

**TWELFTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

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**THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC (ACP) OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION:
NEW EVIDENCE ON SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION FOR THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE
UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT¹**

The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Observatory on Migration

¹ The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

A. INTRODUCTION

Over the past years, South-South migration has become increasingly important in international discussions on migration and development, including the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and the United Nations High-level Dialogue. The latest figures released by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA) in September 2013 point out that South-South migration (82.3 million migrants worldwide) accounts for approximately 35 per cent of all international migration stocks. As the UN/DESA report states, “since 1990, South-North migration has been the main driver of global migration trends, but South-South migration remains the largest category” (UN/DESA, 2013).

The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Observatory on Migration was launched by the ACP Secretariat, the European Union and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in 2010 to support ACP countries’ policymaking efforts through the facilitation of improved and updated information on South-South migration. Several challenges persist in this process, as highlighted during the High-level Dialogue last year. The activities of the ACP Observatory can provide a useful input in several areas of priority emerging from this event and contribute to the proposed integration of migration in the post-2015 development agenda.

B. RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR IMPROVED INFORMATION ON THE POTENTIAL OF SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. *South-South migration in international debates and the need for improved information*

UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon noted during his statement at the High-level Dialogue that “four of every ten migrants are living in developing countries”. Yet, the international community has also highlighted that information is not always available on these flows. During the 2012 Mauritius GFMD, participants at the roundtable 2.2, specifically devoted to South-South migration, acknowledged that “the collection, analysis and sharing of timely and comprehensive data should be promoted further, including through support of relevant global and regional organizations”. One of the outcomes of this session specifically concerned the integration of South-South migration and development in the post-2015 development framework (GFMD, 2012).

More recently, in the framework of the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, the representatives of UN Member States emphasized “the need for reliable data on international migration, including when possible on the contributions of migrants to development in both origin and destination countries; this data could facilitate the design of evidence-based policy- and decision-making in all relevant aspects of sustainable development”. Strengthening the migration evidence base is also one of the eight points of the agenda for action issued at the High-level Dialogue from the report of the UN Secretary General (United Nations, 2013).

Many examples of South-South migration can be mentioned to justify the need for improved data. South-South financial remittances for instance are often transmitted through informal channels. A recent study carried out in Lesotho by the ACP Observatory on Migration demonstrates that most remittances are sent informally (87.4 per cent) (Nalane et al., 2012). Data collection remains limited and hinders policymaking efforts in a country among the top-three countries receiving more remittances as a percentage of GDP (World Bank, 2010).

2. *Proving new evidence on the impact of South-South migration*

The need for accurate and updated evidence on South-South migration lies at the center of the ACP Observatory's efforts. In particular, much attention has been put on national assessments to identify sources of migration data and evaluate data management systems existing in ten ACP countries: Angola, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania and Timor-Leste.

The findings of these assessments showcase the existence of rich sources of migration data and the challenges faced by many countries in data analysis and sharing (ACP Observatory, 2013: 64). Contrary to the commonly accepted perception, the data assessments carried out in 10 ACP countries found that all countries are collecting data on migration and in most cases possess several datasets that include information on migration.

While migration data does exist also in the South, it is often not systemically utilized, analysed and disseminated. As a result, public information and analysis are insufficient and not easily accessible to relevant stakeholders and policymakers. Most of the ACP government institutions assessed currently use data to meet specific internal administrative and regulatory requirements, such as tracking applications, enforcement actions, reporting rules, and often do not see data as a national resource for policymaking and planning. A key challenge remains in bringing together all data producers and users to develop a coordinated approach and raising their awareness on the importance of migration data as a tool for decision-making at all levels.

Furthermore, the ACP Observatory has specifically carried out two studies—in Cameroon and in Trinidad and Tobago—which look at the concrete impact of South-South migration for development. The findings of this research, along with major outcomes of other publications, have been assembled in a thematic book that aims at identifying the specificities of South-South migration with regards to South-North movements (ACP Observatory, 2013).

