

# THE JLMP DISPATCH

A quarterly update of key activities of the AU-ILO-IOM Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP)

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## INSIDE:

New Online Course  
Goes Live to Help  
African Member  
States Protect  
Migrant Workers

**P2**

African Journalists  
Mobilise to Rewrite  
Labour Migration  
Narrative

**P4**

RECs Take Step Towards  
Harmonising Skills for  
Labour Migration

**P5**





Media professionals and JLMP technical staff pose for a group photo at the start of the training.

Photo: AUC / Innocent Vuga

# AUC-IOM-ILO Launch Initiative on African Migration Reporting

*JLMP is implementing a series of initiatives aimed at enhancing skills in reporting on migration, data-driven storytelling, and incorporating migrant workers' perspectives into media narratives*

African journalists are sharpening their skills to tackle misinformation and sensationalism in migration reporting, thanks to a new initiative by the African Union, the International Organization for Migration, and the International Labour Organization.

Through the Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP), the three institutions are rolling out initiatives to enhance reporting on migration, promote data-driven storytelling, and ensure migrant workers' voices are reflected in media narratives.

A recent training in Addis Ababa, held on 12–13 March, brought together leaders from the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ), media professionals from across the continent, and officials from the AU Commission and IOM. The gathering focused on labour migration trends, policy frameworks, and strategies to counter misinformation.

Journalists in Africa often struggle with limited access to reliable data, which undermines the quality of reporting and fuels crisis-focused stories that ignore economic opportunities,

regional integration, and labour mobility.

“More often, the information we need to improve our reporting is limited, hard to locate, or outdated by the time it is obtained,” said FAJ General Secretary Louis Thomasi.

To address these gaps, JLMP is providing targeted training to help media professionals tell more accurate, balanced, and fact-checked stories.

Dr. Sabelo Mbokazi, Head of Labour, Employment and Migration at the AU Commission, urged African media to reclaim control of migration storytelling. “As a continent, we bear the responsibility of reclaiming our narrative—of reporting factually and accurately on migration and its multifaceted impact on Africa,” he said.

The initiative stems from a 2024 workshop in Dakar, Senegal, where 35 media organisations established a network to promote balanced coverage of migration.

JLMP is also working to improve journalists' access to migration data and resources, while respecting media independence. With migration shaping Africa's economic and social landscape, responsible and evidence-based journalism is more important than ever.



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# New Online Course Goes Live to Help African Member States Implement Migrant Welfare Programmes

*The course explores how African Member states can establish and implement national Migrant Welfare Programmes, with a focus on regulatory frameworks, institutional coordination, and practical delivery. It also outlines the obligations of destination countries and the role of origin states in ensuring social security coverage for migrant workers and their dependents.*

An online training programme aimed at helping African countries improve protections for migrant workers has officially gone live, with the JLMP calling it a major boost to efforts tackling exploitation and abuse.

Launched on 6 March 2025, the course—developed by the JLMP—is now available via the IOM E-Campus. It is designed for government officials, policymakers, and practitioners involved in labour migration and social protection.

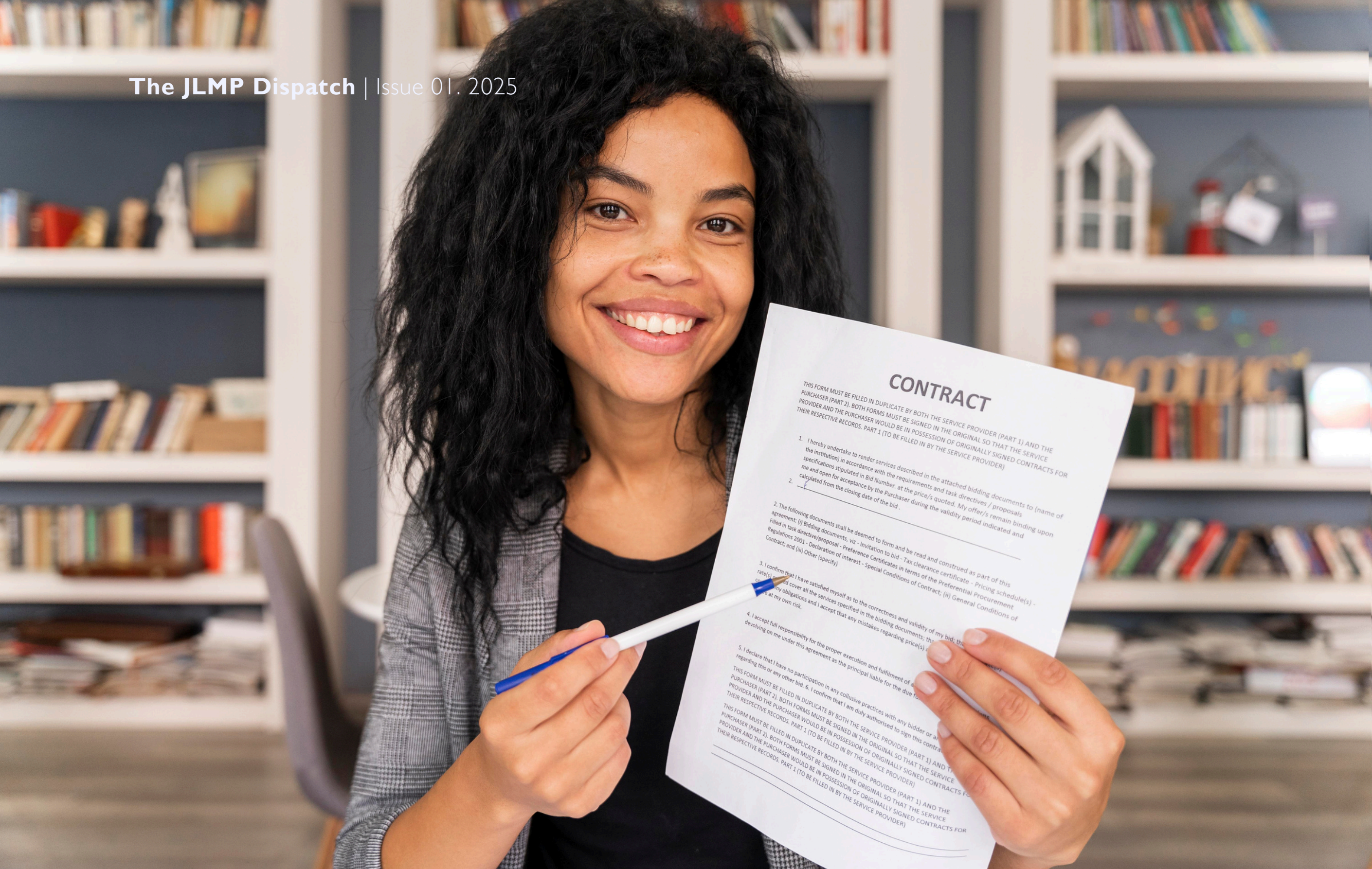
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of destination countries and the role of origin states in ensuring social security coverage for migrant workers and their dependents.

