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MANAGING MIGRATION FOR
THE BENEFIT OF ALL

MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (MIDA)

MIDA GENERAL STRATEGY PAPER



Ongoing MIDA projects in the world

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I. Introduction

After half a century of worldwide operational experience, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has become the leading intergovernmental organization working with migrants and governments to establish humane response to migration challenges. IOM has since its very early years recognized that international migration presents an opportunity for cooperation and development. Today, the relationship between migration and development is an increasingly important focus in many of IOM activities and programmes: For instance, IOM Return and Reintegration of Qualified Nationals programmes in Africa, Asia and Latin America have for many years sought to support the social and economic advancement of developing countries, to foster their national human resource development and to counter the negative effects of brain drain. In collaboration with governments of the countries of origin, IOM identifies and selects suitable candidates, finances their return and ensures their reintegration into both professional and personal environments, thus contributing to rebuild and strengthen a depleted human resource base in priority areas and increasing the capacity of the receiving institutions to cope with economic, social, educational and health challenges of the developing countries

II. Achievements of RQAN

Within the context of the Lomé II, III & IV Conventions, IOM initiated in 1983 the European Commission funded Return and Reintegration of Qualified African Nationals programme (RQAN) through which over 2000 highly skilled and experienced African nationals were assisted in their professional return and reintegration to 41 countries, in addition to 2,565 fellowship students who were assisted through other EC funded programmes. These professionals brought experience mainly in the fields of management and administration, social and legal services (27%), natural sciences and public health, education (17%), physical and mathematical sciences, engineering (15%) and senior executive level personnel (11%), to address identified gaps in key socio-economic sectors of their countries of origin.

III. Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA)

Drawing on the lessons learnt from the RQAN programme and the recommendations made at various fora¹, IOM initiated in 2001 in Libreville, Gabon, a new programme called, Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA). MIDA is a demand-driven institutional capacity building programme. Its overall objective is to assist governments to achieve their development goals through the mobilization of vital skills and resources (financial and others) of qualified nationals in the diaspora. In partnership with government authorities in the countries of origin and the host

¹ For details, see Annex 1.

countries, as well as the civil society, the private sector and the donor states and agencies, MIDA aims at:

1. Identifying priority skill/resource needs in the main economic sectors of participating countries.
2. Identifying skills and resources available in the diaspora.
3. Matching the identified skill/resource needs of target countries with appropriate skills/resources of nationals in the diaspora in order to fully engage the diaspora in the development process of the countries of origin.
4. Exploring the most beneficial ways of channelling and investing migrant remittances for development of countries of origin and advocating for the creation of conducive environment for such investments.
5. Building synergies between governments at the national as well as the local level (regions and municipalities), civil society, academic and research institutions (e.g. Ford and Rockefeller Foundations), African associations, the private sector and donor agencies towards a sustainable and cooperative approach in implementing the MIDA programme.

III.1. MIDA's Advantages and Key Achievements

What makes MIDA an innovative programme:

1. MIDA seeks to involve the contribution of all stakeholders in countries of the North and the South (governments, private sector, civil society, Africans in the diaspora) in order to broaden the programme's ownership base.
2. MIDA seeks to establish a dialogue and to develop partnerships between countries of origin and destination with regard to the mobilization and utilization of diasporas. It takes into account the need for highly qualified personnel in specific sectors in developed countries on the one hand, and the concern to mitigate the effects of the growing brain drain on the African continent, on the other.
3. MIDA is based on the principle of mobility and circulation of both people and resources. It does not necessarily require the systematic return of migrants.
4. MIDA offers flexible and innovative arrangements that provide various options for skills transfer. These include, temporary, sequenced and virtual transfers, which increasingly depend on new information technologies to facilitate the transfer of competencies.
5. MIDA respects the dual identity of Africans in the diaspora by giving them the opportunity to contribute to the development process of their countries of origin without giving up the positions and rights they have acquired in their host countries.
6. MIDA is a demand-driven programme. It seeks to ensure that the transfer of highly skilled individuals/resources is channeled in such a way as to meet the development requirements and priority

needs of the countries of origin. In this regard, MIDA adopts development planning and sectoral approaches tailored to the needs of the countries of origin (e.g., public health, education, private sector development, enhancement of national capacity).

