

DIALOGUE ON MEDITERRANEAN TRANSIT MIGRATION (MTM)

STRENGTHENING AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN DIASPORA POLICY
THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGE
(AMEDIP)

AMEDIP WORKSHOP

NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION FOR MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

BERN, SWITZERLAND, 23-24 APRIL 2013

Final Summary of Discussions

The third AMEDIP workshop on North-South Cooperation took place in Bern, Switzerland, on 23-24 April 2013. The workshop was hosted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and organised by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The workshop gathered representatives from the 13 AMEDIP Focus Partner States: Algeria, Cape Verde, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia. Representatives from the four Donor countries (France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Switzerland) and various international and diaspora organisations (African Union, GIZ, EADPD) also participated in the event.

The opening session included welcome remarks from a representative of Switzerland, followed by interventions from IOM and ICMPD. It was followed by a state of play of the AMEDIP project.

The workshop focused on North-South Cooperation for Migration and Development, and particularly aimed at:

- Reflecting on the AMEDIP project as a concrete example of North-South Cooperation on M&D;
- Addressing the relevance of North-South Cooperation for M&D in a period of recession and austerity in western countries, discussing the foundations of the M&D paradigm;
- Highlighting innovative and strategic aspects of North-South Cooperation fostering mobility through policy coherence, a migrants' centred approach, and the recognised vitality of the local dimension;

- Disentangling the institutional long-run visions for supporting and for collaborating with diaspora organisations; and
- Identifying further interrelations/cooperation mechanisms of North-South Cooperation and South-South Cooperation.

Session I: AMEDIP in the context of North-South Cooperation

This first session conceived as a roundtable gave space to discuss each country's feedback on the [AMEDIP](#) project up to now. The occasion paved the way for reflecting and questioning new orientations within North-South Cooperation in times of crisis. Following a presentation on the state of play of the project, the participants had some remarks concerning the methodology and the content of the AMEDIP project.

As regards to the methodology, representatives from the AMEDIP Partner States and the project team had the opportunity to give their feedback about the activities that have been carried out to date. Some participants considered that some information was missing in the Registry and that some details were out-of-date. This can be explained by a lengthy data collection process and by being short of some relevant information or initiatives. It has been noted that missing information and corrections can still be included in the Manual to be published at the end of the project. This re-assessment calls for a stronger ownership of the process from the AMEDIP Partner States.

The project activities, given their novelty, especially the South-South Expert Exchanges Mechanism, are carefully scrutinised by Partner States, donors and other organisations. It was concluded that the South-South Cooperation should be further strengthened, especially through the capitalisation of experiences in this area by AMEDIP Partner States.

Despite some imprecision in the [Registry of Institutional Priorities of AMEDIP Partner States](#), some of the data collected during the implementation of the Registry are a gold mine of information and should be further analysed for the benefit of all partner states, such as the information contained in the diagram on page 12 of the Registry. The countries' representatives explicitly asked for further information on this specific diagram, which will be done in the Manual to be published at the end of the project as mentioned above. ICMPD and IOM will work in complementary ways for the drafting of the Manual.

Another vital point for a total success of the AMEDIP project and for the development of South-South Cooperation is the necessity to find and set up mechanisms to sustainably convey and share the knowledge acquired during the workshops, within the respective governments. This statement goes in line with the countries, which expressed the need and will to transform the various exchanges that took place in the framework of the AMEDIP project into concrete actions back in their respective countries.

Overall, the workshop also offered a mid-term assessment of the AMEDIP project and allows concentrating the efforts on the priorities raised during the workshop.

As regards to the content, AMEDIP Partner States called for a more consistent North-North Cooperation and particularly by putting more coherent migration policies in place in the North.

A central topic that emerged from the exchange is the link between youth and mobility. Countries both from the North and from the South agreed on the necessity to exchange and share more and develop coherent public policies on these topics.

Countries are in favour of a continuation of exchanges of experience, as illustrated by the case of Lebanon. Indeed, Lebanon is currently studying the French overseas voting system and offered to share its newly acquired knowledge with Kenya, who expressed its need to learn more about voting systems for Kenyans residing abroad. This could represent an interesting example of triangular cooperation, as discussed in the last session of the workshop.

All things considered, the workshop was an excellent opportunity to concentrate on the challenges met during the implementation of the first half of the project. It will allow for a better targeted implementation of remaining activities.

Session II: Innovations and redefinitions of the M&D paradigm: Migration for development or *more* development for *better* migration?

This session emphasized the necessity of a common definition of the Migration-and-Development nexus and the role that new terms can play in enriching the discussions and expanding the debate on the topic. It also reaffirmed the importance of the central role of migrants in development. Especially with the current economic and financial crisis it is extremely important that all actors become more vigilant and focus on rationalizing and setting priorities (both geographic and thematic) within existing programmes. Insofar it is necessary to build on existing partnerships and to further coordinate with other initiatives. Under these circumstances, dialogues (MTM; Rabat; etc.) may have a vital role to play as vectors of exchange and cooperation at various levels (political or expert level). The AMEDIP initiative offers a unique platform for several Northern and Southern Partner States to exchange skills, initiatives, and know-how on a tailor-made basis and on specific and targeted actions or policies.

