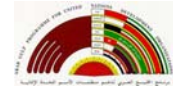




## LABOUR MIGRATION FOR INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN EURO-MED, EAST & WEST AFRICA



### *Africa-Europe Inter-regional Dialogue: Labour Migration for Integration and Development*

#### *A Road Map for Action on Labour Migration and Development*

##### Background summary

The Africa-Europe Dialogue on Labour Migration for Integration and Development” organized by the UN’s International Labour Office took place in Brussels 4-6 April 2006. It brought together some 70 participants: senior officials of labour ministries and senior representatives of trade union and employer/business federations in 10 countries across Africa, officials of international, African and European organizations, European and international employer and trade union bodies, and concerned research and NGO bodies. The conference culminated a two-year programme supported by the European Commission and AGFUND implemented by the ILO on “managing labour migration for integration and development.”

Participants concluded the three-day inter-regional dialogue by adopting a *road map for action on migration and development*. The outcome stressed that labour migration is crucial to economic progress in Europe as well as Africa, and that migrant workers need to be treated as an essential human resource. The outcome road map for action is directed at governments and social partners in the regions concerned as well as to international organizations and the UN system.

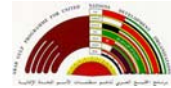
The road map calls on governments, in cooperation with social partners, to ratify and implement ILO and UN standards on migration, address migration as a central pillar of development and labour market policies, enhance initiatives for labour mobility in Africa, open more accessible and adequate legal migration channels, consider regularization of irregular migrants to resolve clandestine migration, expand training opportunities in home countries for opportunities abroad and to meet domestic needs, involve the social partners in migration policies, and increase capacity of governments, employers and trade unions to better regulate labour migration.

Research reports assessing labour migration data, the state of national legislation on migration, and synergies between labour migration and development in 12 countries and three sub-regions in Africa were presented. The new ILO Multi-lateral Framework on Labour Migration was introduced as a comprehensive policy tool comprising principles and practical guidelines covering all aspects of labour migration, derived from international norms and good practices worldwide.

Tripartite delegates participated from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda. The African Union, the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the ILO, the Economic Commission for Africa, the International Organization for Migration, the Economic Community of West African States, the International Organization of Employers, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the European Trade Union Confederation, and the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe were also represented.



## LABOUR MIGRATION FOR INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN EURO-MED, EAST & WEST AFRICA



### ***A Road Map for Action on Labour Migration and Development***

***Adopted at the Africa-Europe Inter-regional Dialogue, "Labour Migration for Integration and Development," Brussels, 4-6 April 2006***

On the basis of project research findings, exchange of experience, and the conclusions and recommendations from preceding regional tripartite consultations in Africa, participants identified major challenges and recommended key elements of the way forward to fully ensure labour migration contributes to development and regional integration.

Participants agreed that labour migration, if properly regulated, benefits all concerned: countries of origin and destination countries as well as migrants and national workers themselves. They stressed the need to ensure full involvement of the tripartite stakeholders as well as to keep labour migration on the international agenda for a coherent and concerted multilateral approach.

### **Challenges**

#### **Migration for Development**

- Migration is predominantly perceived and treated as a security problem rather than an issue of decent work and economic development;
- Absence of targeted investment and development aid to emigration areas to support creation of decent work and thus reduce migration pressures;
- Inadequate incentives and conditions for returning migrants;
- Lack of implementation of mechanisms to facilitate labour mobility in regional integration schemes;
- Inadequate dialogue and lack of consultation and cooperation between countries of origin and host countries on mitigating brain drain in connection with skilled migration;

#### **Interregional and regional cooperation**

- Absence of a regular and consistent dialogue between Europe and Africa on labour migration, involving all relevant stakeholders;
- Lack of coherence in policies developed by various institutions in the field of migration and duplication of efforts in certain areas;
- Need to strengthen South-South cooperation on migration issues;

- Lack of institutional mechanisms to ensure full participation of social partners in regional integration process;

#### **Legal framework**

- Incoherent and unharmonized legislation within countries and among member States of regional integration initiatives;
- Inadequate level of ratification of ILO, UN and regional instruments;
- Poor enforcement mechanisms for legislation and regulations;
- Absence of promotional efforts of relevant conventions.