7. MIDA encourages the voluntary and efficient use of migrant remittances for development in countries of origin. These include initiatives that support cost saving and reliable remittance methods, and help consolidate remittances into pools of development and investment capital.
8. MIDA aims at strengthening the private sector in the countries of origin, with the contribution of the nationals in the diaspora, through the establishment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and job-creation opportunities.
9. MIDA aims at promoting the participation of women in a gender-balanced economic and social environment, thus empowering their role in the socio economic sectors of their countries.

III.2. MIDA on the Regional and International Agenda

While for many countries of origin engaging their diaspora has become a priority concern, and host countries are increasingly recognizing the potential of migration for development, there is still an acute need for concrete action. MIDA, as one of the few existing programmes, that actually bridge the gap between policy and practice in this field, has since its inception gained broad support from the regional and international community.

The Organization of the African Unity (OAU) has endorsed the MIDA programme during the 74th ordinary session of the Council of Ministers held in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2001, and has adopted a decision² calling on IOM “to continue to help African countries to encourage and facilitate the return of their qualified expatriate nationals and to promote the initiated Migration for Development in Africa programme (MIDA)”.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), as well as other regional organizations (e.g., the East African Community (EAC) and l’Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA)) are closely collaborating with IOM to develop partnerships that aim at reinforcing the links between migration and development in Africa.

The donor community as well as a large number of multilateral organizations and agencies (Islamic Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, World Health Organization, International Labor Organization, World Bank) have confirmed their interest in MIDA as a development–

² CM/Dec. 614 (LXXIV) on the “Establishment of a Strategic Framework for a policy of Migration in Africa”.

supporting programme, and are working closely with IOM to reinforce the positive impact of migration on development.

III.3. Current Status of MIDA Programme

The translation of the initial concept of MIDA into operational projects has been greatly facilitated by the dynamism with which they have been adopted by the African beneficiary countries. Starting in late 2001, a pilot project covering the Great Lakes region was initiated for the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Rwanda with funds made available by the Belgian government. Others have followed, notably for Guinea, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia with the involvement of other European partners, such as Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom as well as the United States. So far, six projects are being implemented and 27 MIDA project proposals targeting countries in the four sub regions of Sub-Saharan Africa have been developed in close collaboration with the governments of countries of origin and the diasporas in host countries. Several of them are now being examined by potential bilateral and multilateral partners.

IV. The Way Forward

The way forward for the MIDA programme includes the following key objectives:

- 1. Expand MIDA to other regions:** Migration is a global phenomena. Many regions in the world, other than Africa, are affected by the migration of their highly qualified nationals. Migrant remittances represent a big percent of the GDP of many regions (e.g., 2.5% in South Asia, 1.3% in East Asia & the Pacific and 1.5% in Latin America & the Caribbean).

The experience of MIDA has proven that it is one of the best tools through which countries of origin could involve their diaspora in their development process. Therefore, IOM should seek to expand MIDA programme or to develop similar programmes for other regions seriously affected by the migration flow of their qualified nationals (e.g., Asia, Latin America & the Caribbean). However, it is important to note that since MIDA has been developed as a demand-driven programme essentially based on the principle of ownership, its enlargement could not be achieved if the targeted regions did not appropriate its concept. Therefore, IOM should establish an open dialogue with the governments as well as the major organizations in the regions concerned in order to encourage them to endorse and incorporate the MIDA concept in their development plans. The major organizations that can be approached in this regard are as follows:

- **In Asia:** The Asian Development Bank (ADB), The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).
 - **In Latin America and the Caribbean:** the Inter American Development Bank (IADB), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Latin American Economic System (SELA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), as well as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
- 2. Reinforce the MIDA ownership base:** The ownership of the MIDA programme should rest with the African countries, with IOM playing only a facilitating and supporting role. Therefore, IOM should guarantee that the beneficiary countries are actively involved from the earliest stage in all the activities related to MIDA. In this regard, it is highly important to appoint national coordinators for MIDA in the beneficiary countries and to involve nationals in the management structure of the country based MIDA projects. Moreover, IOM should reinforce the contribution of all other stakeholders in the countries of origin and host countries, especially the African diasporas, as well as the donor community.
- 3. Encourage regional organizations to incorporate MIDA in their development strategy:** Endorsement and appropriation of MIDA by regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), East African Community (EAC), l'Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA), as well as the regional economic communities such as the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), is essential for the sustainability of MIDA.

Regional cooperation and coordination in this regard will assist to:

- Avoid duplication or overlap with other regional projects.
 - Promote the regional harmonization of diaspora policies.
 - Provide an opportunity to interregional exchange of expertise through the promotion of intraregional knowledge and dialogue as well as the creation of African centre of expertise.
 - Foster joint efforts to deal with common challenges and problems in a given sub-region, and
 - Elaborate initiatives that replace the brain drain in African countries through inter-regional brain circulation.
- 4. Reinforce the dialogue with host countries:** the active participation of host countries in MIDA represents a key element for the programme's success. IOM should promote and broaden the dialogue with host countries in order to achieve the following goals:

- Engage the host countries in the efforts to ensure that migration contributes to development.
- Encourage the host countries to adopt a more flexible approach in their migration policy, emphasizing the mobility of migrants. This is a precondition to enable migrants in the diaspora to maintain and strengthen their relations with their countries of origin and to contribute effectively to the development process without losing their acquired rights in the host countries.

Furthermore, It is important to take into consideration that migrant contribution to the development process of their countries of origin is not only dealt with at the national level, but also at the local level. Therefore it is crucial that IOM's efforts to promote dialogue with host countries and the countries of origin, go beyond the centralized governments to include the local authorities (regions and municipalities) as well. Indeed, This approach could contribute to encourage trends aiming at promoting decentralized development cooperation.

- 5. Maintain the sustainability of the MIDA programme:** One of the main indicators of the success of the MIDA programme is its sustainability. Both IOM and African countries should exert efforts, in collaboration with all the other stakeholders (e.g., private sector, civil society, African diaspora), to ensure the sustainability of MIDA.

To this end IOM should:

- Advocate the integration of MIDA in the national development plans of African countries.
- Strengthen the capacity of countries through the MIDA programme, and provide them with the opportunity to learn, apply and institutionalize the programme principles and techniques. This could be achieved by encouraging the active participation of counterpart institutions in learning, applying and incorporating all programme techniques.

For their part, beneficiary countries should:

- Work to create an enabling environment that stimulates a return flow of migrants and encourages members of the diaspora community to continually invest and contribute towards the reconstruction and development of their countries of origin.
- Undertake grass root initiatives that maintain and reinforce contact between members of the diaspora and their home countries. They should endeavour to reinforce their economic development, foster domestic investments in innovation and

research and development (R&D), foster their education system and target information and communication technology (ICT) development.

6. Improve the management of remittances for development:

Migrant remittances represent one of the most important elements through which migrants contribute to the development process of their countries of origin. IOM has a major role in advocating the efficient management of remittances to achieve development goals. Activities to be taken by IOM in this regard include:

- Developing pilot projects that help to channel remittances towards community development projects in the target countries.
- Supporting efforts to take stock of and examine the various approaches that have been tried to manage remittances more efficiently and to see whether any of these approaches could be replicated elsewhere under MIDA programme.
- Advocating developing mechanisms to reduce the cost of sending remittances and the barriers to the official transfer of funds, as well as to assist members of the diaspora who want to invest in their home countries to receive micro-credit from local institutions at preferential rates and conditions.

