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**The AU Member States Workshop
On Reintegration of Returning Migrants into the Labour Market**

Dakar, Senegal

22 – 23 October 2018

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Introduction

1. The workshop on reintegration of returning migrants into the labour market was held in Dakar, Senegal on 22 – 23 October 2018. The objective of the meeting was to provide a platform for open exchange and dialogue on reintegration of returning migrants into the labour market and to deliberate on the needs of stakeholders involved.
2. The delegates from the Ministries of Labour of the following 15 AU Member States were present at the Workshop: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guinea, Lesotho, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The meeting was also attended by two Regional Economic Communities, namely; COMESA and IGAD, as well as by representatives from the following organizations: Africa Centre/Ireland, ITUC – Africa and OA TUU, ILO and IOM, NEPAD Agency – West Africa Region.
3. Dr Jeremy Tinga Ouedraogo, Head of NEPAD Agency, West Africa Region, on behalf of the African Union Commission (AUC), welcomed participants and thanked the Government of Senegal for hosting the meeting. He reiterated the centrality of the workshop, emphasizing the need for a whole of government and society approach and for *more sustainable reintegration*, exploring the potential interventions of a multiplicity of labour institutions such as labour inspections, public employment services, labour market information systems, social security institutions, employers and workers' organizations; while at the same time putting in perspective the role of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). He numerated achievements of the AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance (JLMP), particularly on social security access and portability for migrant workers, skills recognition and portability, operationalization of the Labour Migration Advisory Committee (LMAC) and the Labour Migration Statistics Report. In his conclusion, Dr Ouedraogo informed that the outcome of the workshop would feed into a broader workshop on reintegration being organized by the AUC and EC to hold on 27 – 28 November in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He thanked the AUC partners on labour migration management, including ILO, IOM and ECA, as well as the GIZ, which supported the workshop and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden for its outstanding support to the implementation of a three-year priority project of the JLMP.
4. H.E. Mr. Samba Sy, Minister of Labour, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations and Relations with the Institutions representing the Government of Senegal, officially opened the workshop. In his opening statement, he emphasized the importance of the theme of the workshop at this important moment in Africa, when migration is taking a central stage, particularly highlighting the situation in Libya. Reiterating the need for Member States to take necessary measures to develop national strategies and services to assist their returning nationals. He informed the workshop that the Government of Senegal was developing a national whole of government and society migration policy aimed at ensuring effective governance of migration issues, while

optimizing its benefits towards sustainable development and leveraging interaction between migration, governance and development. He noted that the Government of Senegal would give particular attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop for inclusive and sustainable economic development.

Deliberations on current Reintegration efforts

5. The AUC informed the meeting of the various continental policy frameworks related to reintegration of returning migrants into the labour market as contained in the 2018 Migration Policy Framework for Africa, the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, AfCFTA and the Joint Labour Migration Programme. The AUC also presented its efforts on addressing the Situation of Stranded Migrants in Libya under AU-EU-UN Tripartite Task Force framework.
6. The IOM also presented its strategy on youth, employment and migration focusing on its three-pronged approach that includes promoting intra-regional labour market integration and mobility, fostering peace and security and reinforcing transnational network/diaspora engagement, as well as the strategy on migrant protection and reintegration for the case of Libya.
7. Furthermore, representatives of AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) also shared their experiences on return and reintegration programmes being implemented in their respective countries. Advanced experiences in Nigeria and Senegal were used to support the reflection and draw lessons. Group work was organized to conduct in-depth analysis of ongoing reintegration actions and framing of operational reintegration systems in labour markets.

Recommendations:

Following the ensuing in-depth deliberations, the subsequent recommendations were reached;

8. Member states with national labour migration policies that do not take into account provisions for returning migrants are advised to develop and streamline their policies based on existing continental frameworks such as the 2018 Migration Policy Framework for Africa, Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, AfCFTA, and Joint Labour Migration Programme, as well as national and international rules and regulations in line with labour migration governance.;
9. Strong strategies should be developed to promote regular labour migration and mobility within existing partnership frameworks with the EU, Asia, Americas, Gulf countries, etc.;

10. Member States were also encouraged to adopt and ratify existing international labour standards (notably ILO Convention 122, 143, and 189), continental and regional policy frameworks, so as to fast track their implementation;
11. Member States to put in place and implement macro-economic and employment policies that address root causes of migration for sustainable reintegration, in particular unemployment, underemployment, and prevailing non-decent work, especially in the informal economy;
12. MS to set up comprehensive reintegration plans in labour markets, embracing all migration steps with pre-departure, post departure and return /reintegration systems engaging social partners as key stakeholders, employers and workers through their organizations
13. Furthermore efforts to be expended towards strengthening cooperation and partnerships with the Tripartite, Federal Governments, Local Governments and Communities, and promote fair recruitment practices to curb all forms of irregular migration;
14. Enhancing synergy building and coordination between and amongst different government ministries and agencies dealing with aspects of reintegration was also overemphasized as key to successful implementation of reintegration programmes, as well as facilitation of exchange platforms for returning migrants associations;
15. Member states are also encouraged to take responsibility and ownership of reintegration efforts of their returning nationals, including in design and implementation of multi-stakeholders coordinated reintegration programmes in labour markets and use of diaspora networks and labour attachés in embassies of main countries of destination; They are encouraged to support each other by sharing labour attaché services in the same region, including through RECs coordination;
16. Member states should put in place a framework to recognize and reinforce the skills of returning migrants, in order to facilitate their access to labour markets in their countries of origin. In doing so the labour market institutions such as the Public Employment Services, can establish cooperation with their counterparts in countries of destination of their nationals In order to achieve this, Member States are encouraged to enhance their capacity on negotiation, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement;
17. Member states to improve the regulation of the interventions of the Private Placement Agencies for promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers;
18. There is a need to set up an inclusive reintegration platform that takes into consideration governance institutions, civil society, social partners, corporate industry and the private sector to encourage return through awareness and advocacy;

19. It is necessary to set up a comprehensive data and information system on returning migrants in order to facilitate better understanding of returning migrant profiles, including knowledge, skills, qualifications, experiences etc. so as to aid design of appropriate response mechanisms for their integration into labour markets;
20. AUC, RECs, Member States and relevant UN agencies are encouraged to share best practices on management of returning migrants, support capacity building of labour market institutions and other non-market actors in managing reintegration of returning migrants, as well as develop effective communication strategies, involving social movement;
21. RECs to take lead on regional policies and programmes in support to the efforts of their Member States for impactful interventions, in close collaboration and coordinated with their communities.
22. It is necessary to support cooperation between Member States under the AU intra-Africa technical assistance platform, to build and enhance capacity of Member States and RECs, in collaboration with AUC, RECs and development partners, to enhance the capacity of the labour market institutions in labour migration governance, building on experience of countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria and Senegal;
23. AUC should support MS and RECs in the reintegration efforts, in close collaboration and coordination with its partners.

Way Forward

24. Member States should actively participate in the forthcoming meeting of the AUC and the EU on reintegration to be held in November 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
25. The AUC should present the outcome of this workshop during the above-mentioned meeting.