Certain aspects of the migration-development nexus are often overlooked and should be studied in more depth. One of them is social remittances, defined as “the flows of ideas, knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, identities and social capital transmitted through migrants to family, friends and beyond in the sending country communities” (Levitt, 1998)

Studies of the ACP Observatory on the impact of social remittances in Tanzania and the role of exchanges of practices in the Casamance (Senegal)-The Gambia-Guinea-Bissau region revealed innovative findings on the concrete effects of the circulation of ideas and knowledge. Efforts directed towards improving the evidence base for migration policymaking should take into account these phenomena.

C. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE INTEGRATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1. *South-South migration in international debates and the need for improved information*

The High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development called for “partnering more effectively with all stakeholders involved in international migration and development at the regional and

global levels” (United Nations General Assembly, 2013). Migration partnerships and cooperation are also targeted by the eight-point agenda for action in which various avenues for collaboration are mentioned to reinforce the migration-development nexus.

In this line, the ACP Secretariat and the European Union signed a Joint Declaration on the High-level Dialogue that looks at ways to improve international cooperation on migration issues. In particular, the ACP-EU Declaration recalls the commitment to uphold the rights of migrants and considers the migration-development nexus as an integral part of any migration policy (ACP-EU, 2013).

The ACP Migration Facility has established and maintained National Consultative Committees in its pilot countries including members of the government, the civil society and the academia. In several cases, these platforms were allowed brought together migration stakeholders that had not previously cooperated, leading to enhanced national dialogue and exchange on migration issues. In particular, the input from universities and research centers can be highlighted, as these institutions often have the knowledge and capacity to produce relevant evidence for informed policymaking. Research institutions often have the ability to study and analyse the South-South migration phenomenon, and their access to data should therefore be enhanced. Closer links between research and policy processes on migration and development can improve planning and policymaking in this area.

The regional level is often crucial in terms of movements and needs to be reflected in the harmonization of existing policies at regional level. Regional consultative processes (RCPs) have offered fora to exchange views and experiences which have led to improved cooperation at the regional and inter-regional levels. Some ACP regions present very high percentages of intraregional migration—in West Africa intraregional migration represented 76 per cent of all migration in 2010 (UN DESA, 2012). The coherence of regional policies is essential to capture the positive impact of migration. The studies carried out by the ACP Observatory on intraregional labour mobility in the Caribbean, the Pacific and West Africa shed light on potential opportunities to increase the positive outcomes of regional mobility.

Inter-regional and intra-regional partnerships are also essential for policy coherence purposes. Processes such as the ACP-EU Dialogue on Migration, the Rabat Process or the Global Forum on Migration and Development have played an important role in raising awareness on the importance of international coordination on migration issues. These fora have also opened avenues for discussing changes in migration practices.

2. Integrating migration in the discussions related to the post-2015 development agenda

An important outcome of the High-level Dialogue is the call to improve the mainstreaming of migration in the development agenda at the national, regional and global levels. The eight-point agenda mentions that “the international community should define a common set of targets and indicators to monitor the implementation of measures aimed at enhancing the benefits and addressing the challenges of international migration, for consideration in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda” (United Nations, 2013).

In the framework of their preparatory documents for the HLD and within the ACP-EU Joint Declaration, ACP States committed to push towards the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 development agenda. This process requires increased evidence and monitoring tools – including

initial work carried out by the ACP Observatory on Migration in its Indicators on the impact of migration on development (Melde, 2012), including links to the Millennium Development Goals.

The undeniable importance of South-South migration requires its integration in migration and development research and policymaking initiatives. While evidence and updated information are needed to carry out this process, political will and international cooperation remain the cornerstone of any attempt to give migration a relevant and useful role in the post-2015 development agenda.

The ACP Observatory on Migration publishes free-of-charge all of its research and assessment findings as well as the outcomes of its activities on its website: www.acpmigration-obs.org. The website also includes a compendium of research on migration and development with more than 1,400 studies and other resources on the migration and development nexus.

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