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**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN
AFRICA AND RELATED ECA AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES**

Economic Commission for Africa **

** Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

ACRONYMS

ACGD	African Center for Gender and Development
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
CEMAC	Communauté Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa
DND	Dakar-Ngor Declaration
EAC	East African Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMP	International Migration Policy Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PoA	Programme of Action
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SDD	Sustainable Development Division
TB	Tuberculosis
TRID	Trade and Regional Integration Division
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire de l'Ouest Africaine
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

A. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of international migration comes with its opportunities and challenges including those which can be termed social, economic, health, political and environmental. In Africa, the opportunities may include free movement of the population, expanded trade, widened employment opportunities, and international remittances. On the other hand, the challenges may include the scarcity of standardized relevant international migration statistics; lack of human resources and institutions to handle international migration; security concerns; the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria; trafficking of women and children; handling of migrant workers; the brain-drain; and the adoption and implementation of appropriate policies on international migration in cooperation with other nations.

This paper sets out to briefly examine international migration and development in Africa, and to present related activities conducted by the ECA and its development partners in the region.

B. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

According to the IOM (2003), in 2000, international migrants in Africa amounted to 16.2 million (2.1% of the total population) compared to the world total of 175 millions (2.9% of the world population) and 5.9 millions in Latin America and the Caribbean (1.1% of the total population). These proportions may be considered small compared to world regions with the largest proportions of migrants, notably Oceania-Pacific (19.1%), North America (13%) and Europe 7.7%). But they hide a number of changes taking place in migration flows in Africa. For example, the proportion of female international migrants increased over time from 42 per cent in 1960 to almost 47 percent in 2000; the number of refugees increased from 79,000 in 1960 to 6.4 millions in 1995 although it eventually dropped to 3.6 million in 2000 (Zlotnik, 2003), and is most likely to have currently gone up due to additional hotspots in such places as Ivory Coast and Sudan; undocumented migration is known to take place but no accurate and reliable data are available on the phenomenon although it is estimated that, worldwide, 700,000 to 2 million women and children are trafficked across international borders each year (IOM, 2003); and labour migration and the brain drain are recurrent issues on agendas discussing factors affecting Africa's human resources.

The large number of refugees and IDPs in Africa is attributed to conflicts, human rights violations, lack of democracy and strong democratic institutions, and natural disasters (Ndiaye, 2004). Labour migration and related international remittances continue to raise a number of questions regarding benefits to sending and receiving countries. For sending countries, international remittances defined as the share of remittances in a country's GDP, are said to yield a strong, statistical impact on reducing poverty (Adams and Page, 2003). They state that on average, a 10 per cent increase in the share of international remittances in a country's GDP will lead to a 1.6 per cent decline in the share of people living in poverty. In addition, IOM (2003) estimates that over the last 20 years, annual official remittance flows to many African countries surpassed inflows of ODA and FDI. For example, as a proportion of total financial inflows, remittances amounted to 66% in Morocco, 51% in Egypt and Tunisia, 35% in Cape Verde, 30% in Nigeria and 27% in Benin and Burkina Faso. But, on the other hand, the brain drain is blamed for an annual loss of US\$500 million to Africa in what is termed the reverse technology transfer (Ndiaye, 2003).

Despite this increased awareness on the issues related to international migration and development, available information from the ECA ICPD+10 Survey indicates that less than 50 per cent of the governments in the region have taken any measures or adopted strategies including changes in legislation to facilitate the reintegration of returning nationals in their communities and development activities (21

out 43 responding countries). In addition, less than one third of the governments had ratified the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (12 out of 43 countries) at the time of the survey. Even fewer countries had started implementing the Convention; namely Algeria, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Rwanda, South Africa and Sudan.

It is, however, encouraging to note that countries in the region have started the process of taking international migration seriously in their policies and programmes. With increasing integration and globalization, this trend should increase and dominate future perspectives on migration in the region. But in formulating and implementing policies and programmes, there will be a need to:

- adopt standard definitions and share knowledge on international migration;
- take note of changing patterns of international migration and the necessary policy and programmatic measures to promote labour export and to utilize remittances more effectively as a development tool (for sending countries), and measures to respond to changing international migration dynamics (by receiving countries).
- adopt appropriate measures to deal with population displacement within and across national borders as a result of conflict, natural disasters, and poverty, especially for humanitarian purposes with regard to refugees and IDPs; and
- devise mechanisms to deal with undocumented migration, especially the trafficking in women and children, as well as security concerns.

