The AU Senior Officials and RECs Meeting to Validate the Draft 3 Year Action Plan on the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration in Africa.

MEETING REPORT

18-19 June, 2019
Best Western Hotel
Lusaka, Zambia
I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) is a major milestone in strengthening global migration governance, through the agreed Objectives that range from the prevention of irregular migration, protection of the vulnerable migrants to harnessing the benefits of safe and regular migration. This will mark the beginning of a new era in management of migration not only at the Global level but also in Africa.

2. While the GCM is not a binding policy document, it allows each country the freedom to implement any of the objectives at their pace and as they deem relevant. However, the Compact will not become a reality unless each Member State takes action. This means that national strategies on migration are developed and implemented; sub regional level policies related to migration are clarified and implemented; and coordinated discussions and efforts between countries at the sub regional level occur.

3. It is in this regard that the African Union Commission together with partners, including the relevant UN agencies under the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM), organized a Senior Officials meeting in Lusaka, Zambia on 17-18 June, 2019 to consider a draft 3 Year Implementation Plan of Action. This meeting was aimed at guiding and supporting Member States in the implementation of the GCM in Africa.

4. The main objective of the meeting was to consider the Draft Plan of Action for their inputs and validation. The meeting further provided an opportunity for AU Member States, RECs and other participants to be updated on the latest development on the implementation of the GCM at the international level. Present the draft Plan of Action for consideration by Member States and RECs to guide the implementation of the GCM in Africa for next 3 years. The meeting also provided an opportunity for participants to identify capacity building priorities, based on the continental priorities for technical support and joint resource mobilisation and also discuss and agree on the continental, regional and national coordination, reporting and follow up mechanism on the GCM.

5. This Draft Plan of Action takes into account African migration priorities, policies, Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It provides Member States and RECs with comprehensive guideline to assist them in the formulation and implementation of GCM objectives in accordance with their priorities and resources as committed during the negotiations.

II. IN ATTENDANCE

6. The meeting was attended by the following 29 AU Member States: Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Cote d’voire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania,
Morroco, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

7. The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were in attendance: Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Intergovernment Authority on Development (IGAD), Common Market for East and Southern African (COMESA).

8. The following UN Agencies were represented: UNECA, UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, UNAIDS and ILO.


III. OPENING SESSION

10. Ms Gloria Moreno-Fontes for the International Labour Organisation (ILO) highlighted the importance of the meeting and appreciated the role of AU in the development and implementation of the GCM process and specifically developing the draft Plan of Action for Implementation in Africa for the period 2019-2021. She informed the meeting that AUC has been a key partner with ILO, IOM and ECA for implementation of the Joint Labour Migration Program (JLMP) to foster labour migration and regime for development in Africa which fits well in the Draft Plan of Action.

11. Ms Marianne Lane, the Chief of Mission, IOM Zambia, provided the background of the Global Compact on Migration and the role played by IOM in supporting this process. She noted that migration being a global reality, the GCM Plan of Action is the first comprehensive framework in the continent that has been developed in an inter-organizational approach that provides blue print for RECs and Member States to promote prudent management of migration in the continent. She further reiterated that for the continent to harness development from a global perspective, there is need actionable steps and priorities on migration be taken that are specific to the region and adaptable, as accommodated by non-binding and flexibility GCM Plan of Action. She concluded by informing the meeting that the UN Network on migration, in which IOM coordinates, will work jointly with the AU Commission to support AU Member States and RECs to promote easy coordination of migration within the UN towards achieving safe regular and orderly migration effectively.

12. Mrs Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Director for Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division at UNECA, noted that the Draft Plan of Action of the GCM in Africa spells out a range of principles that fall under humanitarian, developmental, and human rights management; for enhanced comprehensive integrated handling of migration. She noted a wonderful working
relationship between the AUC and ECA and their contribution to the development of the Common African Position (CAP) on GCM and further providing technical support to AU Member States to actively engage in the negotiations in New York. She concluded her remarks by proposing the need to increase research for comprehensive knowledge on migration from an African perspective. Interventions to effectively improve migration situation should be developed in addition to improved research and capacity building in research. We should increase awareness of migration benefits in and out of Africa as well as to enhance legal migration and policy to improve migration.

