a similar partnership with one or more of the remittance transfer companies offering service to Dominicans in Switzerland and a local bank in the DR. A partnership like this could further reduce transfer costs and facilitate

higher savings rates, savings which remittance recipients could use as a guarantee to get access to credit for housing, education, and business development activities.

5. Engage the European-based Dominican diaspora in similar partnership to Funglode/Columbia

The final suggestion is to expand contact between the Dominican government and migrant communities in Switzerland and other European countries with large Dominican diasporas. A series of conferences and/or consultations with the European-based Dominican population could help facilitate future transnational collaborations for development. The size of the Dominican diaspora in Europe is growing at a steady rate along with remittance flows. Now is the time to take advantage of the growing ability and interest of this population to contribute to development of their home country.

### **Suggested Policy Changes to Improve the Situation of Dominican Migrants in Switzerland to Enhance Migration and Development Impacts**

Clearly, remittances sent by Dominican migrants in Switzerland have had important impacts on their communities of origin in the DR. Increased household income, improved housing, expanded opportunities for education and more equitable gender relations are just some of the important impacts observed. At the same time, the growing remittance flows sent by individual Dominicans and Dominican HTAs have the potential for enhanced development impacts on a much larger scale in the future. To achieve this end, in addition to the remittances-for-development initiatives suggested above, we present here recommended changes to Swiss migration policy towards Dominican citizens which could help to improve the social and economic situation of this population and reinforce their ability to act as agents in the development of their country of origin. These recommendations include:

1. Continue short term labor migration opportunities with improved working conditions;
2. Expand legal labor migration opportunities;
3. Increase support to the established Dominican diaspora in Switzerland;

*Suggestion #1: Continue short term labor migration opportunities with improved working conditions*

Given the important role that remittances play in supporting the well-being of migrant families and their communities, opportunities for Dominican men and women to continue to legally migrate, reside and work in Switzerland, earning sufficient income to support themselves and also to send money home to relatives, should not be interrupted. As we discussed several times throughout this paper, short term labor contracts for cabaret dancing have been an important legal migration pathway for thousands of Dominican women in Switzerland over the past 25 years. Still today, Dominican women are recruited for this work, highlighting a continued demand for their labor, although at much lower rates than in the past. Most Dominican women who have entered Switzerland under these conditions have abided by Swiss law, leaving the country after their work permits expire, or marrying and remaining in the country legally. There is consequently no reason why short term work contracts for cabaret dancing should not continue to exist as a legal labor migration opportunity for people who qualify for this work and who choose this migration route voluntarily.

However, stricter enforcement of existing laws and regulations are needed to better combat the trafficking of women for this work and to protect those who choose this work voluntarily. According to several key informants and migrant women interviewed for this study, some of the protections required by law and/or stated in the official work contracts for cabaret dancers are not followed or enforced. Women still report being forced to drink excessive amounts of alcohol and/or perform sexual services for clients in order to reach sales quotas established by the cabaret owners that they work for. Failure to meet these quotas sometimes results in the withholding of wages. Other abuses of workers rights, such as requiring migrants to reside in and pay for overpriced, substandard housing, or the recruitment of women under the minimum age limit (usually through the use of forged

documents) are also reported. Clearly, government and law enforcement officials must do a better job ensuring that basic employment guidelines and workers rights are not only stipulated on paper, but are also enforced.

*Suggestion #2: Expand legal labor migration opportunities*

Legal labor migration opportunities for Dominican men and women should also be expanded. At the moment, most Dominican women and men who want to migrate legally to Switzerland are limited to work in the cabaret industry or marriage to a Swiss resident. The right to legal employment in other areas could be achieved by one or both of the following three strategies described here.

First, women who migrate to Switzerland with a cabaret labor contract, holding an L Permit, could be granted the same rights given to temporary, seasonal workers in the past. After accumulating an established number of months of legal employment, these L permit holders could be given the right to apply for an annual residency and work permit (B), and allowed to either continue their employment in the cabaret industry or compete for jobs in other areas for which they are qualified. Once they obtain a B Permit, these migrant workers could also be immediately extended the customary right to family reunification of direct dependants.

