

A GLOBAL STRATEGY OF MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

**BEYOND THE MIDA APPROACH TO MOBILIZING AND SHARING OF
HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES
OF THE OVERSEAS AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

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FOREWORD

Following the 2001 workshop that established the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) strategy, the International Organization for Migrations (IOM) has developed a strategy for mobilizing African migrants, their countries of origin and their countries of residence in order to strengthen the institutional capacities of the African continent and to contribute to countries' economic growth and to the fight against poverty.

Main lines of cooperation with the countries of Africa have been developed and have been implemented by IOM in several countries. These have made it possible to test the specific mechanisms for mobilizing resources and drawing benefit from the African diasporas.

These numerous steps have awakened the interest of a significant number of countries and institutions through the world, and in Africa in particular.

At the end of these five years of partnership, IOM considers it necessary to develop a more global strategy aiming to offer a unified response to the brain drain, to the ageing of qualified populations, and to the lack of adequate qualified personnel both in the public sector and in the private sector, which is in fact the engine generating jobs in Africa.

These ideas have been advocated many times by IOM and by African and European governments at varying international forums. IOM has linked up with a wide network of international partner agencies such as the African Union, NEPAD, the African Development Bank, as well as the governments of the Member States of the European Union, in order to create a movement favourable to the establishment of a policy of migration for development. This initiative intends to boost the role of the African diasporas in the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the African continent, through mobility of resources: human, intellectual and financial.

This paper presents the effects of the pilot activities started five years ago and pursued with the African diasporas for the development of the countries of origin; the lessons drawn from the experiences; the shortcomings to be borne in mind when preparing development strategies related to the diasporas, as well as the major advantages of a policy of drawing benefit from the migrants within a global approach of managing international migration.

It presents a five-year approach for the effective use of migration in the processes of developing the institutional capacities of Africa, both by and with the migrants.

THE INITIATIVES ON MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: IOM'S MIDA PROGRAMME

THE STRENGTHS OF MIDA

Migration's positive contributions to Africa's development processes

THE STRATEGY:

The Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) strategy is the outcome of an initiative of the African States and their diasporas aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of Africa through the mobilization of resources from those diasporas. Various African countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Somalia, have moved to set up MIDA programmes.

THE MECHANISMS:

The MIDA programmes make it possible to develop mechanisms for analysing the needs in the major development sectors of the African countries, through consultations with a large range of development actors, in order to draw up a picture of the development sectors that are suffering a shortage of qualified resources, expertise or management capacity.

These mechanisms have to form part of a process of buy-in by the African countries. IOM ensures that these tools have the objective of promoting the role of African governments in a long-term process of active cooperation with the diasporas in the definition of national policies, their implementation, and the organization of multi-year economic growth programmes and poverty reduction programmes.

In line with national strategies, sectoral action plans, and, taking development indicators into account, the Millennium Development Goals, as well as National Indicative Programs and actions undertaken within the context of bilateral cooperation, the MIDA programmes identify the public and private institutional needs in terms of human and financial resources. As these multi-year and multisectoral strategic plans are drawn up, at the same time a mechanism of registration of the interested members of the diasporas is established in the countries of residence, thus allowing a matching of the needs with the resources held by overseas nationals who are desirous of making a commitment.

Whether in countries in a post-conflict situation where the governments face challenges of reconstruction, reconciliation and crisis management, or in countries in which the priority is to build up sectors such as health, education and agricultural development, calling on the diaspora appears, in the MIDA context, to be a promising tool for strengthening national capacities.

The contribution of overseas African experts should take a cross-cutting approach and should make it possible to strengthen the actions generating incomes and good management of public and private affairs within all sectors which African Governments have identified as priorities. It makes it possible to bring about attitudes and conduct more compatible with better governance of decentralized structures.

The involvement of the diasporas themselves in the programme, and their buy-in of it, are also part of the mechanisms implemented in the MIDA programmes.

By organizing national committees of experts in the countries of residence, MIDA ensures the full participation of the expatriates in the process of disseminating information and preselection of volunteer experts, as well as support and advice in the preparation of expertise missions. Through steering committees, it is possible to bring together all of the parties involved, whether Government, non-governmental or private.