The workshop also raised awareness on the leading role countries of origin can play for:

- Making conditions for mobility possible;
- Setting up incentives for nationals living abroad;
- Setting up innovative partnership with local/territorial level, communities, and any other actors at the local level; and
- Calling on the co-responsibility of donors, notwithstanding the fact that remittances will not substitute for development aid.

Further to a presentation from the expert, the participants split into two working groups. Working Group 1 discussed the importance of integrating migration policies at the local level while Working Group 2 addressed the issue of triangulation.

Working Group 1- Integrating migration into decentralized development policies: The rise of the local level

While the Migration-and-Development nexus always had an impact at the local level, whereby migrants have been taking part in local or community initiatives, it was emphasized by the participants that few policies are taking the local dimension into serious consideration. In this regard, government representatives expressed the need to develop initiatives for local development in a decentralization framework. In order to ensure development at the local level, all activities related to development at the local level should be planned with local representatives, they should be included in the decision processes that involve their regions or communities. This cooperation should also take into account the specificities and needs of the regions in terms of migration and development.

Partnerships between migrants and their place of origin should also be enhanced in this framework, along with partnerships between migrants, the countries of origin, and the countries of destination. And last but not least, it is important to integrate the migration component into national development plans and to enhance a dialogue at the vertical level (from the national level to the local level).

Working Group 2- Promoting the positive *triangulation* between home country – diaspora – host country: Under which conditions can mobility function?

This session focused on discussing the positive triangulation between home country – diaspora and host country whereby a balance must be found since interests inevitably converge. The participants advanced the importance of adopting a practical take on such matters whereby specifically declaring: a) what can be done in order to commit for change; b) what should be avoided, refrained from doing (explicitly declaring it) and equally admit; and c) in which areas nothing should be done but kept as it is. Two important specifications emerged from the discussion. The first relates to the awareness that all parties involved in this dynamic are not a unity. Neither countries of residence and origin just refer to governments – but include all actors and stakeholders operating in the different poles of the migratory process - nor the diaspora, is a homogenous group or community. The second specification regards the word ‘triangulation’ used for describing this dynamic, and a preference especially in the French language to use the word *trilateral* instead.

Several areas of intervention have been highlighted as key and important for joint collaborative efforts. The first one regards the collection of statistical facts and figures. Sending countries should ask for data from receiving countries (which is however always unsatisfactory) but also complement this demand with figures and data gathered by eminent civil society organisations (on refugees, etc.).

A second area of intervention regards the portability of social rights. It has been highlighted that this issue should be linked with existing bilateral conventions at the OECD level on the elimination of double taxation. Several countries have agreements to avoid double taxation (OECD), such as Senegal with Switzerland, which represent the matrix to take an example from.

Regarding irregular migrants (for example people working in the black market) countries of origin should try to ease their contribution towards the social security facility in these countries. This way, if irregular migrants would get deported, they would still have a safety net from which they could benefit from.

Partner States agreed that governments should reach out – by thinking and listing incentives and opportunities – towards their diasporas, to invest back home.

Session III: Engaging diasporas in development: Further structuring the dialogue between diasporas and governments

Session III was introduced by a presentation of the [European-wide African Diaspora Platform for Development](#). The platform aims to promote the contribution of the diaspora to act as a development actor for Africa through the establishment of a European-wide African diaspora platform for development. It achieves such a goal through the provision of support in the establishment of a functioning European platform of African diaspora organisations in the EU 27, Norway, and Switzerland. It also improves coordination, communication, and cooperation of development activities undertaken by African migrant organisations through the development of tools for enhanced communication, and finally it enhances capacities of diaspora organisations to meaningfully participate in the development cooperation process in Africa.

Some representatives of the platform and some diaspora associations took part in a panel to share their experience as actors of development and to exchange and answer the questions of the government representatives. This session aimed to discuss the long term objectives for sustaining diaspora organisations/interventions. During their presentation, the diaspora representatives insisted on two facts: representation and unity. It was clarified that diaspora associations only represent themselves, their organisations and goals - and are not 'democratic institutions' just as any association/NGO. Regarding the unity of diaspora organisations, it is rather an expectation of institutions which reduces complexities whereby diversity should be defended.

It has been repeated that despite there is a general consensus that diasporas are actors and factors of development, diasporas need to demonstrate their own claims by making their engagement more efficient, effective, and increase its impact.

The governments of origin called for a co-responsibility towards diaspora associations. They call for the need for joint efforts with Partner States in the North to support the integration of migrants and for putting in place favourable conditions for diaspora interventions to take place. Governments need the diaspora to be organised in associations and in networks. They must also support these platforms by developing policies and creating incentives.