13. Mr Sabelo Mbokazi, The Head of Labour, Employment and Migration Division, African Union Commission, reinforced the commitment of the African Union Commission to migration. He noted that the Common African Position on GCM paved way for advancement of the GCM process and has further enabled the GCM to deepen the implementation of the MPFA. He informed participants that in order to harness strategic benefit of research and data, AU is spearheading the establishment of data migration centres across the continent: Morocco, Mali and Centres. He reiterated AUC commitment to work in closer partnership with all stakeholders in supporting AU Member States and RECs in implementing the Draft Plan of Action once adopted by the STC.

14. Dr Chileshe Mulenga, The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, in the Government of Zambia, who was the Chief Guest, thanked the African Union and its partners for organising the meeting in Zambia and further welcomed all participants to Lusaka City. He informed the meeting what his Government is undertaking in fulfilment of various migration related issues and noted that the Government of Zambia is keen to support the Plan of Action of the GCM once adopted. In order to achieve safer and regular migration in Africa, the PS noted that Africa should be cautious of external influence from strong nations with interests.

IV. SESSION DELIBERATIONS, OUTCOME AND KEY RECOMMENDATION

A. Session 1: Promoting fact-based and data-driven migration discourse, policy and planning, including the Establishment of Research, Data and information mechanism and infrastructure in Africa (GCM Priority 1)

14. The following are General comments were made on this session:

i. Need to involve all stakeholders especially the RECs and Partners which in turn would help in harmonization of activities across the continent.

ii. A proposal that AU develop matrix to guide reporting of indicators at continental, regional and national levels.

iii. Need to set timelines for activities, inputs and assigning of roles would enhance monitoring and evaluation.
iv. Need for capacity building for Member States in migration governance is essential for National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and Immigration departments. It was suggested to establish migration units in immigration departments.

15. On the substantive matters under Pillar/Priority 1 of the Draft Plan of Action on GCM the following inputs were provided in specific objectives:

**Objective 1: Research, Data and information sharing on migration is enhanced in the continent**

- **Activity 1:** Support the operationalization of regional migration observatories, research and data center in Mali, Morocco and Sudan
  - i. It was recommended to involve and update all RECs in the operationalisation of continental observatory centres for comprehensive intergration migration governance activities at continental level.
  - ii. The system should be coherent to ensure that national data centres feed into the continental data centers.
  - iii. It was also noted on the need to ensure data on migration is inclusive as possible including that of forced migrants.

- **Activity 2:** Strengthen the capacities of the African Union Institute of Statistics (STATAFRIC) to provide necessary assistance to AU Member States and RECs on Migration data
  - i. It was recommended to strengthen National Statistical Offices in Member States to include migration in surveys (eg census) at national level.

- **Activity 3:** Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to improve migration data at continental level
  - i. It was recommended to harmonize all data on migration Migration and have the data disaggregated by age and sex.

- **Activity 4:** Develop and implement a continental Program to build and enhance national and regional Bureaus on Statistics capacity in data collection and dissemination (including provision of infrastructure for digital migration data management) on migration issues
  - ii. Cognizant of the fact that there is lack of information sharing among different governments as well as among different actors at national level, there was need to support national statistics offices to provide relevant information and data to the regional and continental levels.
  - iii. Subsequently, the need to support RECs in the development and collection of data to support continental centers.
• Activity 5: Conduct at least 2 household, labor force, establishment and other dedicated surveys to collect sex-disaggregated data/information on migration drivers, and socio-economic impacts of migration on transformation process (including on rural transformation and territorial development), as well as on the social and economic integration of migrants in two RECs
  i. Activity 5 can be a deliverable for activity 3
  ii. Merge activities 6, 7 and 1 into one and recraft the activities into deliverables

• Activity 7: Mobilize funding to support AU Member to conduct regular surveys on migration
  It was recommended to develop specific timelines for different levels of reports at continental, regional and national levels.

B. Session/Priority 2 : Protecting The Human Rights And Elimination Of All Forms Of Discrimination To African Migrants And Diaspora (GCM Priority 2)

16. On the substantive matters under Pillar/Priority 2 of the Draft Plan of Action on GCM the following inputs were provided in specific objectives

Objective 1: Provision of timely information to migrants is enhanced

• Activity 8: Develop information based campaigns and awareness creation at national, regional and continental level to sensitize African citizens against discrimination of migrants.
  i. Need to involve the civil society’s involvement on this activity is key and information on migration risks and labour exploitation and abuse was vital in addition to promoting information on positive contribution of migrant workers.
  ii. It was recommended to redesign the indicators to reflect continental, regional and national levels. Perhaps pick a representative country from each region to report on as an indicator.