The process of correlating between the national African institutions and the overseas African experts has provided important advantages of various kinds:

- ✚ Recognition by national institutions of migrants' positive contribution to the process of developing and strengthening their capacities (as in the Great Lakes MIDA);
- ✚ The lasting tie created between the diaspora and the country of origin has the effect of strengthening the positive picture of the country among the expatriates and also within the indigenous populations and brings about a reconciliation, when necessary, between the migrants and their countries of origin (DRC, Burundi and Rwanda);
- ✚ The exchange of best practices, research results, working methods and management techniques, between the migrants, the representatives of the institutions of the host countries and the public and private undertakings in the countries of origin;
- ✚ The creation of lasting ties, twinning, and exchanges between national enterprises and institutions of higher education and scientific research in the countries of origin on the one hand and the host countries on the other (DRC, Burundi and Rwanda diasporas, the Universities of Brussels, Louvain, etc.);
- ✚ The opening of paths of cooperation and professional agreements between the private sectors of the countries of origin and the host countries, promoting a quality of production, an extended distribution, the opening of markets, or even exports (example : private companies in Burundi and expatriates in the private sector in Belgium).

Based on the rewarding experiences undertaken so far, IOM intends to pursue its activities in order to ensure that governments and private institutions are able to consider the expatriate Africans as supplementary resources for the development of their national capacity, and to ensure that they maintain a lasting and representative link to their country of origin, wherever they are currently located.

The MIDA programmes have made it possible to launch an advocacy campaign on the importance of migration and to bring about the drafting of various declarations both in the North and in the South, recognizing the role of the diasporas as an activator of socioeconomic and cultural development, economic growth and the fight against poverty, good governance and management of migration.

SHORTCOMINGS OF MIDA

The process of mobilization of the diasporas

To date, most African governments structure their ties with their natives who are in other countries through departments within their Foreign Relations ministries acting through private or semi-public associations (Chambers of Commerce, etc.).

Inclusion of migration in the agendas of African governments as an important domain should result in accountability and increased participation by all government structures, such as the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training. The mandate of these government entities thus allows them to integrate a cross-cutting contribution of resources from the migrants.

MIDA creates institutional links between the working sectors in the African countries, whereas the processes of consultation between the public and private sectors still show certain limits.

Similarly, in the countries of origin, the institutions of higher education, whether public or private, only partially fulfil their role as centres of development and centres of excellence. It appears in the MIDA context that a more prominent role could be assigned to them, as a catalyst between the public and private sectors.

MIDA has also suffered from the nature of the relations between the Governments of the countries of origin and their diasporas. It has been determined that there is a lack of trust between these two groupings, in the political, economic and social and cultural spheres.

These determinations, among many others, show that the involvement of state actors, of institutions of higher education and of the associations of expatriate Africans is crucial to ensuring the full success of the links between Migration and Development. However, globally, the government and private initiatives that we have taken within the context of the MIDA programmes have made it possible to demonstrate the value added of involving the diasporas in the implementation and realization of the development objectives of the national institutions in the countries concerned.

BEYOND ISOLATED EXPERIENCES: TOWARD A GLOBAL POLICY OF MANAGING MIGRATION

Consistency in the frameworks of implementation of the policies linking Migration and Development

Migration is henceforth an important factor on the international political stage. IOM is convinced that a better understanding of the migratory phenomenon and of the possibilities for involvement of the diasporas in countries' development agendas is an essential factor in ensuring improvement of socioeconomic performance, good governance and the management of migration at the national, regional and international level.

The greater part of the continent has to deal with an internal and external migration with considerable ecological and economic repercussions, causing difficulties in regional integration, an increased exodus from the land and intra-regional disparities leading to movements of people toward regions within the continent viewed as stable and prosperous.

Consequently, we consider that since migration is an intersectoral and multidisciplinary phenomenon, affecting both the public and the private sector, inclusion of these energetic and positive forces within governments (in particular the ministries for labour and employment, finance and economic planning, foreign affairs and cooperation, the interior, higher education and scientific research, health, and the private sector) is absolutely critical if we wish to create an internal consistency in the management of a policy linking migration and development.

Political will and decisions

The strategy of Migration for Development of Africa has been ratified by the Heads of State of the African Union, who at Lusaka in 2001 recognized the need to face up to the challenges of migration on the continent and develop a strategic framework for a migration policy in Africa. Based on various recommendations and declarations of the African Union, the African Economic Community (AEC, 1991), the seminar on Intra-African Labour Migration (1995), LC/Res 235 (XIX) on the Rights of Migrant Workers (1998), and the Cotonou Agreement signed by all ACP States (2000), the Declaration calls on Governments to integrate migration into their national and regional agendas for security, stability, development and cooperation. It also provides for ensuring the free circulation of people, for reinforcing intra-regional cooperation and for establishing the necessary political, social and economic conditions in Africa to create incentives to reverse the brain drain and attract investment from the diasporas. The regional economic communities 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 such as the East African Community (EAC) and the Maghreb Arab Union (MAU), have pursued their work directed towards strengthening the ties between migration and development in Africa. The African Union has placed its diasporas at the centre of its activities in its Strategic Plan for 2004-2007. Identified as one of the organs of the Union, the diasporas are considered to be a vital segment of the

