



SOUTHERN AFRICAN MIGRATION  
PROJECT

# M I D S A

Migration Dialogue for Southern  
Africa



IOM • OIM  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION  
FOR MIGRATION

## **Report and Recommendations of the MIDSAs Workshop on Migration and Development in Southern Africa**

**Zanzibar, Tanzania March 17 – 19, 2004**

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### **Countries, Presenters and Observers**

**Participants from Governments** were as follows: Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. **Presenters** included representatives of the Governments of DRC, South Africa, Madagascar, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Foundation for Development (AFFORD), University of Zambia, IOM and SAMP. **Observers** included officials from the African Union (AU) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Apologies: Botswana, Namibia, UNESCO, WHO, UNDP, UNIDO, NEPAD Secretariat, SADC Secretariat, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), and the Tanzanian Association of Employers.

The agenda and list of participants are annexed hereto.

### **Summary of Proceedings**

#### **Opening Session**

##### **Mr. Vincent Williams, Project Manager, SAMP.**

Mr. Williams welcomed participants and expressed his gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Tanzania for agreeing to host this seminal MIDSAs workshop on the nexus between migration and development. He left the participants with the question: Does migration contribute to development, or does it inhibit development and indicated his hope that this workshop would provide some answers.

##### **Mr. Hans-Petter Boe, Regional Representative, IOM.**

Mr. Boe welcomed participants, and also thanked the host Government for its endorsement of the MIDSAs process by supporting this Workshop. He suggested that because migration is increasingly circular and temporary that policy-makers in both developing and developed countries would need to adjust migration policies to effectively manage these changing patterns. He concluded by adding that he hoped this workshop on migration and development would contribute to this end.

**Hon. B.A. Mahiza, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Tanzania.**

Mr. Mahiza made a presentation on behalf of the Minister of Home Affairs in which he expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to open the workshop in Zanzibar. *Karibuni sana*. Southern Africa is experiencing the phenomenon of migration – movement of capital, people, services, and goods in record time. These developments provide opportunities, but also create challenges of trafficking, smuggling, and terrorism among others. Tanzania is in the process of reviewing its migration policy in order to maximise benefits and minimise detriments of this reality, but stressed the need for regional cooperation. He hoped that this MIDSAs workshop would be a step in this process. With these words, Mr. Mahiza declared the MIDSAs Workshop open.

**Workshop Objectives**

**Mr. Pär Liljert, Chief of Mission, IOM Zambia**

Mr. Liljert outlined the objectives of the MIDSAs process, and highlighted some of the migration challenges that exist in the Region, including lack of reliable and comparable data; lack of appropriate legal frameworks; lack of efficient regional coordination, among others. He indicated that it was his hope that the MIDSAs process should be gradually geared towards action-oriented activities conducive to enhancing and streamlining approaches to migration management in Southern Africa.

**Migration and Development – Framing the Debate**

**Dr. Meera Sethi, Regional Advisor, IOM Geneva**

Ms. Sethi gave a presentation entitled “Emigration, Diaspora, Remittances and Development in Regions of Origin” from a global perspective. She informed participants that migration contributes to countries of origin by way of the three R’s: remittances, resourcing expatriates, and the return of migrants to their countries of origin. She further reminded participants of IOM’s Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN) programme from 1983 – 1999 that assisted 690 people in the SADC region, and a follow up programme, known as Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA), that takes into account current circular and temporary migration realities.

She noted that underdevelopment is among the route courses of migration but that migration can both adversely affect development and have important benefits. She provided an overview of migration flows in the SADC region and identified various types of migratory movements – skilled, contract, undocumented etc. Remittances are an important factor in migration in Africa and the sub-Saharan Africa receives approximately USD 4 billion in remittance flows. She described the IOM MIDA (Migration for Development in Africa) program as a means of strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of African countries by reintegrating qualified African migrants into key position in the public sector.

Participants highlighted that countries within SADC have already assisted each other in filling labour gaps – e.g. DRC provision of nurses to Zimbabwe. Ms. Sethi confirmed the paradox that Africa has all the skills necessary for its own development, but so many of its skilled citizens live and contribute their skills outside Africa. Country representatives indicated that the SADC region has universities which train skilled manpower, but has not, as yet, trained enough people to create the critical mass required to assist development of this continent.