Secondly, new bilateral agreements could be negotiated to offer Dominicans possessing skills needed in the Swiss workplace access to new, legal migration opportunities – either short term or renewable annual contracts. Currently, the Spanish government, through bilateral accords, is in the process of recruiting a limited number of Dominican men and women for jobs in restaurants, hotels, domestic service, etc. A rigorous selection process is used to choose labor migrants for this program. The selected candidates then receive job training and cultural orientation to prepare them for work and residence in Spain. A similar arrangement could be negotiated between the DR and Switzerland allowing Dominicans to apply and compete for a range of both high and low skilled jobs in strategic areas important to the Swiss economy.

Thirdly, the legal status of Dominicans currently living and working unauthorized in Switzerland, but who have been steadily employed in legal labor activities for a certain period of time, could be regularized. The number of Dominicans living and working without authorization in Switzerland is quite small compared with other Latin American groups. Nevertheless, for the small number of migrants in this situation, granting them legal status would grant them basic rights and responsibilities of other Dominican migrant workers.

Generally speaking, expanding legal employment opportunities for Dominican migrants will allow them to make a larger contribution to the Swiss economy, support their country's economic development and improve their own economic well-being. Legal employment in a variety of areas, along with stable residency rights, will also help promote better socio-cultural integration. Expanded legal labor migration opportunities will reduce the need for Dominican men and women to resort to marriage as their fundamental immigration strategy, as is currently the case for many people. Given that the Swiss Federal Government has specifically stated in the new Foreign Nationals Act (2005) that they wish to improve the situation of foreign nationals with legal residence in Switzerland and punish the use of marriages of convenience for immigration purposes, the suggested policy changes seem appropriate.

*Suggestion #3: Increase support to the established Dominican diaspora in Switzerland*

Existing transnational social networks will continue to bring more Dominican men, women and children to Switzerland every year. The growth of the second generation of Dominican-Swiss nationals adds further to the size of this growing transnational community. To help facilitate their social and economic integration in the Swiss society, a number of improved/expanded services and support mechanisms are needed, both at the time of arrival in Switzerland, as well as during their initial years of residency. Some specific examples include:

- (1) Language training - Successful integration into the Swiss society and workforce requires that Dominicans develop stronger language skills appropriate to the region where they reside. Improving people's access to high quality, long term language training is needed.
- (2) Recognition of academic credentials to facilitate employment – A number of Dominican men and women residing legally in Switzerland hold university or technical degrees in specialized areas from educational institutions in the DR. Many informants for this study reported having tremendous difficulty in validating these credentials. As a result, many people are unable to work in areas where they possess advanced education, training and/or experience, and are working instead in areas far below their professional capacity or have not been able to find stable work at all. More systematic recognition of academic, professional and technical credentials would help improve the working conditions and earning potential of many Dominican men and women.
- (3) Access to job training programs and continuing education – Dominicans who come to live in Switzerland via marriage to a legal resident or through family reunification, and are unable to find work, either because their credentials are not recognized by the Swiss government, or because they do not possess skills appropriate for the Swiss labor market, need enhanced support and access to job training programs which will allow them to make a more productive contribution to Swiss society. Similarly, many older adolescents need better opportunities to advance or complete their education. Many young Dominican men and women who join their Dominican parents in Switzerland under family reunification laws leave the DR at a critical point in their education, with the majority of secondary school complete but without graduating. When they arrive in Switzerland, because of their age, many are not able to integrate themselves into the Swiss educational system, either to continue their academic studies, or to pursue practical job training via the popular “stage” system. Access to continuing education and/or job training would allow these young people the important opportunity to realize their professional potential, contribute more generously to the Swiss society and develop the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in future transnational activities with their home country.
- (4) Support for Dominican socio-cultural and entrepreneurial activities – Dominican HTAs and other individual leaders in the Dominican community in Switzerland have demonstrated their interest and ability in organizing socio-cultural activities which provide support to people during their integration process and a link for second-generation Dominicans to their country of origin. Our interviews also revealed a number of current and planned entrepreneurial activities by Dominican men and women in Switzerland which also contribute to the well-being of this migrant community in the Swiss context, and at the same time, support transnational economic development. The importation of Dominican specialty items such as food and beauty products, and the development of new, low cost remittance transfer and courier services between the DR and Switzerland are two concrete examples. Specialized financing to support socio-cultural and entrepreneurial activities could also have important effects on the well-being and development-enhancing potential of this community.