7. Maintain closer collaboration with diaspora associations and networks:

diaspora associations play an important role in maintaining contact with African nationals abroad. Often they are the main partners who either have or could gather information on the expertise and resources of African migrants that could be used under MIDA projects. They could facilitate the transfer of technology and the return of knowledge to the home countries. Therefore, it should be pointed out that:

- It is unlikely to achieve MIDA goals in integrating African migrants in the development process of their home countries without maintaining close links with diaspora associations in host countries.
- IOM should advocate expanding the role of both source and host countries to facilitate and fund the creation of such networks, which, to date are mainly autonomously funded.

8. Strengthen and forge partnerships with the private sector:

From its early inception, the private sector has been identified as one of the main partners for MIDA. IOM and target countries should focus on the private sector to guarantee that it remains a main actor throughout the different phases of MIDA project implementation. The contribution of the private sector to MIDA could be achieved at two levels that are the country and the diaspora levels.

At the national level, private sector could contribute to:

- Provide funds for the implementation of MIDA projects in the target countries.
- Provide opportunities to invest diaspora remittances in the home countries (e.g. joint venture projects between the local private sector and the diaspora).
- Contribute to the creation of small and medium enterprises.

As for the diaspora level, the private sector could contribute to:

- Offer jobs to nationals in the diaspora that match their expertise and acquired skills so as to stimulate a permanent return flow of highly qualified migrants.
- Channel diaspora remittances through the most cost-effective and reliable means.

- 9. Focus on E-learning:** Experience has shown that technology could provide a very cost-effective means of skills transfer to a large number of people in a short period of time. IOM should focus on and expand the use of virtual means for skills' transfer under the MIDA programme. This could not be achieved without the collaboration of the private sector, diaspora associations and academic and research institutions.

The use of technology could serve to:

- Set up virtual diaspora networks.
- Incorporate distance learning and education in the academic programmes of African universities and research institutions.
- Set up virtual Job fairs that nationals in the diaspora could navigate wherever they are.
- Develop a retention strategy that enables professional and career development as well as retraining in the new skills in countries of origin.

10. Develop a coherent resource mobilization strategy for MIDA:

Securing appropriate financial support is a determining element for the sustainability of MIDA programme. A sustainable resource mobilization strategy for MIDA has to focus on the following elements:

- Continue to advocate for the integration and prioritization of MIDA in the national development plans of beneficiary countries.
- Maintain close liaison with donor countries and agencies in support of MIDA.
- Focus on the private sector as a main partner to be approached to mobilize resources.

It is clear that the sustainability of MIDA programme is essentially based on its appropriation by the beneficiary countries. Therefore, it is crucial to develop a resource mobilization strategy in which the beneficiary countries assume the main responsibility for mobilizing the necessary support, while IOM plays only an assisting role. In this optic, IOM will continue to encourage the African countries to integrate MIDA in their national and regional indicative programmes.

11. Advocate for the planning of national human resource development (HRD) strategies: Each African country has its specific human resource needs and requirements that largely depend on its own political, economic, social and demographic conditions. Meeting these needs in an efficient way wouldn't be possible if each country did not plan its own human resource development strategy, that could possibly feed into a continental strategy to address the common challenges and needs of the African continent (see point 12). MIDA, as a capacity building programme that aims at helping African countries to take advantage of their reserve of human resources that represent the African migrants, could largely be integrated in these HRD national strategies.

12. Promote a continental human resource development (HRD) strategy: According to the memorandum of understanding IOM signed with the OAU in 1998, IOM should provide a framework for technical cooperation and assistance to African governments on a broad range of issues related to migration, which include, among others, human resource development. To this end, IOM, in collaboration with NEPAD/AU, the African regional organizations, the African countries and all other partners, is developing a continental human resource development strategy to coordinate all the regional and national initiatives related to human development.