C. ECA's AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES ON MIGRATION

ECA is the major UN agency playing the role of policy analysis and advocacy, and of coordinating development activities in the Africa region. By nature, therefore, its activities include those on the characteristics and quality of life of human resources in the region. In the area of international migration, the following activities are notable:

1. African Center for Gender and Development (ACGD)

ECA, through ACGD, plays the role of monitoring and evaluating the process of the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action. Among the issues covered in this process are: gender-based-violence; international trafficking in women and girls; and forced prostitution and sexual harassment. These are issues closely related to undocumented international migrants.

2. Sustainable Development Division (SDD)

ECA, through SDD, plays the role of monitoring and evaluating the process of the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PoA and the related ICPD+5 Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme adopted in 1999. In the recent ICPD+10 review carried out by the Conference of African Ministers responsible for population and development that took place in Dakar, Senegal, from 7 to 11 June 2004, satisfaction was expressed in that some progress was made in the implementation of the recommendations of the DND and the ICPD PoA. But countries also recognized the persistence of extreme poverty and the existence of socio-economic inequalities, high levels of HIV/AIDS infection and high levels of maternal and infant morbidity and mortality, among other challenges. They, therefore, reaffirmed their commitment to deepened implementation of required actions and to concerted effort to achieve the goals set for the programme period.

The countries noted the extent to which conflicts and poverty constituted important root causes of mass migration and forced displacement of population in much of the region. They re-committed themselves to promoting activities aimed at preventing and managing conflict, promoting good

governance and the rule of law, and eradicating poverty. Of special interest, was the recognition that the future success of national and regional policies focused on these issues, would depend on the effectiveness of sound political and economic governance as reflected in the NEPAD.

In addition, ECA, through SDD, utilizes **Africa's Population and Development Bulletin** (now Africa's Sustainable Development Bulletin) to promote the exchange and sharing of experiences among countries in the implementation of the outcomes of major international frameworks related to sustainable development in Africa. The process enhances discussions on critical regional population and development issues; presentation of briefs on trends and policies related to population, food security, agriculture and environment; highlighting of achievements, best practices and constraints in the implementation of the international frameworks; and dissemination of information on research results, policy initiatives, policy outcomes, and national and regional activities. Some of the issues contained in the Bulletin include those on international migration, such as: patterns of migration (causes and consequences); the brain drain; feminization of migration; human trafficking; migration and HIV/AIDS; racial discrimination and intolerance; and refugees and IDPs. There is no doubt, therefore, that the contents of the bulletin provide an important influence on planners and policy makers in Africa to rededicate themselves to dealing with the challenges of development concerns, including international migration.

For the future, there are plans to use the Working Group of experts on monitoring and evaluating the implementation of DND and ICPD-PoA scheduled for 2005 to pay special attention to international migration and development, in collaboration with the AU, AfDB, RECs, SROs, other regional institutions, and other Divisions in ECA.

3. Trade and Regional Integration Division (TRID)

In its policy analysis/advocacy activities, the Division, among other things, deals with the free movement of persons as a component of regional integration. In a review conducted by the Division to assess progress of sub-regional RECs in this area in 2002, it was observed that progress differs from the introduction of intra-regional passports by three RECs (CEMAC, ECOWAS, UEMOA), to deferment to the long term by COMESA. COMESA did not have a programme or a protocol on the free movement of persons. However, the EAC sub-region within COMESA was ahead of the rest of the COMESA sub-region in that its second Development Strategy incorporated programme components on the relaxation of regional travel restrictions with the introduction of the East African passport and temporary passes, elimination of charges on temporary cross-border movement of motor vehicles, extension of border crossing services to twenty four hours and the provision of an exclusive airport immigration window for community citizens. These findings are part of the contribution to the debate on setting up an African Economic Community.