**Mr. Vincent Williams, SAMP**

Mr. Williams defined development as more than just economic growth but rather development is concerned with increasing the capacity of people and the redistribution of wealth that is generated. He added that globalization has also distorted our understanding of development because globalization focuses on maximization of profits and perceives people as ‘consumers’. This will result in the further marginalization of Africa because its people are not able to compete at the international level.

Mr. Williams underlined that African economies rely so much on informal sector, and so when governments try to implement macro-level economic plans they undermine the informal foundation and small-scale entrepreneurial initiative of African economies. He suggested that individuals must be at the centre of development policies. This requires a more substantial investment in capacity building to ensure that African countries have the human resources to develop the economies. He concluded with the question: Is capacity building the way to go if training only results in our people seeking their futures in already developed economies. Governments should seek a new tripartite social contract that consists of the country of origin, the country of destination, and the migrant. It is also important involve civil society when looking at ways of integrating migrants.

**Mr. Pär Liljert, IOM Lusaka**

Mr Liljert underlined the importance of recognising both the extra-regional and regional brain drain affecting the SADC region. It was recommended that the issue be addressed both in the SADC framework as well as on a bilateral level. Lead agencies could include various ministries as well as international organizations. He left participants with the following questions: what incentives can be offered to people that want to return home; what category of skilled professionals should be targeted; what has been done at regional and bilateral level to address the issue; what are the coordination mechanisms?

In response, a number of participating countries made presentations on their experiences with migration and development. Common to many was the suggestion that governments needed to identify skills gaps, put in place bilateral agreements with receiving countries, create investment opportunities for returning migrants, and strengthen ties with the Diaspora. Country representatives highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for investment in countries of origin for people in the Diaspora as well as the possibility of introducing multiple citizenships within the AU. Participants further recognized that attitudes towards migrants need to change. The role of developed countries in the brain drain from Southern Africa is recognized, and the question was asked about the compensatory measures that could be taken to compensate for the loss experienced in the developing countries.

**Migration and Development in Southern Africa**

**Mr. William Kazeze, UNECA**

Mr. Kazeze presented a paper entitled *Human Resource Shortages: Short-term Assistance for Long-term Needs*. It focused on the health and education sectors and their linkage to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Special focus

was on Brain Drain to developed countries outside Africa. Mr. Kazeze noted that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has accorded priority to human resources issues by including a chapter on Human Resources Development Initiative.

Mr. Kazeze cited various reasons for the shortage of qualified human resources in the education and health sectors. They included the following: Not sufficient numbers are trained to meet the demand; the trained and qualified personnel generally leave their employment in most countries and migrate to other countries where conditions of employment are better. In some cases, those trained outside their countries never return to work in their home countries because of low salaries and poor working environment; HIV/AIDS aggravates the shortage of skilled and qualified personnel through increased morbidity and mortality; training to replace those affected by the pandemic is not done fast enough as it takes years and investment to produce skilled and qualified personnel; some reform programmes, through retrenchment, have contributed to the shortages; poor economic conditions and slow economic growth are among the main reasons why African countries are not able to train sufficient numbers of qualified and skilled personnel and at the same time not able to retain those trained; and poor governance, insufficient job opportunities and political instability all contribute to brain drain thereby perpetuating the shortage of skilled and qualified human resources.

The causes of shortages of skilled and qualified people needed to be addressed by governments in the SADC countries with the assistance from development partners. Thus **effective partnerships** were essential in providing financial and technical support to SADC member States in: capacity building in human resources development; retaining trained and skilled personnel; minimizing brain drain; harnessing positive aspects of brain drain from those in the diaspora to contribute to socio-economic development in their countries of origin; combating the HIV/AIDS; as well as promoting good governance as one of the major factors to encourage the retention of skilled and qualified personnel and the return of those in the diaspora.

During the discussion, participants supported what was presented. They acknowledged that out migration of skilled professionals could not be stopped or reversed and stressed the need to minimize brain drain. Participants then emphasized that sound and improved economic management, good governance, political and social stability were important to retain and encourage the return of qualified personnel. In order to tap on talent of those in the diaspora and to engage them to contribute to socio-economic development in their countries of origin, it was necessary to know who these people are, what their expertise are and where they are. The issue on difficulties in the transfer of remittances from those in the diaspora to the countries of origin was raised. There was need to put in place mechanisms to facilitate the transmission of remittances. Further discussion on this was taken up in a subsequent presentation. Some participants provided experiences of what their countries were doing to address the challenges of brain drain and shortages of skilled personnel.

