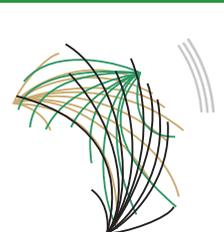




**Executive
Summary**

**Migration Policy Framework
for Africa and Plan of Action
(2018 – 2030)**



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Executive Summary

During their 74th Ordinary Session in July 2001, The Organisation of African Union Council of Ministers called for the development of a migration policy framework in light of the development potential and challenges posed by migration. This resulted in the AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA), which was adopted in Banjul, the Gambia, in 2006. Ten years later, in 2016, the AU Commission (AUC) conducted an evaluation of the MPFA regarding its efficiency, its implementation challenges and opportunities that could be seized, relevance and whether there was a need for revision. At their meeting of November 2016, AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) acknowledged that migration is dynamic, and that migration trends and patterns on the Continent had changed over the past ten years. In line with their recommendation for the AUC to update the MPFA and formulate a plan of action for its implementation, the “Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018 – 2030)” is a revised, strategic document that builds on the achievements and challenges of the previous MPFA to guide Member States and RECs in the management of migration, reflecting the current migration dynamics in Africa. It is the result of an inclusive and participatory process involving different departments at the AUC.

The revised MPFA takes into account AU priorities, policies, Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and international migration management policies and standards. It provides Member States and RECs with comprehensive policy guidelines and principles to assist them in the formulation and implementation of their own national and regional migration policies in accordance with their priorities and resources.

In addition to eleven cross-cutting issues, the revised MPFA identifies the following eight key pillars:

- Migration Governance
- Labour Migration and Education
- Diaspora Engagement
- Border Governance
- Irregular Migration
- Forced Displacement
- Internal Migration and
- Migration and Trade

Better **migration governance** as the overarching objective of the MPFA aims at facilitating safe, orderly and dignified migration. It advocates for the socio-economic well-being of migrants and society through compliance with international standards and laws. The security of migrants’ rights and addressing the migration aspects of crises are key elements. Better migration governance can furthermore be achieved through the development of evidence-based policies through a “whole of government” approach.

In terms of **labour migration and education** the MPFA calls for the establishment of regular, transparent, comprehensive and gender-responsive **labour migration policies, legislation and structures** at national and regional levels. The AUC’s 2015 Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP) promotes the facilitation of the free movement of workers as a means of advancing regional integration and development. Key activity areas of the JLMP include skills portability and mutual recognition of qualifications, as well as Labour Market Information Systems which support market driven skills development and skills pooling across the Continent. By gaining new skills, student and labour mobility can result in “brain gain” and “brain circulation”. In addition to the JLMP, the MPFA recommends the creation



of accountable labour recruitment and admission systems, and the promotion of standardised bilateral labour agreements to ensure the protection of migrant workers and facilitation of remittance transfers. The framework advocates for the integration of migrants into the labour market and the education and training sector, as well as the provision of social protection and social security benefits for labour migrants while working abroad, as well as upon their return.

Regional cooperation and harmonisation of labour migration policies can foster regular labour migration to meet the supply and demand of domestic and foreign labour markets, promote the enforcement of labour standards, and reduce recourse to irregular migration. In this regard the framework recommends the harmonization and strengthened implementation of AU and REC free movement provisions related to residence and establishment, as well as enhanced cooperation among Member States in regard to the facilitation of free movement.

Countering **brain drain** and mitigating its effects on national economies are important policy objectives for African countries. To this end the framework urges States to encourage its nationals abroad to contribute to the development of their countries of origin through financial, skills, technology and knowledge transfers. It further recommends the implementation of brain gain strategies such as temporary return programmes for Diasporas to alleviate skill shortages in critical sectors and foster skills development; and the facilitation of the regional and continental mobility of professionals.

Remittances can improve people's resilience to shocks and even offer a pathway out of poverty through investments in education,

health and income-generating activities. Therefore, identifying ways to maximise the developmental impact of remittances, improving the efficiency of remittance transfer mechanisms, and reducing remittance transfer costs are topics of growing importance to African countries.

Diaspora Engagement is one key aspect of fostering the migration-development nexus. Strategies in this respect include instituting policies and environment frameworks that foster Diaspora participation in the development of the Continent and their countries of origin. Some these initiatives include establishing national Diaspora focal points and/or agencies to manage Diaspora affairs, conferring dual citizenship on nationals abroad, Diaspora mapping, better investment protection for Diasporas, and the facilitation of the transfer of knowledge by Diasporas to countries of origin.