#### **Data and information**

- Absence of adequate resources to establish or strengthen structures responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on labour migration;
- Poor coordination and networking between statistics institutions at national, regional and interregional levels;
- Absence of reliable data on the diasporas needed to assess their potential to contribute to development of countries of origin;
- Disparities among existing definitions, indicators and criteria for the collection and analysis of data concerning labour migration; lack of application of UN and ILO recommendations for information on labour migration;

#### **Strengthening Capacity**

- Inadequate capacity of the tripartite stakeholders on labour migration issues;
- Inadequate recognition of the vital role of labour ministries as focal point on labour migration policies.
- Insufficient knowledge of core international standards and instruments on migrant workers;

### **Recommendations**

Participants agreed on a basic “**Road Map**” comprising the following recommendations for concerted action by Governments and social partners in Africa and Europe. International organizations and bodies in Africa and Europe are asked to support the implementation of this road map and to give it the widest possible publicity.

#### **Signposts for Governments in Africa and Europe include the following lines for action:**

- Ensuring that development, decent work and rights for migrant workers prevail in the elaboration of migration policies and that unfounded security concerns are not used to undermine sound and efficient labour migration policies;
- Opening more accessible legal migration channels to meet labour market needs and reduce incentives for irregular migration;
- Considering regularising the status of irregular migrants to reduce abuse of vulnerable migrant workers;
- Taking measures to harmonize labour and migration legislation based on ILO core labour standards and instruments (Conventions and Recommendations) relevant to migrant workers;
- Ratifying the relevant international standards on migration, specifically the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No.97), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No.143) as well as the

- 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;
- Adoption and full implementation by concerned States of the relevant EAC and ECOWAS instruments on labour mobility;
  - Establishing or using existing tripartite mechanisms at national and regional level to ensure involvement of social partners in the elaboration and implementation of labour migration policies;
  - Ensuring effective coordination among the various government departments and other concerned institutions at national level with a view to better regulating labour migration;
  - Setting up migrant centres to provide information and counselling to would be emigrants and to migrant workers in their respective countries;
  - Engaging in campaigns aimed at combating racism and xenophobia and at promoting integration of migrant workers in their host countries;
  - Providing incentives, including fiscal incentives, for returning migrants to invest in their country of origin;
  - Promoting measures to reduce costs for the transfer of migrant remittances;
  - Supporting skills training for potential migrants and others to meet domestic needs in countries of origin;
  - Initiating campaigns to combat xenophobia and racism and provide the public at large with information on the positive contribution that migrant workers make to the economies and societies of host countries;
  - Increase targeted development aid of donor governments to training and job creation to identified areas of emigration in the countries of origin
  - Adopting measures to mitigate the impact of skilled emigration and assist in improving possibilities for decent work for skilled workers in their country of origin.

**Signposts of the Road Map for Employers' and Workers' organisations include:**

- Promoting relevant regional, ILO and UN instruments in their respective countries and the harmonization of labour legislation nationally and regionally;
- Networking with their counterparts in order to ensure readily available and unbiased information to would-be migrants in the countries or origin before departure;
- Providing training and strengthening their capacity to deal with migration issues;
- Engaging in dialogue with migrants' associations and ensuring integration of migrants within social partner organisations;
- Initiating campaigns to combat xenophobia and racism and providing their members and the public at large with information on the positive contributions that migrant workers make to the economies and societies of host countries;
- Launching awareness campaign to inform migrant workers of their rights and help them to access legal assistance if required.

**Signposts of the Road Map for international and regional institutions**, including the United Nations, the African Union, the European Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the International Organization for Migration, the East Africa Community, the Economic Community of West African States, the Africa Development Bank and others, **include:**

- Promoting ratification of relevant international conventions on labour migration by member States and their full implementation and encouraging harmonization of labour, social security and migration legislation;
- Enhancing policy coherence in development initiatives and in their activities concerning labour migration;
- Adopting the ILO Framework on Labour Migration to develop policies aimed at maximizing the benefits of labour migration to all concerned;
- Establishing mechanisms to ensure full involvement of social partners in matters concerning labour migrations;
- Encouraging targeted development aid in training and job creation to identified areas of emigration in the countries of origin.

**The International Labour Organization is asked to:**

- Contribute to strengthen capacities on labour migration by labour, employment and related ministries and by social partner organizations;
- Support and strengthen ongoing activity of national focal points and tripartite mechanisms established in African countries, including by organizing comprehensive training for them;
- Continue technical cooperation and advisory activities on labour migration in Africa;
- Actively promote ratification of ILO Conventions and other relevant international instruments on migrant workers as part of the Action Plan adopted by the International Labour Conference;
- Actively disseminate and promote the utilization of the new ILO Multilateral Framework for Labour Migration;
- Promote discussion on labour migration and development issues at international forums
- Support cohesion and coherence in policy initiatives by the international community.

Adopted by consensus at the Africa-Europe Inter-regional Dialogue: Labour Migration for Integration and Development, Brussels, 6 April 2006