### **Country Presentations**

#### **Seychelles**

The Republic of Seychelles reported that a number of incentives, such as tax reduction on belongings brought back to the country, had been put in place to

encourage the return of graduates. A bonding system, through which students who are sponsored to study abroad commit to work for the government or alternatively refund their fees, has also been introduced. It was recognized that more solutions need to be sought to overcome the brain drain in parallel to offering incentives to foreigners who are interested in living and working in Seychelles. The representative of the Seychelles ended her presentation by posing a question for the future: “How do we keep functioning and face the brain drain, rather than trying to stop it?”

### **Mauritius**

Mauritius confirmed that it has introduced incentives to encourage return of nationals as well as capital. A new permanent residence scheme has been implemented, through which non-citizens can invest in Mauritius and acquire land. The funds generated through this initiative is being used for training. Increased emphasis has been placed on IT and funds are being invested in this sector and in developing call centres. IT professionals are being recruited from abroad and the aim is to turn Mauritius into a “cyber island” in the future. The country identified a lack of doctors, nurses and specialists, and replacements are being sought in India particularly. A general approach of encouraging the population to become self-employed entrepreneurs has also been taken by the Government.

### **Madagascar**

The representative from Madagascar reported that according to their experience it was very difficult to attract skilled nationals back to Madagascar, once they had left for Europe, and the need for regional cooperation to deal with the issue of brain drain was underlined. It was also noted that Madagascar was in bigger need of capital than human resources. For this reason, the government had changed legislation and relaxed many strict measures to create a climate more attractive for investors. Apart from skills migration, irregular migration and drug trafficking were problems faced by the government and the representative highlighted the need for dialogue between countries of origin and destination to solve these problems.

### **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

According to the representative from DRC, Migration for Development as a concept has been applied by the government for a long time already. For instance, migrants in DRC have been given regular status and been able to legally enter the job market. For nationals outside DRC who wish to return, mechanisms have also been put in place for voluntary return. Bilateral agreements with Zimbabwe and Namibia have been signed to try to mitigate the effects of the brain drain. The representative further requested IOM to intervene to improve the management of national and regional irregular migration, which he felt undermines certain situations and relationships.

### **Republic of South Africa**

The representative from South Africa confirmed that the country’s new Immigration Act had been written to accommodate skills in the IT, tourism, academic, agrotech and transport sector, among others. Once the needs were identified, a quota system had been put in place to manage recruitment of foreign workers and schemes had been developed to ensure that there was no discrepancy among salaries of national and foreign workers. Apart from attracting workers, it was also hoped that his initiative would attract business activities.

### **Tanzania**

The representative informed the participants that the Government of Tanzania was looking at ways of managing its foreign recruitment, particularly on the issuance of work permits. One of the constraints, related to the issue of brain drain, which is facing the government is the lack of data on educated nationals and skills available in the country. It was reported that Tanzanian nationals want to come back but the situation in the country is not conducive. Often they are unable to get jobs that commensurate with their education/experience.

### **Mozambique**

It was reported that the country experienced its worst brain drain during the civil war and that the country is now moving forward. The agriculture sector still provides most job opportunities and creates industries. The country's industries are trying to exchange experiences with other countries, but the low salaries remain an important problem and this makes skilled workers seek employment abroad. The representative also posed the dilemma of foreigners occupying their tourism sector.

### **Zimbabwe**

The representative recognized that there would always be migration and the Zimbabwean government therefore intended to investigate the possibilities of working with the Diaspora. The need for a mechanism within SADC relating to migration of specialists was underlined, but the issue of how to best regulate skills migration is also a question for the international community and international organizations.

### **Zambia**

In response to the increasing skills migration, initiatives have been taken by the Government of Zambia to ease restrictions on investment and abolish visa requirements for neighbouring countries. Other initiatives include tourist visa waivers and business permits for COMESA citizens.

### **Diaspora Voices**

Mr. Chukwu-Emeka Cechikezie (AFFORD – African Foundation for Development) (UK)

Mr. Chikezie began by observing that the Diaspora offers capital in four dimensions: (i) social capital, which is the glue (i.e. Relationships) that bind people together; (ii) financial capital, which includes remittances, small scale investments, and the Diaspora as consumers of African products; (iii) intellectual capital; and (iv) political capital which proposes solutions such as dual nationality and voting rights for Diaspora members to encourage them to return home.

