

October 25, 2007

After "Lessons from NAFTA"

Day two of our "[Lessons from NAFTA](#)" conference hit hard on one of the most powerful themes of the meeting - the role of trade in forced migration. The day started with a keynote from "Children of NAFTA" author [David Bacon](#), who outlined how NAFTA had displaced jobs and people in Mexico, driving them into the U.S. The day continued with a series of panels on different aspects of immigration and trade, each telling the story of how the forced migration of people desperate for jobs is one of the often ignored downsides of free trade agreements.

In our Farm Bill series, [IATP outlined how NAFTA](#) combined with the 96 U.S. Farm Bill to increase forced migration into the U.S. But it's clear this link between migration and free trade agreements is not getting through to either the mainstream media or political candidates. Discussions on immigration consistently ignore the trade context and prevent us from finding workable solutions. As Congress debates a new round of bilateral free trade agreements for Peru, Panama, Columbia and South Korea, an increase in forced migration should be part of the discussion.

—[Ben Lilliston](#)