

**TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

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**INPUT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA TO  
THE TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION<sup>1</sup>**

*United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN/ECA)*

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

## Introduction

International migration is increasingly gaining importance and priority in the development discourse at the national and regional levels in Africa. Testimony to this is the increasing contribution of migration to development in Africa, through remittances, investment in home countries, alleviation of poverty, living expenses, household expenditures on goods and services, (health, education, etc.) among others. It is evidenced in a flurry of frameworks on migration focusing on bilateral and multilateral relations, including EU-AU relations, Africa-China relations, Africa-Brazil, Africa-Latin America, etc. ECA member States have also endorsed the Migration Policy Framework adopted by the African Heads of State and Governments in Banjul in 2006. This framework provided impetus for formulation of national migration policies<sup>2</sup> in the continent.

This brief note covers ECA activities that could contribute to the preparations of the High Level Dialogue that will take place in 2013. It summarizes ECA's contributions to the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2011 and 2012, and provides information on new ECA initiatives on international migration and development in Africa.

### Activities that could contribute to the High Level Dialogue in 2013

The High Level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration held in New York in September 2006, marks the beginning of ECA's strategic activities on international migration and development in Africa. As contribution to the HLD, ECA has prepared a regional report titled *international migration and development: implications for Africa*. The HLD coincided with the ECA's reform which resulted into the placement of international migration within a newly created social development sub-program 10. Since then research activities on international migration and development in Africa have been based on two ECA's strategic pillars of:

- a) Promoting regional integration in support of the African Union vision and priorities; and
- b) Meeting Africa's special needs and emerging global challenges.

On the first strategic pillar, ECA have considered international migration an important factor in the implementation of the regional integration agenda, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Therefore, ECA research activities have focused on promoting cooperation and policy dialogue on international migration so as to support regional development, to enhance economic growth, and to maximize human and financial resources for development in Africa as

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<sup>2</sup> To date, Rwanda, Nigeria and Zimbabwe have so far formulated NMPs, placing emphasis on aspects that are most relevant to national interest and in the context of regional integration. Other countries have also developed migration policies such as the Nigeria National Labour Migration Policy; Rwanda's National Migration Policy and Strategies; and the Zimbabwe's National Migration Management and Development Policy.

whole. They have also led to partnerships with the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), IOM, research networks and development partners.

With regard to the second strategic pillar, ECA's research has focused on the developmental role of international migration in areas such as financing for development, poverty, gender inequality and climate change. The multiple roles of migration in remittances, addressing poverty and in providing cash flows through formal and informal channels to health, education, housing and other social needs are well recognized in the policy research undertaken by ECA. This research highlights the importance of mainstreaming women and youth concerns, and of addressing social and gender inequalities so as to support the progress of member States on the achievement of the MDGs.

ECA has mainstreamed international migration in its programs and strategic frameworks, and has undertaken the following activities on international migration:

1. Integration of international migration in the strategic frameworks for 2008-2009 and 2010-2011. During this period ECA has prepared and published three reports on international migration and development under the following thematic areas:
  - a. Financial crisis, human rights and regional integration (published in 2009)
  - b. The migration and climate nexus (published in 2011)
  - c. Cooperation and policy dialogue to promote regional integration (will be published by March 2012)
2. Implementation of the DA project on "Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impacts". As part of this project ECA coordinated the preparation of a study on International Migration: Trends and institutional frameworks from the African perspective.
3. Inclusion of international migration in the agenda of the Ministerial Conference, Intergovernmental Committees of Experts, Statutory Committees and the African Development Forum
4. Participation in the GMG and the GMG working group meetings
5. Organization of the first Africa Regional Dialogue on International Migration (ARDIM), under the theme of *cooperation and policy dialogue to promote regional integration*.
6. Inclusion of international migration in the strategic framework for 2014-2015.

In preparation for the High Level Dialogue in 2013, ECA will consolidate the outcomes of above mentioned activities in one document to support Africa's contribution to this important global event. As part of the strategic framework for subprogram 10 Social Development, for the biennium 2012-2013, ECA will prepare its fifth report on international migration and development. Theme of this report will cover areas of importance for Africa and to support the role of member States in the HLD in 2013.