V. Recommendations for Future Planning of MIDA projects

The experience gained with MIDA so far and the successes and difficulties encountered provide a basis to reflect on possible ways of improvement. The following section, therefore, attempts to blend MIDA's main achievements as well as lessons learnt into a series of recommendations regarding the future planning and implementation of projects in the MIDA framework.

V.1. Recommendations for Work at the National Level

Recommendations	Justification	Responsible Institutions	Additional Information
Strengthening the outreach component of the MIDA programme.	A broader and more systematic dissemination of information on MIDA would not only help to improve communication between MIDA volunteers, the governments of countries of origin and IOM, but would also facilitate the collaboration between the countries of origin and host countries and reinforce donor commitment.	IOM field missions and HQ, host countries, home country embassies in host countries, African associations and NGO's.	
Drafting a multi-annual plan for MIDA projects in their preparatory phase (where feasible), in close collaboration with appropriate partners in the beneficiary country (the public and private sectors, civil society) as well as the donor countries or agents.	Create transparency and provide a more programmatic, long-term approach.	Target countries, host governments, donors, diaspora associations, and IOM.	MIDA plans for Benin, Cape Verde, Burkina Faso and Mauritania have already been drafted, revised and finalized in consultation with the respective governments.
Establishment of flexible management structures at the programme level. (e.g., selection committees, African steering groups, national coordinators).	Ensure the appropriation of the MIDA programme by both the beneficiary countries and the diaspora community abroad, and promote the ownership of the programme.	Target countries, the African associations in the diaspora and IOM.	Successful instances of cooperation with government agencies as achieved in Cap Verde, Benin and Mauritania could serve as examples.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct needs assessments and feasibility studies in the countries of origin. • Identification of resources available in the diaspora. 	Match the skills available in the diaspora with the priority needs in the countries of origin.	Governments of the target countries, African associations in the diaspora, IOM and home country embassies.	

Integration of MIDA projects in the ongoing national and regional capacity development efforts.	Avoid duplication or overlap with other projects and programmes and facilitate the needs assessment studies as well as the exploration of possible synergies.	IOM, regional organizations, target countries, international organizations and the donors.	It is important in this regard to explore the possibilities to integrate MIDA in the African national development strategies such as the poverty reduction strategies (PRSP) of the World Bank, the United Nations development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).
Promotion of the dialogue between the countries of origin and host countries, as well as IOM partnerships with other international organizations (e.g., UNDP) and NGOs working in this field.	Maintain close collaboration between the various stakeholders and share the experience gained and the best practices.	Governments of the countries of origin and host countries, the African associations, IOM, NGOs and International/ regional organizations.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater involvement of the African diaspora in the conceptualization of MIDA projects. • Forging networks with and among African diaspora associations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific experiences and knowledge of migrants can be a valuable resource in project design, implementation and management. • Contribute to raise awareness of MIDA as well as mobilize the diaspora. 	IOM, African associations and home country embassies.	
Strengthening the sectoral approach of MIDA programme (e.g., education, health, science and technology)	Expand MIDA's targeted contribution to capacity building in those areas where it is most needed.	IOM, governments of target countries, African associations and donors.	
Focusing on the virtual means and the tele-work as potential options for the transfer of skills.	More cost-effective, helps to avoid the systematic physical transfer of migrants, which could be an obstacle for their contribution in MIDA, and to enhance the sustainability of the MIDA projects.	IOM, donors, host countries.	These options could be employed more frequently, especially as a follow-up to physical transfers. The use of these options entails the systematic provision of material, where necessary.

