



## **Interregional workshop on International Migration**

### **“Strengthening capacities to deal with international migration: “Examining development, institutional and policy aspects of migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean”**

#### **CONCEPT NOTE**

#### **1. Background**

International migration is a global phenomenon and represents one of the key issues in the current political agenda at the global, regional and national levels. The number of international migrants has increased, with South-South migration being more significant in terms of stock. Migration has significant consequences on living standards and well-being of both origin and destination countries, and more in general on their social and economic development. Moreover, international migration intersects in different ways with human rights.

Topics such as trends in South-North and South-South intraregional and interregional migration; magnitude, impact and dynamics of remittances; female migration and its relation with gender equality; migration of qualified workers and migration governance have attracted substantial attention of policy makers and scholars. International migration has become a primary area of policy concern at the national and international level. The United Nations High-Level Dialog (HLD) on International Migration and Development conducted in September 2006, contributed towards raising awareness and attributing importance to the subject of migration.

Starting from 2009, the five United Nations Regional Commissions – Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) —, in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), implemented a joint interregional project on “Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact”.

The project is led by ECLAC and financed by the United Nations Development Account. It aims at providing countries with tools that allow them to maximize the benefit from migration, thus decreasing the negative consequences affecting migrants. The project also seeks to strengthen national institutional capacities so that international migration issues can be incorporated into national development strategies. Considering that currently information and data on migration are fragmented and heterogeneous, and availability and accessibility varies across countries, specific objectives of the project are to improve quality and availability of information and to create intra and inter-regional networks to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices between countries and regions.

The Inter-regional workshop on International Migration is jointly organized by ECLAC, ECE and ECA, as part of the inter-regional activities of the above mentioned project.

## **2. Objectives**

The main objective of the workshop is to contribute towards strengthening capacities of countries to design national migration policies, maximising benefits and minimizing negative aspects for the origin, transit and destination countries and the migrants. The meeting aims at promoting the exchange of national and regional experiences and good practices. It is planned to hold discussions on the emerging aspects of migration dynamic between the three regions, highlighting those with impact on development, and analyzing innovative institutional and regulatory aspects of interregional migration.

## **3. Venue and date**

The Inter-regional Workshop will take place from 22 to 23 September 2011 at the *Palais des Nations* in Geneva, Switzerland.

## **4. Participants**

This workshop will be attended by government delegates from selected countries of the three regions, experts on diverse migration issues and representatives from the civil society and international agencies.

## **5. Topics**

The topics to be addressed in the workshop are within the framework of the project “*Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact*”. The sessions will be organized based on two main interrelated thematic areas:

- Newly and emerging aspects of migration dynamic between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean and its relation to human rights and development, taking into consideration aspects

such as: gender relations; the role of remittances; changes in labor insertion of migrants; migration of children and older persons; integration, entailment and rights of migrants; socio-economic and health conditions among migrant people; as well as an evaluation of the effect of the global crisis on interregional migration, including return migration and migrants' socio-economic conditions.

- Institutional and regulatory agreements in the field of international migration in selected countries from Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, including topics such as social integration; anti-discrimination; regularization programs; transnational communities; the fight against trafficking and smuggling of persons and other relevant aspects within the framework of the obligations assumed by states that could be considered as good practices in terms of handling migration issues on the basis of the principles for human dignity and respect.

## **6. Organization of Work**

The workshop will consist of six work sessions and two round tables. The sessions will include the presentations and discussions of background documents elaborated by selected experts invited by the Regional Commissions. A number of country delegates and civil society representatives will also be invited to present and share their ideas and experience. The roundtables will provide additional opportunities for a wider debate and exchange of ideas.

**Sessions 1 and 2** will address "*African and Latin American migration to Europe*". In the first session, two background documents will be presented by experts and then commented by a discussant:

- *African and Latin American people in the Southern European Countries: Italy, Spain and Portugal* by Andreu Domingo (Universidad Autónoma, Barcelona, Spain) and Daniela Vono (Institute for Longitudinal Educational Research –INBIL-, Bamberg University, Germany);
- *Migration patterns and immigrant characteristics in North-western Europe*, by Helga De Valk (Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute - NIDI).

During the second session, delegates from three countries (one per region) will make a presentation on national experiences and relevant aspects of interregional migration in their respective countries.

**Sessions 3 and 4** will address "*International migration in Africa and institutional frameworks*".

In session 3 the main aspects of the background document *African International Migration: trends and institutional framework from the perspective of selected countries*, by John O. Oucho (African Migration and Development Policy Centre – AMADPOC, Nairobi), will be presented and later commented by a discussant. In session 4, delegates from two African countries will make a presentation on national experiences and relevant aspects of regional and interregional migration in their respective countries, which will be accompanied by the viewpoint of a representative of civil society.

**Sessions 5 and 6** will address "*Recent African migration to South America and institutional frameworks*". In session 5 the main aspects of the corresponding background document - *Recent African Immigration to South America: The cases of Argentina and Brasil in Regional Context*, by Marcela Cerrutti (CENEP and CONICET, Argentina) and Pedro Marcelino (York University, Toronto, Canada) - will be presented and later on commented by a discussant. In session 6, delegates

from two Latin American countries will make a presentation on national experiences and relevant aspects of African migration to their respective countries, which will be accompanied by the viewpoint of a representative of civil society.

**Roundtable 1** will bring together representatives from international organizations and civil society, delegates from governments and one representative of a regional commission, to discuss about *“Migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean: challenges and opportunities”*.

Similarly, **Roundtable 2** will bring together representatives from international organizations and civil society, government delegates and a representative from DESA, to discuss about *“Migration between Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean: advances and gaps in institutional arrangements”*.

A final report will be prepared and posted on the project’s website as an outcome of the workshop.

## 7. Focal Points

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