



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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DURING

**THE GLOBAL MIGRATION GROUP SYMPOSIUM ON “OVERCOMING
BARRIERS: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR MIGRATION AND HUMAN
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Mainstreaming migration in national development strategies to minimise its negative and maximise its positive contributions to human development and the achievement of the MDGs.

1.0 Introduction

The phenomenon of migration comes with its opportunities and challenges which can be categorised as social, economic, health, political and environmental. The opportunities may include free movement of the population, expanded trade, widened employment opportunities and international remittances. The challenges may include the scarcity of standardised migration statistics, lack of human resources and institutions to handle international migration, security concerns, the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDs, malaria and tuberculosis; trafficking of women and children; management of labour migration; the brain drain and the adoption and implementation of appropriate policies on international migration in cooperation with other nations.

Migration is one of the key factors in the strategies of enhanced human development-ie development that is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable and that which enlarges peoples choices. It acts as a stimulant in the creation of new economic opportunities by fostering relationships with the economic, social and cultural fabric of society.

An orderly international migration management requires sound government capacities to manage such movements and to plan for their incorporation in national development plans. Institutional aspects of Migration should include the legal instruments regulating it so as to respond to changing markets; economic conditions and to strengthen the protection of vulnerable groups. It further requires strengthened partnerships and well thought out strategies to maximise the benefits of migration and to forge ways to convert the negative aspects of migration into positive aspects.

This paper briefly focuses on the relevance of analysing and addressing the linkages between migration and development at the regional level. The analysis is guided by the following questions:

1.1 How can regional level cooperation on migration and Development complement and support national planning on Migration and Development.

Regional cooperation or integration provides an important framework through which obstacles to trade liberalisation, markets and the movement of people are alleviated. Africa embraces the pillars of regional integration in the Charter of the African Union and seeks their implementation through the Regional Economic Commissions/ Communities (RECs) such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) the East Africa Community (EAC) the Southern African development Council (SADC); and many others. The principles of free movement of people, labour, right of establishment and residence are enshrined in the Treaties of the RECs with the aim of attaining their implementation in sequenced phases.

Regional level cooperation on migration and development is a critical ingredient and an important aspect to human development both at the national level and at regional level. Migration assists both destination and receiving countries in terms of economic growth and development. From a regional perspective labour migration can have many beneficial elements for both the sending and the receiving countries, including the migrants and their families. While acknowledging that the development of migration policies are supposed to be sovereign rights of each state, it is also important to acknowledge the fact that no individual country effort is sufficient to address issues related to the movement of persons or workers across national borders.

Regionally coordinated efforts take cognizance of the fact that that migration knows no boundaries and it has an influence on the relationship between states. It is also an integral part of national development which requires collective responsibility. Consequently regional and international cooperation and coordination of migration policies must be viewed as an important aspect for regional security, stability and development.

Regional level cooperation in migration and development can complement and support national planning on migration and development through the following-:

- i. Elaborating and promoting through consensus the adoption of new policy frameworks and mechanisms for regulating labour migration as an instrument for development;
- ii. Enhancing the capacities of the member states to manage labour migration as a instrument for development;
- iii. Promoting and supporting research on migration issues including the impact of emigration on countries of origin as well as documenting the contribution of migrants to the countries of destination ;
- iv. Lobbying for multilateral frameworks which promote mobility of people and labour and promoting the positive role of labour migration in deepening the regional integration process;
- v. Facilitating member states engagement in policy debates; elaboration of relevant technical cooperation measures; and in the collection of the necessary migration data to inform policy development;
- vi. Promoting social dialogue and raising awareness among stakeholders regarding migration issues; and
- vii. Advancing labour migration as an integral element of national development, poverty alleviation and a means to a sustainable and equitable regional integration.

1.2 For which of the sectors covered by regional development strategies is migration most relevant?

The EAC regional development Strategy covers socio-economic, economic and political areas of cooperation. The most important sectors which make migration most relevant in the East African region is migration for employment and Education. Employment creation and poverty reduction in the region and especially employment for the youth who make up 65% of the population is currently the most challenging agenda. The negotiated Common Market Protocol has allowed free movement of persons, skilled labour and the right of establishment as self employed persons across the borders of the five Partner State .The Partner States are still negotiating when to commence the movement of unskilled workers.