## **Summary of ECA contributions to GFMD**

The activities and reports above mentioned have greatly enhanced ECA's role on international migration and development in Africa and globally. ECA support to the GFMD is primarily through promoting member states' understanding and mainstreaming of international migration in development plans and strategies at the national and regional levels. The Commission shares with member States its publications and policy briefs on international migration, and contributes to meetings, workshops and consultations organized by the RECs, IOM and research institutions. It also shares with them the outcomes of regional reviews of the international policy agenda, such as ICPD PoA and Beijing Platform of Action, which include international migration.

ECA contribution to the GMFD is also through statutory bodies, namely the Ministerial Conference, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, and Divisional Committees, such as the Human and Social Development Committee and the Committee on Women and Development. For example, the annual meeting of the African Ministers of Development Planning and Finance organized jointly by the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and ECA, frequently discuss the economic and social dimensions of international migration in Africa. These dimensions are often on the agenda of the Intergovernmental Committees of Experts (ICE's) which are the governing bodies of ECA's Sub-regional Offices in Morocco, Niger, Cameroun, Zambia and Rwanda. Also they are included in the member States' preparations for climate change negotiations, and in the review of the implementation of the sustainable development agenda in the continent.

The Commission supports the GFD through the African Development Forum (ADF) and the Big Table. The ADF is a major intellectual gathering for discussion and building consensus on emerging issues. It is designed to share knowledge and generate outcome and actions for implementation by member States. ADF-V (November 2006) focused on *Youth leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, ADF-VI (November 2008) focused on *Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Ending Violence Against Women in Africa*, and ADF-VII focused on *Acting on Climate Change for Sustainable Development*. International migration has featured in context of these ADF themes. For example ADF-V featured youth migration while ADF referred to international migration in the context of actions for climate change and sustainable development.

ECA will support the Government of Mauritius, which is an ECA and AU member State that has recently taken up the responsibility as chair-in-office of the GFMG in 2012. The Advisor to the Government of Mauritius, Chukwu-Emeka Chikezie, has expressed interest to understand more about ECA's work on migration in Africa. How ECA is supporting African governments, and what scope ECA might see with the GFMD through the Mauritian Chair this year. ECA will share with the Advisor its activities on international migration and development in Africa, and will discuss with the Government of Mauritius the kind of support it needs for making GMFD in 2012 a successful event. Also, information on the GFMD, its theme and areas it intends to cover, will share ECA statutory bodies above-mentioned.

## **New initiatives: Regional Policy Dialogue and E-Network**

ARDIM is ECA's new initiative in the area of international migration and development in Africa.

It was held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for the purpose of achieving the following objectives:

- a. To provide a policy platform for discussion on international migration and development in Africa;
- b. To pull together Africa's common position in the international policy agenda on migration; and to
- c. To start the process of Africa's preparations for the High Level Dialogue in 2013

The participants to the ARDIM came from 36 member States<sup>3</sup>, The African Union Commission, the African Development Bank IGAD and COMESA, UNHCR, IOM AU/ECA Liaison Office, UNFPA, UN Women, UNAIDS, UNDP, WHO, EU delegation to the AU, Embassy of Japan, Italian Development Cooperation, IPAS, Embassy of Canada, and CIDA. The dialogue was covered in the media (the Ethiopian News Agency, ERTA, Ethiopian Press Agency, Afro FM 105.3, Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, Paco Net/Afro FM)..

Based on the outcomes of ARDIM, ECA will continue the dialogue on international migration and development leading to the High Level Dialogue in 2013. Currently ECA is preparing a concept note on the architecture and components of the E-Network as a platform for policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and documentation of best practices as well as documentation of bilateral and multilateral agreements. The regional dialogue will be structured around an E-Network of scholars, policy makers and organizations, among others. Information compiled through the E-Network will be used to prepare the fifth report on international migration and development in Africa on time for the High Level Dialogue in 2013.

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<sup>3</sup> Algeria, Angola, Benin, Central African Republic, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Cameroon, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Djibouti, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Morocco, Malawi, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.