These are just some of the possible policy changes and development strategies that would improve the well being of this migrant diaspora and enhance their ability to contribute to development in the DR. Our hope is that these ideas, and the rest of the information presented in this research report, serve to both inform and motivate government policy makers and development organizations to recognize the important and growing link that contemporary migration has to the future development of migrant-sending countries. Contemporary migration offers both tremendous opportunities and requires serious responsibilities for both sending and host governments, who must work collaboratively to develop policies which are mutually beneficial to both the migrant host society and to migrants themselves, providing people with opportunities to improve their lives and at the same time, to facilitate their participation in transnational practices, such as the sending of remittances, which help to reduce poverty and improve the social, physical and environmental conditions of developing countries like the DR.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Association Dominicana Para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (ADOPEM) website - (<http://www.adopem.org.do>) ;

Bolzman, Claudio; Fibbi, Rosita y Vial, María, "Modos de Inserción Socioprofesional, Prácticas socioculturales y pertenencias identitarias, El ejemplo de los jóvenes adultos de origen español e italiano en Suiza," *Migraciones* (6), 1999;

Bolzman, Claudio, "Collective Identity, Association Dynamics and Social Participation in Migrant Communities in Switzerland – The Search for a Local Citizenship," *Revista Migraciones* (2), 1997;

Branger, Katja; "Switzerland : A Multicultural Society, 1998 Monitoring Multicultural Society - A Siena Group Report," J. Bühlmann, P. , Röthlisberger, B. Schmid (Editors), Swiss Federal Statistical Office, Berne, pp. 291-325, 1998;

Brennan, Denise, "Selling Sex for Visas: Sex Tourism as a Stepping-stone to International Migration," *Global Woman – Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*, pp. 154-168, 2002;

Carling, Jorgen, "Migrant Remittances and Development Cooperation," International Peace Research Institute (PRIO) Report - Oslo, Norway, January 2005;

Castor, Suzy, "Migración y Relaciones Internacionales," Editora Universitaria. Santo Domingo, 1987;

Comisión Argentina para los Refugiados, "Migración, Prostitución y Trata de Mujeres Dominicanas en Argentina". Organización Internacional para las Migraciones, OIM. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana, 2003;

Dannecker, Petra, "Transnational Migration and the Transformation of Gender Relations: The Case of Bangladeshi Labour Migrants," *Current Sociology*, Vol. 53(4), 655-674, July 2005;

Economist Magazine, "*The Longest Journey - A Survey of Migration*," November 2, 2002;

Efionayi, Denise, Josef Martin Niederberger and Phillippe Wanner, "Switzerland faces Common European Challenges," *Migration Information Source*, February 2005;

Ehrenbreich, Barbara and Hoschschild, Arlie Russell, *Global Women: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2003;

Federal Office of Immigration, Integration and Emigration, "2003 Foreigner Statistics – Volume 1 : Effects and Movements," 2004;

Ferreira, Francisca; Gómez, Carmen Julia y Moreno Luís, "Trata de personas y Migración Internacional Femenina. Un Estudio Cualitativo en dos comunidades de República Dominicana. Organización Internacional de la Migración (OIM) / Secretaría de Estado de la Mujer .Santo Domingo, República Dominicana, 2002;