4. ECA as a Coordinator of the UN System Activities on the NEPAD

The UN agencies working in Africa meet in consultation, from time to time, under the chairmanship of the Executive Secretary of the ECA to discuss, harmonize and coordinate their activities in support of the NEPAD. Their work is coordinated under six clusters: Infrastructure Development (including Water and Sanitation, Energy, Transport, and ICTs), convened by ECA; Governance, Peace and Security, convened by UNDP; Agriculture, Trade and Market Access, convened by FAO; Environment, Population and Urbanization; convened by UN Habitat; Human Resource Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS, convened by UNICEF; and Science and Technology, convened by ECA.

This paper, draws on the activities of the Human Resources Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS; Science and Technology; and Environment, Population and Urbanization clusters to report on issues related to international migration. ECA is a member of each of these clusters. The human resources development, employment and HIV/AIDS cluster focuses on enhancing the implementation of

the NEPAD in relationship to the MDGs, the resolution of the UNGASS on HIV/AIDS and the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. The cluster reorganized its priority areas around four sub-clusters: (i) education; (ii) employment; (iii) HIV/AIDS; and (iv) health (aimed at promoting the NEPAD health strategy). In education, the cluster was instrumental in exploring the creation of an African database, in collaboration with IOM, on African professionals working abroad. This would provide an appropriate tool for objectively analyzing the impact of the brain drain in Africa. The cluster on Science and Technology is also a collaborator on the brain drain database, while the cluster on Environment, Population and Urbanization examines rapid urbanization in Africa and its propensity to increase international migration within the continent and abroad.

5. ECA as a Collaborator in the Activities of the IMP

IMP organized a regional migration policy dialogue Conference with 13 governments from East Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2002; followed by a second such Conference in June 2003, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the same governments. ECA was part of the collaborators in organizing the Conferences. The main objective of the first one was to discuss priorities and establish common understanding on key migration and forced displacement issues, while that of the second one was to go into further depth on issues identified in Nairobi and, in particular, to begin to respond to the recommendations from the first Conference.

At the Addis Ababa Conference, an informal IMP/AU document entitled “Towards the Establishment of a Strategic Framework for a Policy of Migration in Africa” was presented to African governments. The document was: heralded as very useful for developing and presenting a coordinated migration policy position based on common priorities for Africa; and endorsed for further presentation to African government expert group meetings and the AU Heads of State Summit with the objective of creating a common framework on international migration for use by the region’s governments and development partners. The document is still going through this process of scrutiny. When it is finalized, it will become a major regional tool for guiding governments and their partners on international migration and development.

6. ECA and Coordination Activities of the Statistics and Population Divisions

ECA takes keen interest in participating in coordination meetings on issues of common concern to nations, regions and the international community. International migration has been, and still is, one of those issues. For example, the Commission contributed to the revision of the set of recommendations on international migration which, among others, embrace internationally agreed definitions and relevant data sources on international migration; and a framework for the compilation of statistics on flows.

7 ECA as a member of the Commission for Africa

ECA is a member of the Commission for Africa set up by Mr. Blair. The Commission’s main objectives aim at conducting deepened analysis of Africa’s development challenges to promote appropriate actions and strengthen implementation of relevant policies and programmes, and to identify new responses within the NEPAD and other frameworks. The implications of migration for security and development in the continent constitute part of the Commission’s analysis.

D. CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

From available information and activities reviewed, it may be concluded that the African States regard international migration as an important factor in development that requires special policies and programmes to manage. But a great deal remains to be done in the policy and programmatic areas. Future perspectives may be guided by:

- Holding a regional expert group meeting and conference on international migration to debate on the issues and harmonize approaches;
- Development of human resources and institutions to handle international migration, including security concerns;
- Intensified efforts to collect relevant, standardized and accurate data on international migration;
- Promotion of inter-state collaborative efforts to provide information on diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and related preventive mechanisms;
- Enriched research on the characteristics and impact of international migrants to inform policy;
- Continued debate on new approaches in migration policy development and co-operation among origin, transit and destination countries;
- Strengthened efforts to identify the link between migration and trafficking in human beings, especially women and children;
- Enacting laws and policies to protect refugees and asylum seekers;
- Strengthened mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, as well as good governance; and
- Developing partnerships and cooperation on international migration.

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