

THE JLMP DISPATCH

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

JANUARY – MARCH 2024



International
Labour
Organization



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HIGHLIGHTS

ECCAS MEMBER STATES LAY OUT ROADMAP TO ACCELERATE EXTENSION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION TO MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE REGION



Hon. Minister Firmin Ayessa (front row - 4th from left) together with other experts at the start of a three-day workshop to develop a roadmap to accelerate extension of social protection to migrant workers in ECCAS. Photo: ©2024 AUC / Innocent Vuga

Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) convened in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, from March 26 to 28, to deliberate on extending social protection to migrant workers in the region. The three-day workshop, made possible by support from the AU-ILO-IOM Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP), yielded a significant outcome - a draft roadmap that charts the course for accelerating social protection extension to migrant workers across the ECCAS region.

The roadmap, a recommendation stemming from a comprehensive study on social protection extension to migrant workers, emphasizes inclusive strategies with a focus on amplifying migrant workers' voices and participation, particularly those engaged in the informal economy. It delineates short-, medium-, and long-term measures to achieve its objectives.

In the short term, recommendations include forging payment agreements between funds for returning migrant workers, exporting benefits to migrants' countries of residence, and prioritizing the ratification of relevant ILO conventions on labour migration and social protection. The medium-term vision involves strengthening existing agreements and developing bilateral social security pacts between ECCAS member

states and other organizations. Looking ahead, the long-term plan proposes the formulation of a multilateral social security convention within ECCAS to ensure comprehensive coverage for migrant workers region wide.

To expedite the roadmap's recommendations, strategies outlined include conducting research and knowledge development, capacity building of relevant actors in negotiation and implementation, and prioritizing monitoring of social security agreements. The roadmap also prioritizes institutional capacity development, information dissemination, advocacy campaigns, and steering high-level political dialogue on social protection and social security.

"Migrant workers deserve equal treatment and rights as nationals of countries they are working in," Hon. Firmin Ayessa, Republic of Congo's Minister of State for Civil Service, Labour, and Social Security implored Member States to employ the spirit of Pan-Africanism in managing migration.

ECCAS is home to 4.3 million international migrants (2.1 million female and 2.2 million male), of whom majority migrate for labour purposes, according to data from the African Union third report on labour migration statistics in Africa.

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC) PARTNER STATES APPROVE LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY



Directors of Labour and Employment from the East African Community (EAC) Partner States meeting in Bujumbura - Burundi, to approve the region's Labour Migration Policy. Photo: ©2024 IOM Burundi

With support from the JLMP, Directors of Labour and Employment from the East African Community (EAC) Partner States on 23 January considered and approved the region's Policy and Legal frameworks governing labour migration.

The overall aims of the policy are to advocate for the protection of migrant workers; strengthen labour migration governance and maximise the benefits accruing from labour migration.

The Policy, whose implementation Plan spans from 2025-2030, has ten (10) key Priority areas namely: Labour Migration Governance; Harmonisation of Labour Migration Policies; Protection and Empowerment of Migrant Workers; Access to Social Protection and Social Security Benefits; Mutual recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications. Other priorities area are: Recognition of Skills Obtained through Informal Training; Promotion of Fair and Ethical Recruitment Practices;

Remittances by Migrant Workers; Exchange of Young Workers; and Labour Market Information Systems.

Experts also took cognisance of the fact that remittances by migrant workers is not explicitly addressed in the EAC legal and regulatory provisions, and thus, the need to develop appropriate mechanisms for migrant workers engagement in the development of the Community, becomes critical.

The idea to develop the policy was proposed by Labour Migration Experts in 2013. After wide consultations, and with the support from the JLMP, it was developed and presented to the Forum of Ministers of Labour and Employment in October 2021. After endorsement by Ministers of Labour and Employment, the Policy was then updated and consulted upon at regional level and social partners at sub- regional level.

JLMP STARTS CONTINENTAL CONSULTATIONS FOR THE AU FAIR & ETHICAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY



Former Director of the ILO Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan, and the Special Representative to the AU and the ECA, Mr. Alexio Musindo, addressing experts from Member States during consultations.

The Joint Labour Migration Programme in March commenced a series of consultations with African Union (AU) Member States to develop a continental Fair & Ethical Recruitment Strategy, a key step towards promoting fair and ethical recruitment practices across Africa.

The strategy envisages a future where enhanced worker protection and access to decent employment opportunities are prioritized. By establishing robust mechanisms for worker protection, the strategy aims to safeguard the rights and well-being of all workers.

