

Opening remarks
by
H.E. Amira El-Fadil,
Commissioner for Social Affairs
at the
Launch of the JLMP Strategic Framework
7 November, 2020

Dear Cynthia, The Regional Director for Africa, ILO

Dear Maureen, Chief of Mission, IOM

Dear Inge, Director GIZ-AU Office

Dear colleagues, CEOs of Regional Economic Communities,

H.E Dear Ambassador of Sweden,

H.E Dear Ambassador of Switzerland,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me pleasure to welcome you to the launch of the Strategic Framework of the AUC-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Labour Migration Governance Programme for Regional Integration and Development in Africa, better known as the JLMP. As you know, this long-term joint undertaking was designed upon recognition of the increasing trends of labour migration within the continent, with t Africa is confronted by jobless growth and dearth of decent work opportunities despite its growing and youthful population. JLMP is a key instrument for the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Migration Policy Framework for Africa, including its Action Plan (2018-2030) and also takes into consideration the UN Agenda 2030.

The project also aims to strengthen the effective governance, and regulation of labour migration and mobility, under the rule of law and with the involvement of key stakeholders across governments, legislatures, social partners, migrants, international organisations, NGOs, diaspora organizations and civil society organisations towards increased equitable, full-employment economic growth and sustainable development of the African Continent. This is conceptualized under four pillars:

1. Strengthened effective governance and regulation of labour migration and mobility in Africa
2. Migrant workers in both the formal and informal sectors enjoy safe and secure working environments, access to social protection and mutual recognition of skills and educational levels
3. Increased utilization of labour migration disaggregated data and statistics by all for evidenced based decision-making, policy planning, formulation and application
4. Strengthened governance and accountability of the JLMP

Since its inception in 2015, JLMP has enjoyed unwavering support of technical and financial partners, especially given the relevance of the project. Interventions on strengthening capacities for labour migration statistics, strengthening social protection in selected Regional Economic Communities, mutual recognition of skills in the leather sector with African Leather and Leather Products Institute (ALPPI), support to social security institutions, support to national and regional labour migration policies, capacity building for labour migration governance, among others. The success of these interventions was made possible by strong collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities and Member States as well as social partners. Our partners, especially IOM and ILO have been with us, providing technical support and resource mobilizing for the implementation of the project, for which we are most grateful.

The reason we are here today is to launch the Strategic Framework. Why did we need a Strategic Framework for the JLMP?

1. To create conducive policy framework for the ease of engagement of donors who are interested in joining the JLMP as key funding partners
2. To assess the success and challenges of the project, in line with emerging frameworks and programmes which relates to labour migration in Africa
3. To highlight unfunded or underfunded areas of the project
4. To assess the state of implementation of different JLMP initiatives at the continental and regional levels, with an aim to seek for areas of synergy and complementarity
5. To assess the involvement of different stakeholders towards achievement of project goals
6. To guide the development of a results framework which will guide engagement of partners and stakeholders in future engagements

What have been achieved by the project so far?

The project has contributed to strengthened capacity for various actors in governmental and non-governmental institutions on various thematic areas. The project adopts an inclusive and participatory approach to capacity enhancement, to ensure that new skills and competences are retained within relevant institutions and continue to contribute to the broader labour migration landscape. For the RECs, the focal points are part of the Labour Migration Advisory Committee (LMAC) which has provided a platform for dialogue, information sharing, capacity building and technical advice. JLMP has also installed staff at the AUC, ECOWAS, and EAC and hopes to expand to other regions as more resources become available. The Programme has also facilitated the finalization of the 1st and 2nd editions of the Labour Migration Statistics Report.

The programme has adopted an incremental approach, meaning selection of focal RECs per project, with the hope of expansion to others as more resources become available with more donors' engagement. Most of the interventions have been implemented in ECOWAS, EAC, SADC and recently IGAD. Hopefully, when the SDC funding comes through, we intend to expand to

ECCAS and COMESA. We are happy that JLMP is gradually taking a continental form and we count on the continuous support of our RECs.

Given a programme of this magnitude, there are obvious coordination challenges. Many RECs are implementing labour migration related programmes, which do not make reference or align with JLMP. This undermines the efforts being put in at the continental level, as set in the JLMP adopted by the Heads of State Assembly in January 2015 as the continental policy reference. In coordination with the RECs, we aim to identify these blind spots and seek for ways to address them. We need to make maximum optimal use of available resources, by ensuring a strong coordination structure at the continental, regional and national levels.

The Strategic Framework provides us with a framework to help us account for same goals, and we must work together to make this a reality. It is a ten-year policy framework and we call upon all partners and donors, to align with it in support to improved labour migration governance in Africa. The coordination, complementarity, synergy and cooperation will be structured around the pillars of the Strategic Framework and of its M&E framework as well.

We will need to consider a draft Guidance document on synergy and complementarity of labour migration policies, programmes, projects and funding in the continent. This may be a challenging experience for all of us but I am confident that the willingness to build and enhance collaborative mechanism will keep us committed to establish the necessary synergy and complementarity over the various relevant programmes. To make sure that this will happen in the long run, we need to identify pilot projects and start with them from January 2021. It is my call to the Technical Committee to submit to the next Steering Committee a feasible list of pilot interventions.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to express sincere appreciation to our financial partners namely EU, SIDA, GIZ, and SDC. We are thankful for your generous contribution and look forward to continuing with you on this journey. Our hope is to welcome more donors and technical partners to form a broad strategic alliance on labour migration governance.

Again, I wish to thank you all for gracing this occasion and I wish you all one more memorable event as we proceed with the launch of the JLMP Strategic Framework.

I thank you for your kind attention.