• Activity 9: Advocate the Development and enactment of national and regional legislation that penalizes hate crimes and aggravated hate crimes to migrants including xenophobia
  i. Develop a comprehensive awareness strategy through information sharing should be broad and involve all stakeholders, with targeted advocacy for special groups at MS level.
  ii. National involvement was regarded as key for this activity and recommendation was made to lobby for implementation of national laws to protect migrants
  iii. The importance of the media as a channel of communication was agreed upon and recommendation made include to train and sensitize the ‘opinion shapers’. Further it
was suggested that topics for modules should focus on respecting human rights against racism and discrimination.

- **Activity 10: Develop and implement media engagement strategies to promote independent, objective and quality reporting of media outlets, including internet based information at national, regional and continental levels.**
  i. Need to leverage sports events in changing knowledge, attitude and practice in the community to improve image and acceptance of foreigners.

- **Activity 11: Develop legislation at the National level to ensure equity and access to services to those suffering from and are at risk of structural discrimination such as women, persons with disabilities, youths, and older persons, persons living with HIV.**
  ii. Need to develop a continental website on migration devoted to general public. The website be interactive and linked from continental to Member State level would also address the challenges of coordinated mechanism on migration at national level.
  iii. Targeted advocacy to the youth especially the rural population and the use of social media outlets such as twitter and podcasts were deemed relevant. However, the limitation of internet access and availability especially in the rural areas was notable.
  iv. Need to mainstream migration governance in the training curriculum of media centres.

C. **Session 3: Addressing Irregular Migration Transnational Crime (GCM Priority 3)**

17. On the substantive matters under Pillar/Priority 2 of the Draft Plan of Action on GCM the following inputs were provided in specific objectives and recommendations in this priority area:

**Objective 1: Trafficking of Persons and Smuggling of Migrants and modern day slavery is prevented and reduced in the continent**

i. The need for Member States to ratify various relevant policy documents and have complimentary law to support this instruments was regarded as necessary to address trafficking and smuggling.

ii. Need to incorporate border management aspect for example, electronic border management for easy migration

**Objective 2 : Ensure a well-coordinated Management of national borders to promote safe and regular cross border movements of people in the continent**

- **Activity 20: Promotion of the ratification of the AU Convention on Cross Border Cooperation by Member States**
  i. On the structure, it was recommended to move activity 16 in objective 1 to objective 2.
ii. Further, regional entities should be supported in their activities to ensure signing and ratification of relevant instrument, for example, assist IGAD to push for the adoption of free movement.

iii. In addition, there is need for capacity building on border managers to identify forged documents to combat irregular migration.

- **Activity 24: Provision of modern biometric machines and border information systems**
  i. On this activity, it was recommended that the indicator should include number of training programs and number of border control officials.
  ii. On the wording of the activity it was suggested to rephrased to ‘Integrated border management systems...’ or “Improving the technical capacity of border management to identify false documents” or “IT system on migration and analysis of data”.

**D. Session 4: Facilitating Regular Migration, Decent Work And Enhancing The Positive Development Effects Of Human Mobility (GCM Priority 4)**

18. On the substantive matters under Pillar/Priority 4 of the Draft Plan of Action on GCM the following inputs were provided in specific objectives:

  **Objective 1: Skills development, labor mobility and decent work is promoted**

- **Activity 26: Development and validation of an African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF)**
  i. Need to develop and validate the African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) with mutual recognition of skills, qualification and competencies mechanisms at the country and RECs level.
  ii. Africa should Invest in skill development to meet qualification together with adoption of bilateral and multilateral agreements that promote regional level skills mobility including students, researchers and scientists mobility adopted.