Furthermore, the strategy aims to foster improved efficiency and fairness in labour markets. Through streamlined processes and equitable practices, it seeks to create a level

playing field for all stakeholders involved in the recruitment process.

Addressing deceptive recruitment practices is another key focus of the strategy. By mitigating risks and vulnerabilities associated with such practices, the strategy aims to promote transparency and accountability, thereby enhancing trust and confidence in the recruitment process.

By promoting fair and ethical recruitment practices, it seeks to drive sustainable development and advance the rights and dignity of all workers across Africa, hence contributing to heightened development outcomes, benefiting economies and societies in both origin and destination countries.

EMPOWERING LABOUR MIGRATION EXPERTS: JLMP LAUNCHES COACHING AND MENTORSHIP INITIATIVE



In a bid to fortify technical capacity of professionals engaged in labour migration, the JLMP introduced a coaching and mentorship initiative. This initiative, aimed at bolstering expertise in policy formulation and implementation, targets five pilot Member States—Morocco, Malawi, Ethiopia, Cameroon, and Cote d'Ivoire—as well as two Regional Economic Communities (RECs), COMESA and ECCAS.

From February 6th to 9th, 2024, the program was inaugurated in the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), aligning closely with the region's articulated labour migration priorities. These priorities encompass areas such as skills and qualifications mobility, social security for migrant workers, and the advancement of inter-regional cooperation models.

The initiative will offer strategic guidance to foster collaboration between the Economic

Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and ECCAS. It particularly emphasizes implementation of free movement provisions, including extension of social security to migrant workers and facilitation of skills and qualification mobility, with a specific focus on the wood industry.

The agreed-upon agenda for coaching and mentorship within ECCAS is set to be executed over the course of 2-3 months. This proactive approach underscores JLMP's commitment to equipping labour migration experts with the requisite knowledge and tools to navigate complex challenges in the field. As labour migration continues to play a pivotal role in regional development, initiatives like these pave the way for more robust and effective governance frameworks, ultimately benefiting both migrant workers and host communities alike.

AT THE RMFM, JLMP IMPLORES GOVERNMENTS AND RECRUITERS TO PRIORITIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF PRE-DEPARTURE AND POST-ARRIVAL ORIENTATIONS



JLMP Coordinator at AUC, Ms. Odette Bolly (Second from left) with other migration experts from across the East and Horn of Africa States during the 5th Regional Ministerial Forum on Migration (RMFM) in Addis Ababa. Photo: ©2024 IOM Ethiopia.

From Feb 26-29, the JLMP participated in the IOM-supported 5th Regional Ministerial Forum on Migration (RMFM) in Addis Ababa. Government Ministers from across East and Horn of Africa met to discuss labour migration governance and how to maximize the benefits of greater regional integration on human mobility in the region.

Addressing technical delegates representing 11 countries from the region, including Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Uganda, JLMP Coordinator Ms. Bolly Odette underscored the importance of prioritizing robust pre-departure and post-arrival orientations for migrant workers.

She emphasized the necessity for governments and licensed recruiters to focus on practical,

solution-oriented approaches in administering these orientations.

“The future of migration governance is that where migrant experiences are used to shape the design of every intervention we are making. We need to take an active role of being supportive enablers of safe and dignified migration,” Ms. Odette told the RMFM.

Additionally, the JLMP team shared continental insights during the forum, highlighting the significance of data-informed policies and initiatives in enhancing skills development. They also discussed scaling up youth employment and entrepreneurship, fostering mutually beneficial skills mobility partnerships, and promoting job creation in both traditional and emerging sectors, including the green economy.

RALLYING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN LABOUR MIGRATION: JLMP'S INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CAMPAIGN



Some of the messages that were disseminated by JLMP teams during the campaign.

In the spirit of International Women's Day, observed on 8th March, the JLMP launched an online campaign advocating for the protection of migrant workers, with a particular focus on women. This initiative aimed to galvanize support and call to action towards ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women in labour migration space.

The campaign, conducted through various digital platforms, underscored the importance of respecting women's rights throughout the migration cycle. Messages highlighted the need for equal representation of women in labour migration governance, emphasizing the pivotal role they play in shaping policies and decisions that impact their lives.

Central to the campaign was a call to diversify labour market opportunities for women, recognizing the inherent value and untapped potential they bring to various sectors, to break down barriers and create pathways for women to access decent and dignified work opportunities.

The campaign also shed light on the specific needs of women in the migration process, acknowledging the unique challenges they face and advocating for tailored support mechanisms to address these issues effectively.