African continent. The donor community as well as a large range of multilateral organizations have confirmed their interest in the MIDA programme, and are working closely to reinforce the positive impact of the image of the migrants in the agenda of migration and development. In March 2006, the Belgian Government, together with the World Bank and IOM, organized an international conference in order to gather together the various initiatives and concrete examples that would enable the concept of Migration and Development to take on solid form. The conference made it possible to define the lines along which the States and the migrants' associations could pursue the development of a global policy with a view to the High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development to be held in September 2006 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

These actions illustrate the good will of the multilateral organizations and governments to include migration in the continent's policies and action plans. A process of analysis is needed, however, in order to identify and locate possible synergies among the various initiatives, the actions and the plans of the numerous institutions and governments working in the interests of migration and development.

It is that process of analysis that mandates a need for consistency in the management of a policy linking migration and development.

A global policy on Managing Migration

The African States are gradually attaching more and more importance to policies and programmes on international migration. The drafting of the Strategic Framework for a Policy on Migration for Africa is a very positive element, that deserves the support of international partners. Initiating and facilitating regional, subregional and national dialogue is a necessity to facilitate the development of policies and programmes for managing migration.

It seems to us that working in the very short term to meet the urgent needs of the current national and international situations with regard to managing migration does not exclude the possibility of building over time for the medium and the long term. If migration is to be positive for the development of countries, it must be known and understood by all the actors in the migratory process, both in the host countries and the countries of origin.

It is for that reason that it seems to us that in order to go beyond MIDA, we need to make a contribution to the programme of education and training within the knowledge-creating structures. It is important to target the centres of education, the poles of excellence, because it is there that the knowledge is created to develop curricula for training in managing migration. It is in those places that effective tools will be constructed so that all aspects of migration can impact the development of the economic and social systems of the developing countries.

In order to meet these challenges, IOM has constantly been advocating for the establishment of strategies allowing for greater international cooperation between migrants' countries of origin and host countries, with the migrants themselves. As the increase in the legal ways of migrating permits and facilitates the circulation of the migrants, not only the mobility but also the mobilization of the diaspora and its human and financial capacities are integral parts of the MIDA policy and strategy of the IOM.

To assure the permanence and long-term success of the advantages drawn from the MIDA programmes, IOM recommends consideration of an integrated approach along four main axes: (1) effective integration of the positive forces of migration into the management structures of the development programmes of the countries of origin; (2) creation of environments encouraging mutual trust and investment; (3) adaptation and harmonization of policies on human resources and good governance of public affairs, in line with international standards; and (4) strengthening of the national and regional management capacities of the development structures.

Effective integration of the positive forces of migration into the management structures of the development programmes of the countries of origin

The next five-year period must focus its attention in order to :

- ✚ Create departments, on a systematic basis, for managing overseas migrant workers within government structures capable of ensuring a cross-cutting approach, according to the needs and shortcomings in the private and public sectors;
- ✚ Integrate the diasporas into national plans and priorities;
- ✚ Ensure that all government and non-governmental parties are involved in the process of recruiting qualified persons within the African diaspora;
- ✚ Evaluate the consistency of the policies and actions proposed in collaboration with the Ministries of Planning and the Ministries of Finance, guaranteeing coordination with national capacities for investments;
- ✚ Organize an open and straightforward dialogue with the representatives of the Africans living abroad in order to enhance the feeling of equitable participation and trust in government institutions;
- ✚ Promote the creation of international databanks on migration, on migrants, and on their qualifications, availability and capacities for assisting their countries of origin;
- ✚ Organize skills transfer mechanisms by facilitating entry into the country, sojourn and import of professional materials;
- ✚ Encourage the African States, based on the pilot experiences in Burundi, the DRC, Ghana and Rwanda, to integrate the migratory components and the recourse to the diasporas as a prime mover of development within National Indicative Programs and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (in health, education, gender and the private sector).

The development of policies for managing migration is highly necessary in order to reduce the negative effects of migration. Making a reality of the mobility of the diaspora's human resources between their two worlds – the country of origin and the host country – is a major component in combatting the brain drain.