Border Governance refers to a system of norms, institutions and the collaboration of states, society and non-state actors around border management. Further, it goes beyond the mere management of borders, which relates to the implementation of parts of this system, and comprises the rules, techniques and procedures for regulating the movement of people and goods across borders. The trend towards the securitisation of migration and borders should not engender the closing of borders and hamper integration efforts in Africa. Rather, cross-border cooperation in security, immigration and development needs to be intensified to allow for the effective governance of borders and stimulate economic integration.

Due to a number of factors, including increased barriers to regular migration and the need for international protection, **irregular migration** is increasing. Irregular migration is closely linked to migrant

smuggling and other forms of international organised crime, including human trafficking, and can adversely affect national and international stability and security.

In regards to **migrant smuggling** strengthened transnational cooperation and legal frameworks are essential responses. Migrant smuggling can be prevented by expanding legal migration pathways and raising awareness on its dangers. It is furthermore recommended to enhance the identification of migrant smuggling cases, and the investigation and prosecution of migrant smugglers while ensuring the protection of the smuggled migrants' rights.

The core element of **human trafficking** is the fact that the victim is deprived of her/his will and is forced into slavery-like conditions or involuntary servitude. It is thus imperative to improve the identification of trafficked persons and grant them protection and assistance. In this regard Member States are urged to align their national legislations and counter trafficking strategies with international conventions and protocols. Further recommended strategies include prevention through awareness-raising among the public as well as state actors, providing assistance and protection to trafficked persons, improving prosecution and investigation, and increasing international cooperation and partnership.

Effective and sustainable **return and readmission** of irregular migrants requires cooperation and mutual understanding between states of origin and destination, and should not jeopardise the free movement of persons on the Continent. **Reintegration** refers to the process of reincorporating a person into their community or state of origin, and may, inter alia, involve socio-economic assistance and cooperation with the

community the person is returning to. Reintegration can be an important strategy to prevent further irregular migration.

Addressing irregular migration and establishing comprehensive migration management systems can contribute to enhancing **national and international security and stability**. However, it remains paramount to uphold the rights of all migrants, asylum seekers and refugees during all stages of the migration process, and enhanced security measures should serve to uphold these rights.

Forced Displacement is addressed in terms of the specific groups that constitute displaced people: refugees and asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and stateless persons. A number of strategies, including integration and reintegration as well as **crisis prevention, management and conflict resolution**, play an important role in addressing displacement. Since forced displacement is closely linked to conflict, both as a consequence and as a potential cause of further conflict, it should be addressed through national, regional and continental dialogue and cooperation, with a view to prevent and manage conflict.

African States have a long tradition of hospitality towards **refugees and asylum-seekers** and have developed legal frameworks governing aspects of refugee protection specific to Africa. Nevertheless, Member States are encouraged to enhance national efforts to fulfil international protection obligations. This also includes enabling appropriate and humane screening of asylum-seekers at borders, referral to competent authorities, providing durable solutions (voluntary repatriation, local integration, resettlement) to refugees, and addressing



the root causes of refugee movements (including conflict and political instability).

Internal Displacement of populations can occur as a result of terrorism, conflict, natural disasters or climatic conditions, and its prevention may require transnational cooperation. Member States adopted the Kampala Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa to comprehensively address the plight of IDPs. It recognises that the primary responsibility to prevent internal displacement, as well as to protect and assist IDPs, lies with national authorities. Safeguarding humanitarian access to IDPs, promoting livelihood and resilience activities as well as alternatives to encampment through integration into host communities are recommended.

Internal Migration is impacting the population distribution in Africa in important ways, with rural-urban migration and the process of urbanization being its most significant feature. If not effectively managed, urbanisation can have adverse consequences for migrants and other urban populations alike, by straining the existing urban infrastructure and services. To leverage the economic and social development potentials that urbanisation represents, Member States need to strengthen the local dimension of migration policies and strategies.

Regarding **migration and trade**, the movement of persons for trade, especially short-term migration, is becoming of increasing relevance. In this context, the implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area and the AU Free Movement of Persons Protocol should aid trade, continental integration and development.

In addition to the above key thematic areas, the MPFA also addresses the following eleven cross-cutting issues: Migration and Development; Migration Data and Research; Human Rights of Migrants; Principles of Non-Discrimination; Migration, Poverty and Conflict; Migration and Health; Migration and Environment; Migration and Gender; Migration, Children, Adolescents and Youths; Migration and Older Persons; and Inter-State and Inter-Regional Cooperation.

Annexed to the MPFA is a Plan of Action (2018 – 2030) which documents activities that will be undertaken by the AU Commission during the plan period in an effort to facilitate the coherent management of migration on the Continent within the framework of the MPFA. It does this by focusing on specific topics or aspects of the themes that are identified in the MPFA, and takes into consideration work that is already underway on the Continent and seeks to forge synergies with institutions that are working on the identified activities.