Gallardo Rivas, Gina, "Tráfico de Mujeres desde la República Dominicana con fines de explotación sexual". Organización Internacional de la Migración (OIM) / Secretaría de Estado de la Mujer. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana, 2001;

Georges, Eugenia, *The Making of a Transnational Community – Migration, Development and Cultural Change in the Dominican Republic*, Columbia University Press, 1990;

Goldring, Luin, "Family and Collective Remittances in Mexico: A Multi-dimensional Typology," *Development and Change* 35(4): 799-840, 2004;

-----, "Re-thinking Remittances: Social and Political Dimensions of Individual and Collective Remittances," CERLAC Working Paper Series, February 2003;

- Grieco, Elizabeth, "Will Migrant Remittances Continue Through Time? A New Answer to an Old Question," *International Journal on Multicultural Studies*, Vol 6., No. 2, 2004, pp. 152-161;
- Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo and Michael Peter Smith, "The Locations of Transnationalism," *Transnationalism from Below, Comparative Urban and Community Research*, Volume 6, 1998;
- Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo, "The Economics of Transnational Living," *International Migration Review*, vol 37(3), Fall 2003;
- Hannerz, Ulf, "Conexiones Transnacionales. Cultura, gente, lugares". Frónesis, Cátedra. Universidad de Valencia, 1996;
- Hernández, Ramona y Rodríguez, María Elizabeth, "Building Strategic Partnerships for Development: Dominican Republic- New York State". *Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo /Cuny Dominican Studies Institute*, 2004;
- InterAmerican Development Bank, "Sending Money Home: Remittance Recipients in the Dominican Republic and Remittance Senders from the US," 2004;
- , "Dominican Immigrants Around World To Send Home Record \$2.7 billion in 2004; \$1 Billion From Metropolitan New York," press release, November 22, 2004;
- , "The impact of remittances: Emigrant remittances from Spain to Latin America," web story, January 28, 2003;
- , "IDB fund approves \$2.5 million loans to cut costs and improve distribution of remittances in Dominican Republic," press release, May 5, 2004;
- , "Remittances and the Dominican Republic – Survey of Recipients in the DR, Senders in the US," Columbia University, NYC, November 23, 2004;
- Itzigsohn, José, "Dominicans in Providence: The Formation of a Transnational Community in a Secondary City," *Dominican Migration – Transnational Perspectives*, University Press of Florida, 2004;
- , and Silvia Giorguli Saucedo, "Immigrant Incorporation and Sociocultural Transnationalism," *Center for Migration Studies of New York*, 2002;
- , José, Carlos Dore Cabral, Esther Hernandez Medina and Obed Vazquez, "Mapping Dominican Transnationalism: Narrow and Broad Transnational Practices," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Volume 22 (2), March 1999;
- Kymlicka, Will, "Ciudadanía multicultural". Ediciones Paidós. Barcelona, 1996;
- Lapoiné, Michelle, "Diasporas in Caribbean Development". Report of the Inter-American Dialogue and the World Bank," 2004;
- Levitt, Peggy, "Migration Fundamentals: Transnational Migrants: When "home" means more than one country," *Migration Policy Institute*, October 2004;
- , *The Transnational Villagers*, University of California Press, 2001;
- , "Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local-Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion," *International Migration Review*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Winter 1998), 926-948;
- Lilon, Domingo and Juleyka J. Lantigua, "Dominican Transmigrants in Spain," *Dominican Migration – Transnational Perspectives*, University Press of Florida, 2004;
- Mahnig, Hans and Etienne Piguet, "La politique Suisse d'immigration de 1948 a 1998: evolution et effets," *Les Migrations et la Suisse*, Editions Seismo, 2003;