Mr. Chikezie also informed participants that African governments can begin engaging the Diaspora by identifying partner agencies in the Diaspora, and that these include INTERIMS, AFRICA RECRUIT, and AFFORD which try to connect skilled migrant labour with positions in home countries. Mr. Chikezie also suggested that African Embassies in the UK should focus on the African Diaspora as a whole rather than their nationals specifically since it's difficult to match positions in the home country with nationals of that country. Instead, countries should take the same pan-African approach as held by the Diaspora generally. Mr. Chikezie reinforced a point made by others that the Diaspora is currently Africa's biggest donor through remittances, but

added that it's important that an African bank move into the remittance market to bring down the price of moving capital to countries of origin.

Mr. Chikezie concluded with a warning for participants that countries of origin should not assume that the children of migrant workers who are grow up in the developed world will retain close links with Africa without effort. These children will not be send remittances or skills on to Africa without mechanisms in place in countries of origin encouraging them to do so because they have lost the essential connection with the Continent that their parents may have had.

Participants wondered about the frustrations faced by members of the Diaspora that do return to countries of origin, and Mr. Chikezie identified differing values in the workplace as a predominant frustration. He added that it is fundamental that governments not create good working conditions to encourage the return of skilled labour from the Diaspora without creating good working conditions for local employees.

#### **Dr. Lemba Nyirenda, University of Zambia**

Dr. Nyiranda told his story of being an African professional who studied and worked in the US, but then decided to return home. He outlined the reasons he decided to study and work in the US, some of the push and pull factors while there, and the reasons why he eventually decided to return home with IOM's Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN). Participants found Dr. Nyirenda's presentation enlightening, and wondered whether his experience had encouraged others to return. Dr. Nyiranda answered in the affirmative, but added that there were other benefits to his experience. While there, the Nyirenda family had also developed close relationships with other families in the church that had helped sponsor him, and some of these – as well as lecturers and professors at Irvine University where he studied – were interested in visiting and working short term in Zambia.

#### **Dr. Meera Sethi, IOM Geneva**

Meera Sethi gave a description of the new MIDA programme and potential donor interest. Based on lessons learned she emphasized that Governments' commitments is crucial for this type of programme. The focus of the programme has changed to virtual, sequential and repeated transfer of skills. A comment was made by the country representatives about the difficulty in relating to the Diaspora since it lacks organized representation.

### **Regional Approaches to Labour Migration**

#### **Mr. Anthony Rutabanzibwa, Program Officer, ILO**

Mr Rutabanzibwa gave a presentation on the condition of East African migrant labour. He suggested that while remittances are important, equally important is the circumstances in which these remittances are earned and that countries of origin need to work with host countries, employers and migrants themselves to improve 3D employment: dangerous, dirty, and dehumanizing.

Mr. Chikezie cautioned, however that participants be careful not to disparage so-called 3D employment since migrant workers often deliberately choose these positions as a means of entering the labour market in receiving countries.

### **Group Discussions and Recommendations**

Participants were divided into four groups to discuss the questions below and to develop recommendations and action plans.

#### **Questions:**

1. What can be done to promote co-operation and linkages at national, regional, inter-regional and international levels (governmental and non-governmental).
2. What kind of mechanisms can be put in place to retain our human resources and/or encourage those in the diaspora to return and to facilitate their re-integration?
3. What can be done to utilize the resources, skills and expertise available from people in the diaspora in the short and long term?

Participants recognized that issues beyond the immediate MIDSAs purview, such as good governance, political, social and economic stability are important factors that influence the out-migration and return of persons and that the situation in individual countries need to be taken into account in considering the extent to which citizens in the diaspora could be mobilized to make a contribution or to return to their countries of origin.

Participants noted that citizens of all countries have the right to migrate and acknowledged that the decision to remain or return must be on a voluntary basis.

Participants further agreed that efforts at harmonizing migration policies and laws through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms, including the consideration of the adoption and implementation of the SADC 'Free Movement' Protocol must be considered.

Participants recommended that governments should continue engaging in dialogue with Western governments, donor partners and international organizations to solicit support for programmes, initiatives and mechanisms aimed at minimising the negative impact that the recruitment of skilled Africans has on the country of origin.

It was noted that governments are signatories to international conventions and protocols related to migration and development that should be implemented.