In line with the broader objectives of International Women's Day, the campaign called for equal opportunities at employment, challenging existing norms and stereotypes that hinder women's advancement in the labour market. By promoting gender equality and empowerment, the JLMP aimed to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for all migrant workers, regardless of gender.

As the world continues to grapple with the complexities of migration and its impact on individuals and societies, initiatives like the JLMP's International Women's Day campaign serve as a timely reminder of the importance of prioritizing women's rights and dignity in labour migration governance.

KEY JLMP PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

Compendium of Practices to the Capacity-building Manual on Establishment and Implementation of a Migrant Welfare Programme by African Countries

This Compendium explores best practices from countries of origin supporting migrant workers & families with social protection measures.



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Labour Migration Governance: Gaps and Challenges in Selected Member States in ECOWAS, EAC and SADC

This resource is an analysis of the status of labour migration management in selected Regional Economic Communities (REC). It also gives recommendations to overcome some of the listed gaps and challenges.



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Ms. Alice Karara,
JLMP Programme Officer, EAC- Arusha, Tanzania

At the East African Community (EAC), JLMP is supporting strategic efforts in labour migration policy, social security benefits, and mutual recognition of qualifications, Alice Karara writes...

Over years, labour migration has been one of the critical areas of cooperation in the East African Community (EAC). To illustrate the significance of labour migration, Article 104 of the Treaty for the Establishment of EAC, provides for the free movement of persons, labour and services and the rights of establishment and residence. To actualize this provision of the Treaty, and pursuant to Article 76, of the Treaty, the EAC Partner States concluded a Protocol on the establishment of the EAC Common Market. The EAC having been one of the beneficiary RECs under AUC JLMP, the JLMP provided technical and financial support to the EAC Secretariat to develop policy and legal frameworks geared towards fulfillment of the aspirations envisaged in the Treaty and the Protocol related to Labour Migration within and beyond the Community. Accordingly, the JLMP facilitated the EAC Secretariat to develop the following policy and legal instruments:

The EAC Labour Migration Policy

The EAC Secretariat in collaboration with the African Union Commission and its Implementing Partners, i.e. IOM and ILO, through the Joint Labour Migration Programme, has developed the EAC Labour Migration Policy. The objectives of the policy are to promote labour migrants' rights; maximize the benefits accruing from labour migration; and promote effective labour migration governance. The draft Policy with its implementation plan have been approved by the EAC Partner States Directors responsible for

Labour and Employment and will soon be adopted by the Council of Ministers. Once the policy is adopted and implemented, the EAC Partners States have a common approach on labour migration in the region and Partner States with labour policies, will align them with the regional policy.

EAC Council Directive on Coordination of Social Security Benefits

In order to further enhance the free movement of workers in the EAC, the EAC Common Market Protocol in article 10(3)(f) enjoins Partner States to develop a directive to effect the coordination of social security benefits. The EAC Secretariat, with support from JLMP, has developed the EAC Council Directive (Regulation) on Coordination of Social Security Benefits. The general purpose of the Directive on Coordination of Social Security Benefits is to provide a mechanism that will facilitate the coordination and maintenance of acquired rights of Social Security Benefits for workers and self-employed persons within the EAC Common Market. The Regulations were endorsed at the technical level (Legislative drafters and Directors of Labour & Employment and social security institutions).

Once adopted, the following social security benefits will be maintained and portable/exportable by the workers and self-employed persons within the community:

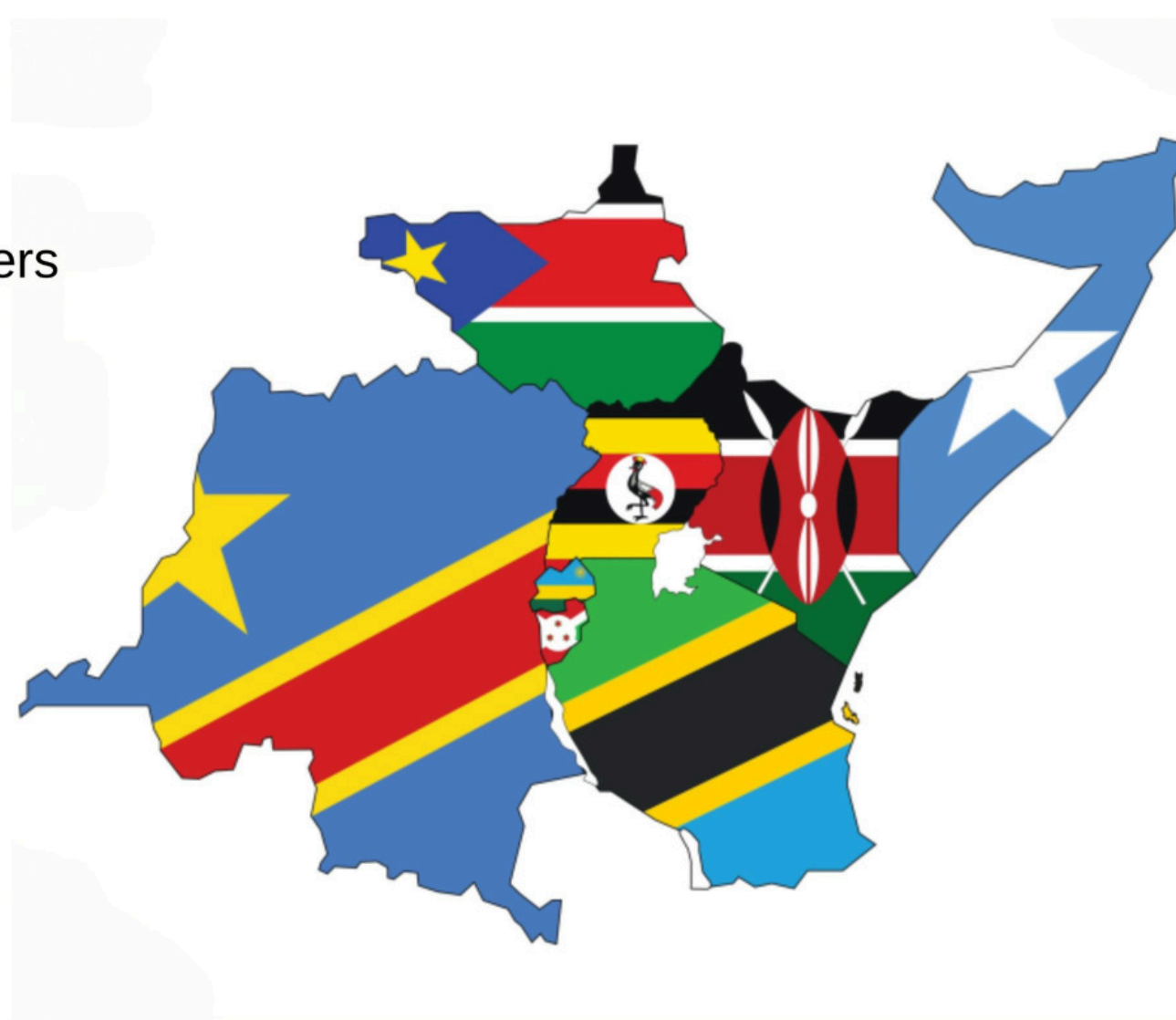
- Ø Old-age or retirement benefit;
- Ø Disability or invalidity benefit;
- Ø Survivors' benefit;
- Ø Employment injury benefits; and
- Ø Occupational diseases.

Mutual Recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications

To promote and enhance the free movement of professionals amongst the EAC Partner States article 11(1)(a) of the EAC Common market protocol provides for mutual recognition of academic and professional qualifications granted, experience obtained, requirements, licenses or certifications granted in other Partner States. With Support from the JLMP, the EAC secretariat has been able to finalize Annex VII to The Protocol on the Establishment of the EAC Common Market on the Mutual Recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications. This Annex has been approved by the Sectoral Council of Ministers responsible for Education and Sports and will soon be adopted by the Council of Ministers. Upon adoption and implementation, the Annex will guide the implementation of the earlier concluded Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) for the Engineering Profession, Architects, Accountants and Veterinarians. The Annex will further support the conclusion of MRAs for Land Surveyors and Advocates as well as guide the future MRAs to be negotiated by various professionals.

EAC LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY PRIORITIES

- ✓ Labour Migration Governance
- ✓ Harmonisation of Labour Migration Policies
- ✓ Protection & Empowerment of Migrant Workers
- ✓ Access to Social Protection and Social Security Benefits
- ✓ Mutual recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications
- ✓ Recognition of Skills Obtained through Informal Training
- ✓ Promotion of Fair and Ethical Recruitment Practices
- ✓ Labour Market Information Systems
- ✓ Remittances by Migrant Workers



SOME OF OUR PARTNERS

JLMP activities are made possible with key support and collaboration from 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.

 @JLMPCoordinator

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