With seven modules, the course offers step-by-step guidance through the entire migration cycle, from pre-departure to return, while addressing the systemic barriers migrant workers often face, including limited access to support, exploitation, and legal vulnerability.

The launch comes as concerns grow over the treatment of African migrants abroad. Effective welfare programmes are seen as essential for protecting rights, promoting inclusive development, and ensuring that migration works for both individuals and the countries they move between.





# Uganda Boosting Ethical Recruitment with Global Standards

*According to data from Uganda's Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, between January 2022 and December 2023, a total of 120,459 Ugandan workers were deployed abroad through licensed recruitment agencies. The majority of these workers, approximately 89.1%, were employed in Saudi Arabia. Women constituted 77.5% of the migrant workforce during this period.*

Uganda is taking key steps towards strengthening ethical recruitment. The East African country, together with the JLMP conducted a three-day training on global recruitment standards, in Entebbe from 24 to 26 March. The workshop brought together 37 stakeholders, including representatives from 20 private recruitment agencies (PRAs), key government ministries, and labour institutions.

At the centre of the training was the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS), IOM's flagship initiative developed with partners from government, civil society, and the private sector. IRIS aims to make international recruitment fair for all — including migrant workers, recruiters, employers, and both origin and destination countries.

Participants were introduced to IRIS principles,

which promote migrant workers' rights, transparency in recruitment, the Employer Pays Principle, and stronger enforcement mechanisms. The training also covered IRIS priorities such as capacity building, migrant empowerment, regulation, certification of PRAs, and stakeholder dialogue.

Stakeholders discussed ways to curb unethical recruitment practices and improve migrant protection. Key recommendations included establishing a regional platform for sharing best practices, and implementing Uganda's Ethical Recruitment National Action Plan as a model for other AU Member States.

The group called for expanding IRIS training through regional 'Training of Trainers' programmes and promoting formal PRA certification. They also stressed the need to engage destination countries in ethical recruitment efforts.





Media professionals participate in a panel discussion during the training session. Photo: ILO

# African Journalists Mobilise to Rewrite Labour Migration Narrative

*With an estimated 14.3 million migrant workers across Africa, the media's role is critical in shaping public opinion and influencing policy.*

A new generation of African journalists is being trained to challenge harmful stereotypes and reshape how migration is reported across the continent.

A total of 39 media professionals and union leaders from across Africa gathered in Kigali for a high-level three-day training workshop. The event was organised by the Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP) and the ILO's Better Regional Migration Management (BRMM) programme, with a focus on ethical, accurate, and gender-sensitive reporting on labour migration.

"Migration is not a crisis – it's a story of resilience, rights and opportunity," said Joel Akhator Odigie, General Secretary of ITUC-Africa. "If we don't tell our own stories, they'll be told for us – and often, wrongly."

The training provided practical tools to help journalists better understand legal frameworks and the lived experiences of migrant workers. It

also introduced participants to the Africa Labour Migration Journalists Network (ALMJN), a new initiative to boost cross-border collaboration and amplify migrant voices.