Participants acknowledged the impact that the HIV/Aids pandemic has on development and that existing frameworks and policies to reduce this impact should be taken into account.

Participants commended the African Union for its efforts in addressing the issue of migration and development and particularly its emphasis on Africans in the diaspora.

- (a) At a national level, governments should identify and periodically review priority growth areas for development and align investments, including human capital investments with these growth areas;
- (b) Skills audits should be undertaken to determine the levels of skills shortages in the above areas and that can be used to develop strategies to attract and train people with the required skills. Country-specific labour market information



should be made available via the Internet as a means of recruiting skilled people in the diaspora.

- (c) Governments should also compile an inventory of the skills of their national's abroad with the assistance of their respective embassies/high commissions and relevant partners. This should include the development of closer partnerships between governments, diaspora organisations and supra-national organisations. This should be captured in a central (national and/or regional) database that includes information about skills and expertise as well as reasons for leaving. It should form the basis for developing strategies and policy frameworks to encourage and promote the return and/or continued contribution of Africans in the diaspora.
- (d) Skills exchanges between member states in the region must be promoted and encouraged and Centres of Excellence in the region should be identified to provide skills training, capacity-building and leadership in specific areas of expertise. This should be done through existing regional institutions e.g. SADC Human Resources Directorate.
- (e) SADC and the AU must engage in discussions with other regional bodies such as EU, Commonwealth and NAFTA with a view to developing policies and agreements regarding the recruitment and training of African nationals, in line with the NEPAD focus on human resources development. Co-operation between these initiatives and the African Capacity Building Foundation should be strengthened.
- (f) Governments, the business sector and the NGO sector should be encouraged to recruit nationals at home or abroad, to provide internships or short-term employment opportunities for Africans in the diaspora and to make use of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of Africans in the diaspora.
- (g) Institutions and partners at a national level must be identified and drawn into a network to collectively engage in the development and implementation of policies and programmes related to migration and development. Part of this should be the identification of a government agency, department or ministry to take the lead and identify priorities and actions.
- (h) Governments must include skills transfer and migration in their National Plans and Country Strategy Notes as an important force for human resource development. Such plans must be based on consultations with all stakeholders, including diaspora organisations and networks.
- (i) The importance of remittances as a contribution to development was recognized and governments, African financial institutions and other bodies must put mechanisms, such as facilitating efficient and cost-effective transfers and strategic investments in place, to maximize the beneficial impact of remittances.
- (j) Governments must put in place measures that reduce stigmatisation and prejudice and that create favourable conditions and incentives for the return of and/or investments by skilled people and entrepreneurs in the diaspora (resource mobilisation). Efforts must also be made to develop infrastructure such as integrated transport, housing, electricity, telecommunications, water, education, health, finance and information communications to facilitate reintegration.
- (k) Governments should at regional and international levels, strengthen co-operation and harmonisation of laws focusing on combating negative activities associated with migration, such as money-laundering and smuggling.

### **Action Points and Reflections (Mr. Boe, IOM)**

- The need for ongoing co-operation and consultation between Ministries of Finance and Development Planning and the various ministries and line departments involved in migration management – and the benefits of extending such cross-sectoral consultations to the SADC level and beyond.
- The continued need for human resources development, retention, return and resource mobilisation must be highlighted to donors in appropriate fora, such as ACP, EU, G8 and Governing Bodies of international organisations.
- The incorporation of capacity building and human resource development programmes such as MIDA into National Indicative Plans, Regional Indicative Plans and Country Strategy Notes.
- Regional dialogue on exchange of skills and training must continue in appropriate fora such as MIDSA, SADC or other dedicated fora.
- Programme planning must take national specificities into account and be crafted in coordination with the diaspora and also involve countries' diplomatic and consular capacities in the diaspora (hosting) countries.
- One dilemma for the countries in the Region is providing more internationally competitive benefits for positions and professions most vulnerable to brain drain.

### **Closing Session**

**Mr. Williams** expressed SAMP's satisfaction with the results of the workshop, its attendance and participants' engagement. He pledged to continue SAMP's collaboration through continued data collection and research, which was SAMP's strength.

**Mr. Boe** said that IOM would take the recommendations to heart and use them to work towards concrete activities to support governments and migrants, as always in collaboration with governments, UN partners, NGOs and donors. He again thanked the Government of Tanzania for its hospitality and all participants, presenters and observers for their very active contributions.