

## Southern African Development Community (SADC)



# Labor Migration Statistics Report in Africa *Second edition: Regional Migration Profile*

SECOND EDITION OF THE AFRICA LABOR MIGRATION STATISTICS REPORT |

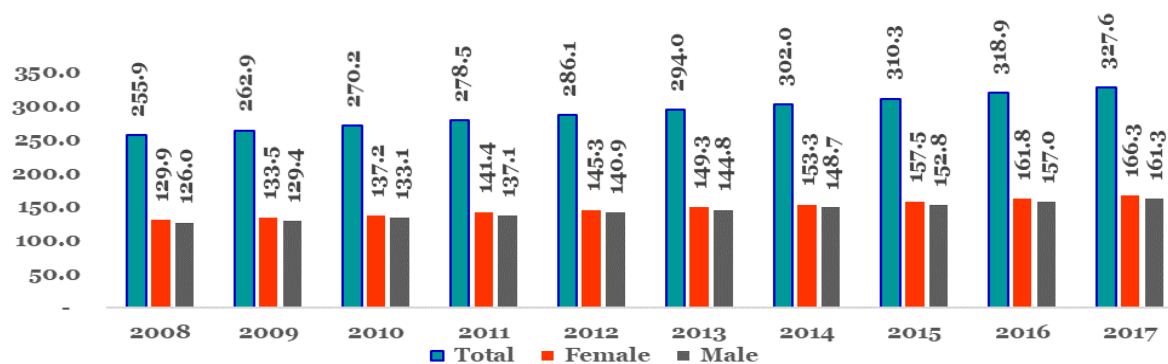
# Introduction

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a Regional Economic Community comprising 16 Member States namely; Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The region is committed to Regional Integration and poverty eradication within Southern Africa through economic development and ensuring peace and security.

## POPULATION

The total population of the region in the year 2017 was 327.6 million people with 166.3 million female and 161.3 million males (figure 1). This indicates a 28.0 percent increase in the population in the region in 2017 from the year 2008 and a 2.78 percent annual growth rate of the population in the region.

Figure 1. Population of SADC Region by sex, 2008-2017(millions)



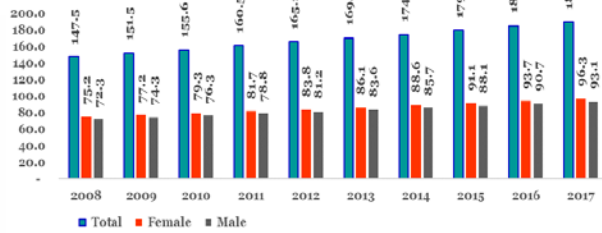
Source: JLMP Database, 2018

## WORKING AGE POPULATION

The working age population for the region increased from 147.5 million in 2008 to 189.4 million in 2017, representing an increase of 28.8 percent (Figure 2). The male working-age population for the region increased from 72.3 million in 2008 to 93.1 million in 2017 (an increase of 28.1 per cent),

while the female working-age population in the region increased from 75.2 million to 96.3 million over the same period (an increase of 28.1 per cent).

Figure 2. Working-age population in SADC region, by sex, 2008–17 (millions)

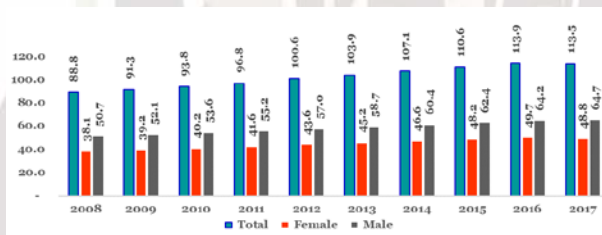


Source: JLM Database, 2018

## LABOUR FORCE AND LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

In 2017, the SADC region recorded a 27.8 percent increase on the labour force from 2008, that is from 88.8 million to 113.5 million. A similar trend is also noted for both male and female population in the labour force.

Figure 3. Labour force in SADC region, by sex, 2008–17 (millions)



Source: JLM Database, 2018

The number of female migrants in the labour force increased from 38.1 million to 48.8 million, thus representing a 28.0 percent increase while that of male migrants in the labour force increased from 50.7 million to 64.7 million, which represents 27.7 percent. It is evident that men continue to dominate in the labour force in the

region beside the fact that we have more women in the working age population than males. Therefore, there is ardent need to create policies to foster gender equity and equality at member states and regional levels.