Creation of environments encouraging mutual trust and investment

The activities to mobilize the Africans living abroad must at all costs take place in an environment favourable to the creation of mutual trust between the diaspora and the government structures of the countries of origin. Human and financial investment can be feasible if the conditions for sharing expertise are accompanied by efficient and transparent monitoring and management measures. In order to achieve this, the African States must undertake to:

- ✚ Create the political, social and economic conditions to promote democracy, good governance and transparency, in order to attract foreign investment;
- ✚ Develop action plans for the involvement, participation and recognition of the diaspora for the fulfilment of national development objectives;
- ✚ Promote strategies to retain African human resources, as recommended by NEPAD, by developing conditions of employment, possibilities for professional development and educational opportunities in the country;
- ✚ Set up efficient measures to encourage the nationals living abroad to commit themselves to the building of the countries, by means of financial and human incentives for skills transfer in the short, medium and long term;
- ✚ Promote working conditions and the creation of private companies that will generate jobs;
- ✚ Facilitate the mobility of workers in a continental and regional setting;
- ✚ Attract investments from the national workers living abroad by establishing macroeconomic policies promoting growth and institutional confidence for financial investment;
- ✚ Create the conditions for equitable consultation among civil society, partner countries, and the public, private and financial sectors, in order to ensure the development of a commercial, financial and productive environment, in which the actors can influence the decisions;
- ✚ Promote economic growth through trade, productive investments and employment, by way of economic and social policies including the migrants as economic potential of the countries;
- ✚ Encourage regional cooperation in terms of economic migration within the regional economic communities, on the basis of bilateral, regional and international agreements, in Africa and beyond.

Adaptation and harmonization of policies of human resources and good governance of public affairs, in line with international standards

In line with the Treaty of Abuja (June 1991), reinforced by Decision 614 of the African Union of July 2001, a global policy of managing migration requires the adoption of employment policies ensuring the free circulation of people in Africa. The development of such employment policies can benefit from the expertise of the Africans living abroad who are familiar with the migration policies of their host countries. In this area, it is important to operate in the context of Conventions No. 97 and 143 of the International Labour Organization, as well as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and the Members of Their Families.

In the area of labour migration, it is important to consider the inclusion of the migrants in order to:

- ✚ Strengthen the national and regional capacities for managing migration by developing migration policies and legislation as well as government and intergovernmental management structures. Focal points within the relevant ministries would make it possible to manage migration and encourage international cooperation among governments, workers' organizations, and employers' associations in Africa and in the host countries;
- ✚ Promote a wider participation of the social partners and civil society in the development and the implementation of migration policies, including in the areas of the fight against discrimination and xenophobia, in conjunction with the harmonization of domestic laws in line with international standards;
- ✚ Promote and instal tools to collect and exchange information on labour migration at regional and national levels;
- ✚ Facilitate the integration of migrant workers into the job markets, and their participation in trade unions and workers' representative groups;
- ✚ Develop legislation relating to the recognition of a specific statute which will serve to protect the rights of the African experts from the diaspora as they share experiences during expertise missions to their countries of origin;
- ✚ Set up procedures and mechanisms to promote temporary migration within the context of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS);
- ✚ Provide for ongoing dialogue among government agencies on migration, trade, and employment issues, in order to ensure a global understanding of the questions of labour migration and the role of the diaspora in the economic growth of the countries.

These approaches can benefit from the support and expertise of the members of the African diaspora, in order to ensure the sharing of knowledge.

Strengthening of the national and regional management capacities of the development structures

In order to strengthen the national management capacities of the development structures, it is necessary to start this five-year period by including the migrants in the development of policies and programmes for strengthening institutional capacities, so as to:

- ✚ Improve the capacities for managing migration and optimize the inclusion of the new technologies and technical training;
- ✚ Promote national and international cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental structures of good governance in Africa;
- ✚ Increase the capacities of the institutions responsible for monitoring migratory movements within and out of Africa, to promote the sharing of information and have a better understanding of the factors underlying African migration and their consequences for the development of Africa;
- ✚ Ensure the role of the African Union and the regional agencies in Africa in the mobilization of technical resources and the harmonization of policies and action programmes, in order to assure efficient management of the structures by the African countries;
- ✚ Enhance the dialogue between States, regional consultations and international cooperation to bring about a better understanding of the mechanisms and a sharing of information on the management of the development structures;
- ✚ Mobilize the energetic forces in order to set in motion a mechanism of continuing training, tracking and monitoring of the national and regional institutional capacities to ensure the management of the development structures in Africa.

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The participation of the African diaspora in the development of Africa, as added in the Constituting Act establishing the African Union at the Maputo summit in July 2003, represents an essential working basis to be taken into consideration for the involvement of the diasporas in the development of policies that concern Africa. Calling on the energetic forces of the Africans in the diaspora makes it possible to ensure the effective involvement of Africans in the management of the policies of the continent. Similarly, regional cooperation and integration are facilitated by the inclusion of migrants in the decision-making processes relating to the socioeconomic mechanisms of development in Africa. Their experience abroad and their ties with the African continent bring an important value added to the processes of economic integration.