While there is general consensus on the need for sustaining diaspora organisations, as these are means for fostering integration, the session missed the opportunity for discussing the vision – and different visions - behind this support, disentangling the ultimate objective of governmental institutions for raising migrants' competences and professionalisation paths in the long run.

Session IV: Interconnections between North-South and South-South Cooperation in the area of migration

Trilateral development cooperation is defined by the OECD as partnerships between DAC donors and pivotal countries (providers of South-South Cooperation) to implement development cooperation programmes/projects in beneficiary countries (recipients of development aid). Four virtues and merits of South–South and Triangular Cooperation can be sketched: 1) the benefits accrued from sharing knowledge and experience among peers to find more effective solutions; 2) sharing appropriate technology and experience that can promote convergence with North–South Cooperation goals; 3) respecting real ownership, with the South in the driver’s seat; and 4) developing countries rapidly emerging as new donors (HDR2013).

The discussion focused on finding viable and experimental domains within which trilateral/triangular cooperation could represent an interesting framework for addressing also migration matters.

Some areas have been identified such as for example concerning the definition and drafting of the migration strategy and action plan of a specific country in the South, utilising the expertise of the North – as in the case of Mali - to be transferred at the South-South level. This exercise would re-affirm the relevance of policy coherence as well as emerging issues relevant in different contexts such as urbanisation and migration.

Other areas of intervention have been identified by Partner States for example concerning mechanisms of evaluation and impact assessments, concerning the exchange of scholarships including at the South-South level, furthermore regarding the integration of migrants/diasporas in the South. On this last point, the transformation of countries from emigrating, into transit and more recently into immigration countries was discussed. Possible triangulations could be identified also in this domain in terms of exchanging experiences between South-South partners.

An important methodological issue was raised for identifying clear criteria and indicators for selecting practices and countries that can triangulate one with the other appropriately and coherently. Sound research and analysis is needed for this purpose.

Finally the importance of involving in this exchange regional economic communities was noted, the need for institutional coordination in each country, by for example establishing working groups on migration was stressed, and the importance to value best practices at the regional level was highlighted.

Closing Session

The workshop was closed by statements from the Swiss representative, and the AMEDIP Partner Agencies (ICMPD and IOM).

The representative of Mali offered to create a network of AMEDIP Partner States, through which the countries representatives would exchange their expertise, present a common programme, and monitor policies developments in migration and development. This proposition offers sustainable perspectives to

the AMEDIP and acknowledges the will from the AMEDIP Partner States to reinforce the cooperation in a long-term perspective.

Recommendations

The following recommendations represent issues that have been discussed and raised during the AMEDIP workshop and around which consensus was found. These elements easily translate in a *to-do-list* for all parties involved – at various levels – in the MTM AMEDIP project:

- Identify mechanisms for sharing knowledge to be conveyed within institutions/governments.
- In times of crisis value and build on existing projects and dialogues such as the MTM AMEDIP, which represents a unique platform of dialogue between the South and the North, the South and South, and the North and the North. In this context, emerging and rising issues relevant for all Partner States can be shared such as the link between youth and mobility while also discuss and jointly contribute to coherent public policies on these topics.
- Following from the previous recommendation Partner States should actively contribute for the realisation of the Manual that will be drafted at the end of the project. This exercise will represent a unique opportunity for presenting interesting practices of South-South Cooperation. This active participation should fall on AMEDIP Partner States that will have the opportunity to capitalize from this direct experience, while also raising a stronger ownership of the process.
- Recognise and value the leading role countries of origin can play for making conditions for mobility possible and for setting up incentives for nationals living abroad for example. These elements further motivate the call countries of origin can launch for co-responsibility on behalf of donor countries.
- Follow up on innovative partnership with local/territorial level, communities, and any other actors at the local level.
- Integrate the migration component into national development plans and enhance a vertical dialogue between the national and the local level.
- Link the portability of social rights issue with existing OECD bilateral conventions on the elimination of double taxation.
- Work in partnership with countries in the North to support the integration of migrants.
- A specific area of intervention is represented also by migration statistics/profiles.
- Reach out – by thinking and listing incentives and opportunities – towards diasporas to invest back home.
- Discuss and question in appropriate forums long term governments' objectives (both in countries of origin and destination) for sustaining diaspora organisations/interventions.
- Imagine and identify domains whereby triangular/trilateral cooperation could be an interesting framework to work with for migration matters and produce clear, sound, and coherent criteria for selecting possible country candidates to triangulate with.

- Design an evaluation and assessment mechanism to measure the impact of migrants' inputs (financial, economic, scientific, cultural, sports,...)
- Find ways for advancing AMEDIP's sustainability beyond the end of the project. In this direction take into serious consideration the idea launched at the end of the workshop to create a network between countries and administrations involved in the project which can exchange their expertise, produce common programmes, and monitor policies developments in Migration and Development. This standpoint would demonstrate that this project/dialogue has been capable to generate a process within which partnerships are established in a long term perspective that goes beyond the duration/resources of a project.