The labour force participation rate of the region for the year 2017 was 59.9 percent with males having a higher proportion of 69.5 percent as compared to 50.5 percent for females. This trend is consistent over the years evaluated in this report with 2017 recording an 18.8 percent difference between males and females. This clearly indicates that the issues of gender parity or equity need to be addressed using more advanced and elaborate policies to bridge the gap in the region.

Figure 4. Labour force participation rate in SADC region by sex, 2017 (%)



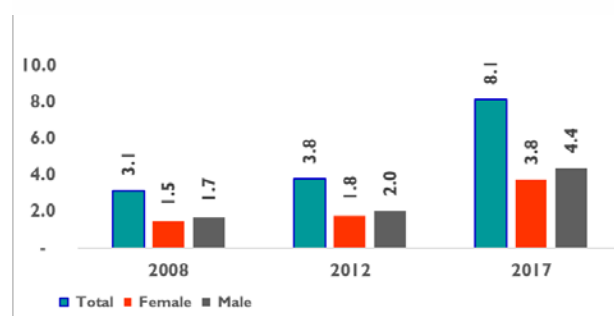
Source: JLM Database, 2018

# Stock of international Migrants

## TRENDS IN THE SIZE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT POPULATION

The trend of migrant workers in the SADC region has been increasing tremendously over the years. In 2008, there were 3.1 million migrants in the region while in 2017, there were 8.1 million migrants, which represents an increase of 160.9 percent.

Figure 5. International migrant population in SADC region by sex (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

Similarly, disaggregating the number of migrants by sex, male migrants continue to dominate over female migrants. In 2008 there were 1.7 million male migrants while in 2017 there were 3.8 million, an increase of 163.1 percent while that of female migrants in 2008 was 1.5 million and in 2017 there were 3.8 million female migrants, which represents an increase of 158.4 percent.

In the year 2017, South Africa was the leading country of destination for many migrant workers not only in the region but also in the continent accounting for 16.5 per cent of the total migrant population in Africa.

## WORKING-AGE INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS

The number of working age migrants in the SADC region has increased significantly over the last decade. In 2008, there were 2.6 million working age migrants in the region while in 2017, the region recorded 6.8 million migrants, which represents a 162.5 percent increase on the working age migrant population in the region.

Figure 6. Working-age international migrants in SADC region by sex (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

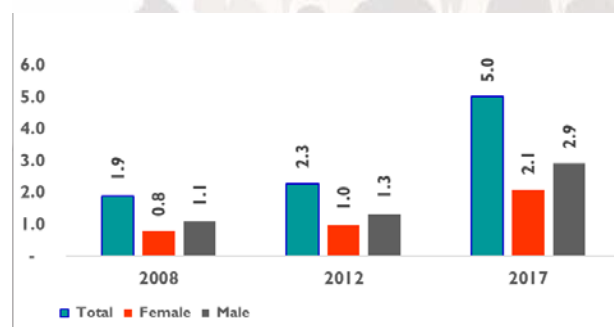
Similarly, in 2008 the number of working age migrant women in the region was recorded as 1.2 million and this has increased tremendously over the decade with 2017 recording 3.1 million working age population of female migrants in the region. On the other hand, the male population has also shown a similar trend over the decade with 2008 recording a total of 1.4 million and 2017 recording 3.7 million working age population of male migrants in the region. The predominance of males over females in the working age migrant population continue to depict a continuous trend over the years with 2017 alone reporting a 21.7

percent difference between male and female migrants in the region. This means that more needs to be done by policy makers in the region to put in place measures and policies that address issues of gender parity for equitable distribution of resources and opportunities to bridge the existing gap.

## INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

The number of international migrant workers in the SADC region in 2008 was 1.89 million while that of 2017 was 5.01 million, which represents an increase of 165.4 percent. A similar trend is shown when disaggregating the number of international migrant workers by sex. In 2008, there were 0.80 million female international migrant workers while in 2017 there were 2.09 million female international migrant workers. Also, the number of male migrant workers in the region in 2008 was 1.09 million while in 2017 there were 2.92 million male international migrant workers.

Figure 7. International migrant workers in SADC by sex, 2017 (millions)



Source: JLMP Database, 2018

Even though the number of female migrant workers in 2008 was low, this has continued to increase significantly over the years at an annual rate of 12.5 percent. However, this increment is still lower than that of their male counterparts who showed an annual increment of 13.3 percent. The male counterparts also occupy more roles in

the working migrant workers population with a significant difference of 39.3 percent the males and females in the year 2017. Therefore, there is more that needs to be done to bridge the gender gap in the work force between males and females for the international migrant workers in the region.