- **Activity 27: Support Member States and RECs to Strengthen Labor Market Information System capacities of AUC, RECs and Member States**
  i. Need for the continent to find ways to utilize skilled labor from diaspora for social and economic development on the continent.
  ii. On the deliverables section, need to include Member States’ labor migration information system strengthened by including labour market needs assessments for the effective recognition of the supply and demand for migrant workers.
  iii. On the indicator section, need to include number of Member States having strengthened their labor migration information system by including labour market needs assessments for the effective recognition of the supply and demand for migrant workers.
• **Activity 28:** Develop regular pathway migration schemes to foster decent job opportunities in foreign job markets, including in the agricultural sector (e.g. seasonal/circular agricultural migration schemes)
  i. The need to reword the activity as “develop regular pathway migration schemes to foster decent job opportunities in foreign job markets through bilateral and multilateral Labour Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU’s) and fair recruitment schemes, particularly into the agricultural, domestic sector and construction sectors. Consequently, inclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements or MoUs among the deliverables.

• **Activity 29:** Develop advocacy strategy to Promote decent work in informal economy and rural sector for inclusive development and poverty eradication
  i. It was noted that the informal sector is difficult to control thus affecting reporting. Therefore, there was need for the formalization of informal sector. Permits should be regularized.
  ii. Need to harmonize the concept of decent work among Member States in addition to promoting decent work. This should be done alongside promoting decent working conditions.
  iii. Need to include development of a strategy on deliverables

• **Activity 30:** Promote decent work in informal economy, rural sector and agri-food systems for inclusive development and poverty eradication
  i. Need to include social protection for migrant workers as a key activity in this priority

• **Activity 31:** Promote the creation of decent jobs for youth in the agro-food system
  i. It was recommended to reword the activity as to promote the creation of decent jobs for migrants and refugees with the facilitation and access to work permits.
  ii. New items suggested to be added include:
    - Include the need to provide labour attachés (and other consular services), access to justice and redress mechanisms for migrant workers abroad
    - Need to Promote social dialogue and other inclusive processes on labour migration involving World of Work actors.

**E. Session 5: Promoting Migrant And Diaspora To Fully Contribute For Sustainable Development In Both Host And Sending Countries**

19. On the substantive matters under Pillar/Priority 2 of the Draft Plan of Action on GCM the following inputs were provided in the specific objectives and recommendations

• **Objective 1:** Leveraging Remittances for Social and Economic Development in Africa
  i. Need to reword the objective as “leveraging remittance and skills transfer for social and economic development in Africa”.
• **Activity 32:** Develop conducive policy and regulatory environments that enable competition, efficiency and uses of innovations as well as designing programs and instruments that enhance the financial inclusion of migrants and their families
  
i. Need to encourage more involvement of the diaspora, it was suggested to improve cultural contact of the diaspora to their country of origins and to adopt legislation that will allow political participation of the diaspora community.
  
ii. There is need to develop collaboration mechanism for the remittance system among Member States.

iii. Need to include improvement of infrastructure on the deliverables.

• **Activity 34:** Develop Operational Framework for African Diaspora Investment Fund
  
i. The need to set up an investment process and creating a network to mobilize African skills.

**F. Session 6: Enhancing Protection Of Migrants, Search For Durable Solutions Including Return And Readmission And Reintegration To Their Host Communities**

20. On the substantive matters under Pillar/Priority 2 of the Draft Plan of Action on GCM the following inputs were provided in specific objectives and recommendations

**Objective 1: Ensure durable solutions for returning migrants**

i. It was of concern that the objective only mentions returning migrants, yet integration of migrants in the host community should also be part and parcel of durable solution.

• **Activity 38:** Enhance capacity of labor institutions on integration/reintegration of migrant in the labor markets including in rural areas
  
i. It was recommended that networks of professional organizations in reintegration was important and building the capacity of local community important to ensure effective integration.

• **Activity 39:** Establishment of return and reintegration AU Guidelines for member States and RECs

**Key Recommendation:**

The need revise the activity and indicator to include women headed households, women and girls.

• **Activity 40:** Support Member States in the establishment of national registration and identification systems for migrants

**Key Recommendation:**

i. It was recommended to change the terminology of the indicator ‘2 RECs’ to ‘selected RECs’. 
Objective 2: Vulnerable migrants including children, persons of disability and women are well protected and assisted

- Activity 45: Promote collaboration among States in dealing with children on the move
  ii. The need for collaboration among RECs and other actors like UN Agencies should also be included along with the collaboration among States.