<p>A stronger strategic focus on the promotion and development of the private sector as beneficiary and partner of MIDA.</p>	<p>Many African countries are actively pursuing a market economy with the private sector identified as the engine of growth.</p>	<p>IOM, governments of target countries, donors, African diasporas, employers associations, trade unions and chambers of commerce and industry in the target countries.</p>	<p>The establishment of SMEs has already proven to be successful within the MIDA programme (e.g., Mali) and could be extended to different contexts, as appropriate</p>
<p>Integration of activities that promote the use of remittances as investments in development into the MIDA concept (e.g., The African diaspora Remittance Fund).</p>	<p>Migrant remittances constitute a very important source of foreign exchange in many African countries (<u>see Additional Information</u>). In 2002, migrant remittances to developing countries stood at USD 88 billion, exceeding both ODA and private investments. They represented 2.2% of the total GDP in Middle East and North Africa, 1.5% in Latin America and the Caribbean and 1.3 % in Sub-Saharan Africa (Source: Global Development Finance, World Bank 2003)</p>	<p>IOM, governments of target countries, private sector, African associations and donors.</p>	<p>Migrant remittances represent 6.4% of the GDP in the Comoros, 9.7% in Morocco, 3% in Egypt, 4.6% in Tunisia, 4.1% in Nigeria, 3.3% in Mali, 26.2% in Lesotho, 8.5% in Uganda (Source: International Monetary Fund, 2003, Balance of Payments, Statistics Yearbook 2002).</p>

V.2. Recommendations for Work at the Regional Level

Recommendation	Recommendation Logic	Responsible Institution	Additional Information
<p>Creation of knowledge blocs and intra-regional dialogue.</p>	<p>IOM should continue to assist Governments, non-governmental organizations, academic and public institutions, representatives of the private</p>	<p>IOM, NGOs, the private sector, universities, African associations,</p>	<p>To this end, IOM, in collaboration with the International Development Research (IDRC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the</p>

	sector as well as migrants themselves in sharing their expertise at the regional level through workshops and seminars on MIDA-related topics, and facilitate thereby the creation of knowledge blocs.	governments of host countries and countries of origin	Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA), organized a regional conference on “The Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa” that aimed at providing a forum of discussion and critical examination of the key issues pertaining to the brain drain problem in the African region. The conference took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22-24 February, 2000. This kind of collaboration should be extended to all the regional economic communities (RECs) in the African continent.
Reinforcement of the cooperation with the regional economic communities (RECs)	Regional cooperation and coordination could assist to put together all regional efforts and initiatives in order to set up a global human resource development strategy that includes reversing brain drain and integrating migrant skills and remittances in the development process of the African continent. Regional cooperation could also help to conduct needs assessment studies for the whole African continent allowing exchange of expertise among the different sub-regions.	IOM, governments of the target African countries and regional organizations.	
Harmonization and consistency.	IOM should continue to collaborate with African regional organizations and initiatives in order to promote a regional harmonization of diaspora policies and to foster consistency, as well as joint efforts (where feasible) in dealing with common challenges and problems.	IOM, regional organizations and initiatives and African target countries.	As recommended by the AU/ NEPAD regional cluster group, IOM has taken the lead to create a continental human resource development strategy. To this end, IOM is working to bring NEPAD clusters together to formulate a joint strategy and plan of action to address the impact of the brain drain on the development in the African continent.