## YOUNG INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

Majority of the population in the region comprises of youths (15-35 years) spread across various member states. However, when assessing the number of youth migrant workers (15-35), many of the countries were not able to provide this information. For instance, in 2017, only Namibia was able to provide the number of youth migrant workers.

## ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

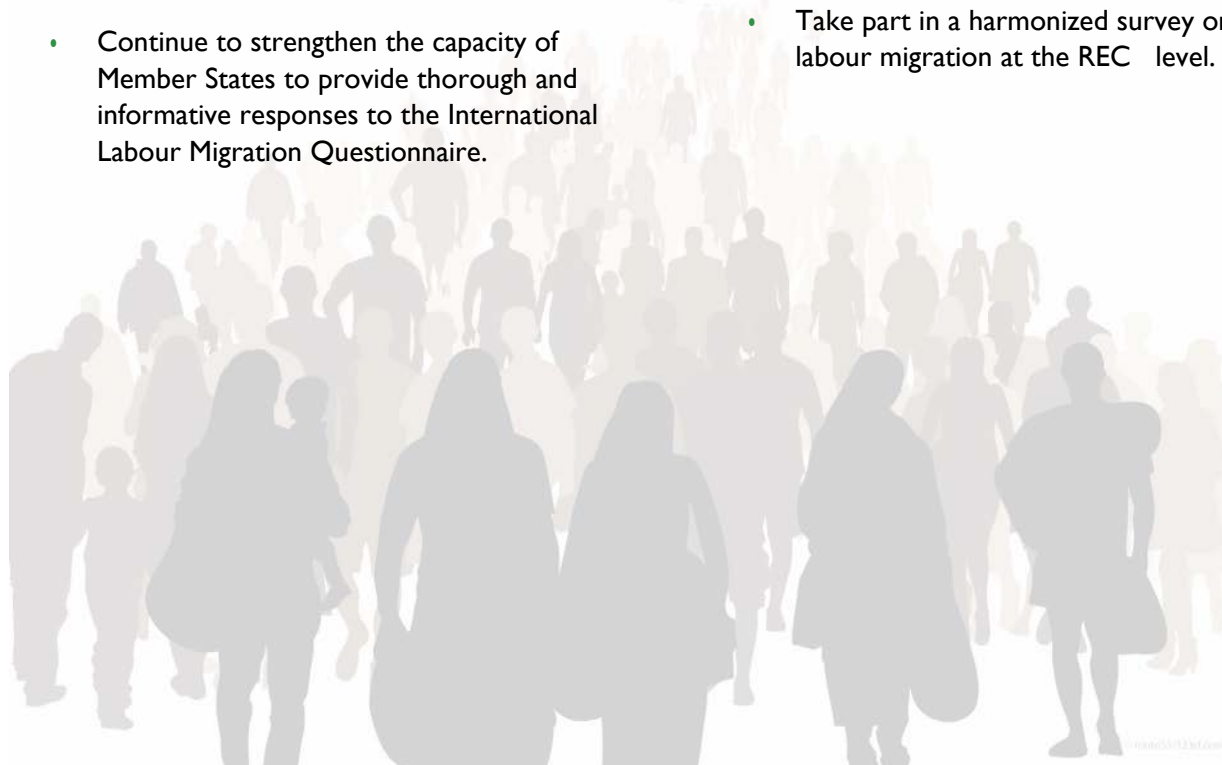
Additional migrant profiles were also assessed during the period 2008 to 2017. These include employment status, economic activity, occupation and level of education. However, in the SADC region very few countries were able to provide the information for the year 2016. For instance, disaggregating migrant workers by economic activities only Botswana, Namibia and Eswatini were able to provide this information, while in terms of occupation, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia collated this information. The disaggregation by education level was only provided by Namibia and south Africa. The need for these indicators is key to understanding migrant trends in the region. Therefore, more efforts and measures should be put in place to capacitate member states to produce data disaggregated by these key indicators for a better understanding of migrant needs, trends as well as their impact in the socio-economic aspect.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Bearing in mind the findings from this second edition of labour migration statistics report in Africa, but also the various constraints on the data analysis, the following recommendations were drawn up:

- Continue to strengthen the capacity of Member States to provide thorough and informative responses to the International Labour Migration Questionnaire.
- Monitor and coordinate the collection of data on labour migration within their blocs.
- Promote the use of administrative sources of labour migration data.
- Take part in a harmonized survey on labour migration at the REC level.



**African Union Commission**



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