Migration for education has been a historical phenomenon in the EAC region due to historical and common colonial legacy.

1.3 Who are the key stakeholders that need to be involved in the mainstreaming of migration into regional developmental strategies?

The main stakeholders are many and multifaceted. They include but are not limited to Member States governments constituting the regional integration bloc; stakeholders of labour and employment (Workers and Employers-National and regional organisations) Social Security Institutions; Private Recruitment Agencies at national and regional level; Private Sector Business Associations, Research institutions, Universities; Human Rights organisations; cross border Professional Associations, Civil society organisations; and associations of nationals in the Diaspora.

International Partners that need to be involved include the International Organisation for Migration (IOM); the International Labour Organisation (ILO) UN Agencies such as the UNHCR and the UNDP. *Migration is also being dealt with by many donors and partners (both bilateral and multilateral) in development, in specific research programmes and projects or as a cross cutting issue in sectoral initiatives. The Financial banks such as the World Bank, IMF, and Regional banks are active stakeholders of the migration debate especially in respect to the African Diaspora and remittances*

1.4 What kind of capacities are needed to analyse the interlinkages between Migration and Human development at the regional level

From available information, and data generated from implemented migration and development projects in the East African region, we can conclusively say that migration as an important factor of human development require special policies and programmes. A great deal needs to be done in the policy and programme areas and the following capacities need to be developed:-

- i. Enriched research on the characteristics and impact of international and regional migration to inform policy development;
- ii. Development of human resources and institutions to handle international migration, including security concerns;
- iii. Intensified efforts to collect relevant, standardized and accurate data on regional and international migration in regard to migrant's data, skills inventory, destination countries and remittance contribution to the overall GDP.
- iv. Enhanced social dialogue on new approaches in migration policy and co-operation among origin, transit and destination countries;
- v. Strengthened efforts to identify the link between migration and trafficking in human beings especially women and children;
- vi. Enacting laws and policies to protect refugees and asylum seekers;
- vii. More research and data collection on south /south migration
- viii. Strengthened mechanisms for conflict prevention an resolution, as well as good governance; and
- ix. Developing partnerships and cooperation on international migration.

1.4.1 What kind of tools and partnerships exist/should be developed to support these processes?

The tools and partnerships currently existing at the national level include:-

- i. The establishment of national multisectoral consultative Committees on movement of persons and labour migration in each country charged with the advisory role to governments and social partners on policy and implementation measures to facilitate the implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements promoting the free movement principles ;
- ii. Partnerships with the ILO and IOM in the development of programmes geared towards the development of labour migration policies at national level
- iii. Review of labour policies and laws in line with regional best practices and based on international standards,
- iv. Implementation of poverty reduction strategic policy papers in line with the MDGs which recognise the central role played by employment of nationals in the country and abroad,
- v. Development of policy documents and laws on the externalisation of labour
- vi. Development of web-sites focusing on the externalisation of labour especially focused on youth;
- vii. Quarterly meetings between the competent authorities and the private recruitment agencies to update each other on labour migration developments;

1.4.2 Regional level tools and Partnerships

- i. Multilateral agreement in respect to the free movement of persons and the factors of production-ie, labour, capital goods and services.
- ii. In collaboration with the IOM;ILO and UNHCR ongoing efforts are focused on coordination and harmonisation of policies and laws in regard to immigration, refugee management, and labour migration,
- iii. Implementation in collaboration with the IOM and DFID of a regional project aimed at enhancing the capacity of the regional organisation to harmonise migration management and allow free and safe movement of persons;
- iv. Undertaking a regional manpower survey in collaboration with the ILO
- v. Development of a regional training curricular for Immigration officers in collaboration with the IOM
- vi. Establishment of a regional capacity building center for training Immigration officers on effective border management

1.5 Concluding Remarks.

Many multilateral initiatives supported by key development actors have been launched on the theme of migration and Development. The Global Forum on Migration and development and the Joint Migration and development initiative are some of the major forums which really underpin the fact that the future of the world will be shaped by migration of human beings whether regular

or irregular. Our positive contribution to an enabling policy environment on this global issue will be determined by how we partner, dialogue and build strategic alliances.