V.3. Recommendations for IOM Internal Work

	Recommendation Logic
Management of MIDA	With the governments taking the lead in managing MIDA, IOM Headquarters and Country missions should provide backstopping and general assistance as appropriate to country specific situation. Cooperation between the IOM offices in the countries of origin and those in the respective host countries needs to be strengthened in this regard.
Evaluation of progress	The success of the programme should not be measured by the number of transfers only, but by indicators of the impact of the transfers on the capacity of the local institutions in the African continent. The number of institutions which have benefited from transfers, the nature of permanent or temporary jobs created through the capacity-building activities and the new external financial investments might serve as quantitative indicators, with the socio-economic improvement for the local population and the alleviation of poverty as qualitative measurements.
Resource Mobilization	IOM should develop a new resource mobilization policy for MIDA in which the beneficiary countries assume the main responsibility to mobilize the necessary funds, while IOM would play only an assistance role. In this regard, efforts should be exerted to encourage donors, IOs and NGOs to incorporate diaspora policies more firmly into their strategies and programmes regarding capacity building in Africa (e.g., the possibility of integrating MIDA programme in the EU framework for capacity building could be discussed at IOM Headquarters. At the field level, IOM could strengthen relations with donors and other national and international NGOs and intergovernmental organizations, in particular UNDP).
Database development	Standardized database tools should be developed for worldwide data collection and processing, preferably through a secure online system integrated as a subsection of IOM's general website where African professionals would personally register and follow the MIDA objective and progress made.
Lessons learnt from other regions	The potential for cross-fertilization among different regions could be more fully explored: organizing 'diaspora study tours' for different regions (e.g., Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean), which face similar issues.

VI. Conclusion

MIDA is one of the IOM pilot projects aiming at the better integration of migrants in the development process of their countries. It should be noted that MIDA does not represent a response to address the root causes of underdevelopment in Africa. However, MIDA is a capacity building programme that could effectively contribute to address the lack of human resources and critical skills, which is one of the key factors of underdevelopment in African countries.

The strategy described above is aimed at developing a more pragmatic and forward-looking approach for MIDA to guarantee its efficient contribution to the development process of the beneficiary countries.

The successful implementation of this strategy would not be possible unless the following preconditions are met:

1. Ensuring appropriation of MIDA programme by all partners, in particular the beneficiary countries and the diaspora, as well as their sincere commitment to achieving MIDA objectives and the regular coordination among them.
2. Working towards replacing the project-driven approach with a more regional strategic approach in implementing MIDA programme.
3. Targeting adequate and sufficient human resources to close the gap between the ambitious objectives set forth for MIDA and the lack of necessary expertise at the country and regional levels to conduct surveys and to follow up on the implementation of the programme.
4. Creating an effective and sustainable resource mobilization policy for MIDA to ensure its sustainability and appropriation by the beneficiary countries and their diaspora.
5. Providing sustainable monitoring, evaluation, backstopping and adjustment measures to enhance performance in programme implementation.

VII. Annex 1: Lessons learnt from the RQAN and recommendations made at other fora

Lessons learnt from RQAN
Feedback from returnees and employers was very positive.
A large majority of returnees has been successfully reintegrated into the countries of origin.
Important sectors for economic development, as well as specific skill shortages, should have been more clearly identified and addressed.
Highly skilled nationals were underemployed, which has resulted in the importation of expatriates despite the availability of qualified, underemployed nationals.
One of the main critics of RQAN was its donor-driven approach.
Beneficiary governments should have assumed greater responsibility in the implementation of the programme. The ownership of the programme by beneficiary countries was very limited.

WORKSHOP LIBREVILLE, 2001
MIDA was presented to and endorsed by the participating African countries. Participants agreed that: The ownership of the MIDA programme should rest with participating African countries.
IOM should only play a facilitating and implementing role.
African countries should include migration in their national priorities as a positive development tool.
IOM would, where appropriate, assist in the revision of governments' capacity building plans.
Participating African countries would carry out a thorough needs identification, in close collaboration with IOM.
IOM should carry out data collection on Africans in the diaspora, as well as information campaigns to raise awareness of MIDA.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON BRAIN DRAIN AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN AFRICA, ADDIS ABABA, 2000
<i>Key recommendations of the conference included:</i>
More emphasis should be put on brain circulation and utilization of virtual means for skills transfer, rather than physical movements, which could be very expensive and unsustainable.
Donors, governments, foundations and aid agencies have to ensure that the African diaspora is integrated in their capacity building strategies for Africa.
A coherent policy aimed at building networks with migrated African human resources and expertise in the diaspora should be set up. This policy should further work to build networks between Africans in the diaspora and at home, to enable them to develop an autonomous development agenda for their countries.

MIDA