With an estimated 14.3 million migrant workers across Africa, experts say the media's role is critical in shaping public opinion and influencing policy. Ephrem Genet, JLMP-Lead Project Manager at the ILO, described journalists as "agents of change" who can shift narratives by telling migrant stories with empathy and a rights-based lens.

FAJ President Omar Faruk Osman called the workshop a "watershed moment" for public interest journalism. "This is how we break the cycle of misinformation and spotlight migrant workers' struggles and successes," he said.

The Kigali session builds on progress from last year's Dakar meeting, where journalists adopted the Dakar Communiqué – a framework for fair, dignified, and fact-based labour migration coverage.





# RECs Take Step Towards Harmonising Skills for Labour Migration

*The Tripartite Committees is expected to create a lasting platform for collaboration, helping workers—particularly migrants—carry their qualifications across borders with ease.*

In a move to enhance labour mobility across Africa, representatives from four Regional Economic Communities (RECs) met in Kigali, Rwanda, to forge a common approach to recognising skills and qualifications across borders.

The two-day “Inter-REC Dialogue and Experience Sharing on Skills for Migration and Mobility,” held from 4 to 5 March 2025, was convened under the Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP), to establish Tripartite Committees on Skills within each REC, aimed at promoting skills harmonisation and mutual recognition across the continent.

The timing of the dialogue aligns with the African Union’s Year of Education (2024) and ongoing continental efforts to strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), including the development of the African Continental Qualifications Framework.

Key was the creation of a Model Terms of Reference for the REC-level Tripartite Committees on Skills—a guiding document that will serve as a blueprint for each bloc to establish their own committees. These committees are expected to bring together governments,

employers, and workers’ organisations to collaborate on aligning occupational profiles and qualifications.

Participants also conducted a stocktaking exercise to assess current regional initiatives around skills recognition, allowing each REC to share achievements and identify persistent challenges. The platform fostered peer-to-peer exchange, with lessons drawn from ongoing efforts to advance recognition of professional qualifications and support economic integration.

Key outcomes included the joint identification of steps towards adopting the model TOR and mapping out the kind of technical support and resources required to roll out the initiative.

Presentations from each REC shed light on policy gaps, varying regional priorities, and the need for common frameworks to facilitate mobility. All agreed on the urgent need to remove bureaucratic barriers to skills portability and ensure that qualifications earned in one part of the continent are valued in another.

The establishment of Tripartite Committees is expected to create a lasting platform for collaboration, helping workers—particularly migrants—carry their qualifications across borders with ease.





# Ethiopia Launches Five-Year Strategy to Protect Migrant Workers

*The long-term impact of the strategy is expected to be wide-reaching. It includes improved regulation of Ethiopia's overseas employment sector, better protection for migrant workers, and expanded access to decent work opportunities abroad.*

The Ethiopian Overseas Employment Agencies Federation (EOEAF) has launched a new five-year strategy aimed at reshaping Ethiopia's labour recruitment sector and improving the protection of migrant workers. Developed in partnership with the Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP), the strategy focuses on enhancing the federation's institutional capacity, ensuring fair recruitment practices, and safeguarding workers' rights.

Founded in January 2020, EOEAF represents over 600 private employment agencies across Ethiopia. The federation's core mission is to promote fair labour practices in line with national laws and international standards, particularly the International Labour Organization's (ILO) guidelines for fair recruitment. The new strategy will strengthen the federation's ability to drive ethical reforms within the recruitment industry, positioning it as a key player in Ethiopia's labour migration governance.

A key aspect of the strategy is improving the federation's financial sustainability. By diversifying its income streams and increasing contributions from member agencies, EOEAF aims to build a more stable and unified organisation. This financial stability will enable the federation to

better advocate for migrant workers' rights.

The strategy also seeks to align Ethiopia's recruitment practices with both national regulations and international labour standards. By doing so, it aims to enhance the credibility of EOEAF's member agencies, promoting ethics and transparency in recruitment.

The long-term impact is expected to strengthen Ethiopia's overseas employment sector, offering better protection for migrant workers and expanding access to decent work opportunities abroad. As migration remains a significant employment avenue for many Ethiopians, this strategy is seen as a vital step in ensuring fair governance and improving conditions for migrant workers.

This is not just about financial viability—it's about ethics, transparency, and building a system that works for migrant workers," said a representative from EOEAF. "We want our practices to reflect the highest standards of fairness."

The initiative comes at a critical time, as migration remains a key avenue for employment for thousands of Ethiopians. Ensuring that this pathway is governed fairly and transparently has been a growing priority for the government and its development partners.



SOME OF OUR PARTNERS

JLMP activities are made possible with key support and collaboration from, but not limited to, the following:



The Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa (JLMP), implemented by the African Union (AU), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is structured to provide support / closely work with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States, and other relevant actors in labour migration with the aim of enhancing labour migration governance across the African continent.

Our Objective: Contribute to improved labour migration governance to achieve safe, orderly, and regular, migration in Africa as committed in relevant frameworks of the African Union (AU) and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as well as relevant international human rights, labour standards and other cooperation processes.

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