- Molina, José L. « El Análisis de Redes Sociales. Una Introducción ». Edicions Bellaterra. Barcelona. 2001.
- Orozco, Manuel; "Latino Hometown Associations as Agents of Development in Latin America," Department of Government, University of Ohio, 2000;
- ,"Remittances to Latin America and its Effect on Development," Inter-American Dialogue, Presentation to the Rural Prosperity Conference organized by USAID/LAC, Feb. 2002;
- ,"Globalization and Migration: The Impact of Family Remittances in Latin America," Inter-American Dialogue, October 2001;
- ,"Worker remittances: the human face of globalization," Inter-American Dialogue, October 2002;
- , "*New Development Opportunities? The Work of Home Town Associations and their Present and Future Partnerships*", Inter-American Dialogue, Report to the U.S. Agency for International Development, July 2003;
- , "Transnationalism and Development," published as a chapter in "Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects," World Bank, 2005;
- Pellegrino, Adela, "Migration from Latin America to Europe: Trends and Policy Challenges". International Organization of Migration Research Series, No. 16, May 2004;
- Pessar, Patricia and Sarah Mahler, "Transnational Migration: Bringing Gender In," International Migration Review, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Fall 2003): 812-838;
- Portes, Alejandro, "Conclusion: Theoretical Convergencies and Empirical Evidence in the Study of Immigrant Transnationalism," International Migration Review, vol 37(3), Fall 2003;
- Prudential Equity Group, "Does the Money Transfer Industry Have Legs?" Industry Update, June 2004;
- Ratha, Dilip and Samuel Munzele Maimbo, "Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects," World Bank, 2005;
- Requena Santos, F., "Redes Sociales y Mercado de Trabajo. Elementos para una Teoría del capital relacional". Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas . Madrid. 1991
- Robinson, William, Transnational Conflics: Central America, Social Change and Globalization, Verso 2003;
- Sagás, Ernesto y Sintia E. Molina, Dominican Migration: Transnational Perspectives, University Press of Florida, 2004;
- Salazar Parrenas, Rhacel, "The Care Crisis in the Philippines: Children and Transnational Families in the New Global Economy," Global Women – Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy, 2002, pp. 39-54;
- Soldevila, Maria Isabel, "El Pais Que Vive de Las Mujeres," Rumbo 365, January 29, 2001;
- Sorensen, Ninna Nyberg, "Nueva York es tan solo otra capital dominicana-Madrid es otro mundo Prácticas espaciales y culturales de desplazamiento entre migrantes dominicanos en Nueva York y Madrid". Revista Género y Sociedad. Santo Domingo, 1996
- , "New Landscapes of Migration? Transnational Migration between Latin America, the U:S. and Europe, Beyond Home and Exile: Making Sense of Lives on the Move, Roskilde University, 2002;
- , "The development dimension of Migrant Transfers," Danish Institute for Development Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2004;
- , "The development Dimension of Migrant Remittances – Towards a gendered typology," June 2005;



-----, "Narratives of Longing, Belonging and Caring in the Dominican Diaspora," Chapter 12 in Besson & Olwig, *Caribbean Narratives*, January 2004;

Suki, Lenora, Joaquin Vial, « Meeting the Millennium Development Goals in the Dominican Republic; Identifying Areas for critical policy action," The Earth Institute, Columbia University (website);

Valli, Marcello; « Les Migrants Sans Permis de Sejour a Lausanne, Direction de la securite sociale et de l'environnement, » Ville de Lausanne, 2003 ;

Vertovec, Steve, "Transnational Communities Program - University of Oxford" website description, 2005;

Wasserman, S y Joseph Galaskiewicz, eds. "Advances in Social Network Analysis". Sage, Thousands Oaks. 1994.

Wicker, Hans-Rudolf, Rosita Fibbi and Werner Haug, *Les Migrations et la Suisse*, Editions Seismo 2003 ;

Winkler, Doro, « Von der Variete Kunstlerin zum Go-go-Girl, » FIZ, 2004;

Züttel, Patricia Islas, "Permiso Para el Striptease, Menos Latinoamericanas Trabajan en Cabarets, Puerta al Sector Sexual Helvético, Lo de Menos es Bailar, Beber y Hacer Beber por Unos Francos Mas," A Series Report Published by SwissInfo, October 15-17, 2003;