Objective 3: Protection of migrants against drug abuse and infectious diseases

i. Need to include protection of migrants from radicalization, terrorism, and organized crime as an activity under this objective.

ii. The need to focus on access to basic services for migrants in the action plan. The emphasis given on the issue of drugs was questioned as this is disproportionate to the needs of migrants like access to health services.

- Activity 47: Protect the health of migrants from the harms of drug abuse, HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections along their migration journeys
  i. It was recommended to change the indicator to the number of migrants who have accessed the treatment and who have done HIV test.

  ii. Activities on prevention should be added in addition to protection. For example, protection of the hosting community and sensitization of hosting and local communities.

  iii. Further, it was suggested to include in this activity mental health or psycho-social support for migrants.

- Activity 48: Develop strategies to detect migrants who are used as drug mules and couriers along their migration journeys for early identification and protection
  i. The focus should be seen from the point of access to information, that is, education or awareness raising among migrants to prevent drug abuse.

- Activity 49: Establish facilities for rehabilitation of persons addicted to drugs
  i. The focus should be on access to the rehabilitation facilities as most countries already have the facilities.

  ii. Need to incude building the capacity of States to provide basic services for migrants.

G. Session 7: Capacity Building On Member States On GCM Implementation

- Activity 50: Develop and implement advocacy and sensitization strategies for law makers and other policy makers on the implementation of the GCM

  i. Need to focus on support or enhance the capacity of Member States to implement GCM instead of singling out law makers. Need to target all State actors

  ii. Capacity building should include address structural and environmental issues that drive migrants with a focus on policy, frameworks/institutions and resources.
iii. The need to ensure that advocacy and sensitization strategies should be at national, regional and continental levels.

- **Activity 51: Support the establishment of relevant policy, institutional and partnership frameworks at member state level to facilitate the implementation of GCM objectives and increase policy coherence between migration and sectoral policies (including those related to agriculture, food security and rural development).**
  
  i. It was recommended that this activity to incorporate capacity building at the level of coordination mechanism. Further, it should not only target few sectors, but all sectors since sectors such as security are relevant.

  ii. On the indicators, the number of countries which have coordination mechanisms was proposed to be added as well as the number of countries that have streamlined their policies.

- **Activity 52: Develop and implement a resource mobilization Plan to support AU Member States and RECs to effectively implement the GCM**
  
  i. Need to find an alternative word for ‘resource’ as the words seem to imply finance, yet it should be broad to include technical expertise.

- **Activity 53: Develop and implement a cooperation and partnership strategy for the implementation of the GCM in the continent among Member States and RECs**
  
  i. Need to include international agencies on the partnership.

- **Activity 54: Develop and implement a monitoring, follow up and reporting mechanism of the GCM in the continent**
  
  i. Need to clarify on what constitutes monitoring and follow-up mechanisms at national level so that the plan is informed about various platforms that can play the role in monitoring the GCM.

**H. Proposed new priority 8: Minimizing the adverse effects of climate change, natural disasters and environmental degradation that compel people to leave their country of origin;**

21. The African group in Geneva and New York proposed a new priority 8 to address issues of climate change and environmental degradation as the main reasons why African migrants move out of their countries.

22. After deliberations, the meeting adopted the new proposal as an important pillar of the GCM for implementation in Africa. The meeting requested the Commission to include it in the new revised draft of the Plan of Action for their comments in the next meeting.
I. Session 9: Building the Capacity of AU Member States and RECs to cooperate and collaborate to effectively implement the Global Compact on Migration in Africa

23. The representative of IOM made a presentation on the new UN Migration Network that is coordinated by IOM in Geneva that include several UN Agencies.

24. The meeting noted on the need to have a national, regional and continental mechanism to follow up and review the GCM in Africa in preparations of the International Review on the GCM.

25. The meeting requested the Commission to develop a robust implementation and review framework at national, regional and continental levels and to guide Member States to implement this Draft Plan of Action. It was agreed that the draft Plan of Action be presented during the upcoming STC Meeting for validation as well.

V. Meeting Conclusions and Way Forward

26. The meeting requested the Commission to revise the Draft of Action as inputed and validated for validation and endorsement by the upcoming Specialised Technical Committee on Migration, Refugees and IDPs in November, 2019.

27. The meeting requested the Commission to develop a clear implementation, follow up and review framework based on international best practices to guide national, regional and continental GCM implementation in the continent in preparations to the International Review Forum in 2022.