

Roundtable Session 2.1: *Reducing the costs of migration and maximizing human development*

INPUTS from RT 2.1 team members: Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Spain, Sri Lanka

The following are substantive contributions received in addition to the direct inputs into the Issues Paper by the governments listed below and other RT 2.1 team members.

JAPAN:

1. The Japanese Economic Partnership Agreements with Indonesia and the Philippines, which were entered into force in 2008, established the legal framework to receive Indonesian and Filipino (a) nurses and b) care workers for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Japan receives candidates to become nurses and care workers from these countries for three or four years, and provides 6-month language training and the opportunities to work as assistants in Japanese hospitals. In the meantime, candidates can take the examination to become qualified nurses and care workers. If they pass the examination, they can stay and work in Japan beyond the 3- or 4 year- period.
 2. The significance of the EPA framework can be described as follows:
 - (a) This EPA framework is new to Japan since Japan had not previously allowed any foreigners to work as care workers for the elderly and persons with disabilities. There are some foreign nurses who are already qualified and working as nurses, but even in these cases, they can work only for 7 years.
 - (b) The EPAs provide a comprehensive framework to receive candidates to become nurses and care workers and give them the opportunities to learn the Japanese language and gain skills to work in Japanese hospitals, which are often different from those of their countries of origin. This framework provides significant opportunity for them to learn the language and acquire skills.
 - (c) Six-month-long Japanese language training and social orientation are provided by the Japanese Government. And during the period of working as assistants in Japanese hospital, they receive the same salaries as Japanese workers in similar positions. In this sense, this framework significantly contributes to reducing the upfront costs of migration, since it would be much more expensive in the event that they paid the cost to obtain similar qualifications by themselves.
 3. Challenges
 - (a) The qualifying examination is quite difficult because of the Japanese language. Actually, only 3 of 254 foreign candidates passed the examination in 2010.
 - (b) The framework is not recognition of qualification in their countries of origin. So candidates who have the qualification of their countries have to pass the Japanese examination to work in Japan beyond 3- or 4 year period.
 - (c) Candidates who can't pass the examination in three years for nurse and in four years for care worker for the elderly and persons with disabilities have to go back to their countries of origin.
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MAURITIUS:

1.0 Circular migration and human development

With increasing globalization of labour markets, the development of human capital is becoming a critical international issue, not simply a national issue. In order to meet the needs of tomorrow's global economy, there is a need to develop tools to better match labour supply with demand in safe, legal, humane and orderly ways that maximize the development potential of global labour mobility. This includes enhancing global knowledge on labour market trends, labour force profiles and labour migration trends. Better knowledge of existing and projected human resources (labour supply) and human resource needs (labour demand) at national, regional and global levels would help inform human resource development policies and programmes and related migration policies in both countries of origin and destination, according to social and economic priorities.

Traditionally, the concept of human resource development (HRD) has been looked at from the point of view of the supply side. It has been presumed that economic growth requires a certain quantity of skilled personnel. Consequently, much effort has been geared towards ensuring a steady supply of personnel with the general educational background.

HRD is the process of increasing the knowledge, the skills and the capacities of all people in society. In economic terms, HRD could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective investment in the development of the economy. HRD provides a framework for self-development, training programmes and career progression to meet an organisation's future skill requirements.

HRD is closely linked to Circular Migration. It urges sending countries to invest in training so as to meet the requirements of receiving countries. Therefore, investment in training and education are critical to ensure that workers of a particular sending country are well equipped to take employment in a particular receiving country. Quality of education and training becomes essential for a sending country to maintain its comparative advantage in a highly competitive international labour market. Only the most competitive sending countries will be able to maximise the benefits from Circular Migration.

The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. Human development is concerned with individual capabilities. From this perspective, circular migration can serve as a framework for maximizing individual choice.

Given the options, many individuals will choose to move back and forth between their home countries and destinations abroad. Through circular migration, they can avoid making a definitive choice between origin and destination countries, but rather can maintain significant ties in both. They do so in order to maximize the benefits for the migrants and their families: choosing to spend part of their time in a location that offers them superior earnings, for example.

When Circular Migration is embedded in a Bilateral Agreement between sending and receiving countries, circular migration projects are reinforced, as there is better coordination and commitment from both parties. Thus, migrant workers benefit from improved conditions for stay and return. The Bilateral Labour Agreement can be a successful means of reducing irregular migration by promoting managed migration.

The development benefits to be derived are as follows: -

- Circular Migration improves labour market access and enables migrant workers to improve their income prospects. The remittances sent by migrant workers to their families enable them to move out

of the poverty trap and improve their standard of living. It also helps to alleviate the unemployment problem.

- It enables faster Human Capital Development (at all skill levels) through better education, acquisition of foreign language(s), skills improvement, technology transfers and on-the-job experience.
- It also facilitates integration into the Global Economy through the creation of transnational networks, improving the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Diaspora and fostering the development of migration-related sectors of the economy: telecommunications, travel, money transfer.

2.0 Circular Migration Pilot Projects

As Circular Migration gathers momentum, a number of developed and developing countries have recently expressed interest in circular migration pilot projects that occur within the framework of state-managed bilateral or multilateral agreements. Notably, in 2007, the European Commission endorsed circular migration as a tool that can both help address labour needs in EU member states and maximize the benefits of migration for countries of origin by facilitating skills transfers and mitigating the risks of brain drain.

Some governments have even attempted to establish circular migration patterns within the framework of managed programs. These programs are typically designed to meet specific policy objectives. Most contemporary government-managed circular migration programs allow individuals temporary access to a country's labour market. Many migrants are willing to accept these opportunities to work abroad and earn an income higher than that available to them at home.

IOM in partnership with Portuguese and Ukrainian authorities, and with the assistance from the WB, is implementing an important pilot initiative "Temporary and Circular Labour Migration between Portugal and Ukraine". A key challenge for circularity in the Ukraine-Portugal pilot scheme is to establish channels to effectively communicate and coordinate job offers between origin and host countries; and ensure that available job vacancies appeal to migrants.

The European Union has also supported various initiatives regarding the European Neighbourhood Policy. In 2008, the EU signed its first two "mobility partnerships" with third countries. One was with Cape Verde, the other with Moldova, an active party to the Union's Neighbourhood Policy. A more recent one is a Circular Migration Pilot between the Netherlands and South Africa.

3.0 Mauritius' initiative to develop Circular Migration

As part of the reform programme and in order to widen the scope of opportunities for Mauritians, the Government took the initiative to embark on Circular Migration (CM). The objective of CM is to offer opportunities to workers who lose their jobs or whose skills do not help them to find suitable jobs in Mauritius, to spend a few years in Europe, Canada or elsewhere, to build their skills before returning home to either take up employment in new sectors or to start a business. (SME development)

The objectives of Circular Migration are three-fold:

- (i) the development of a temporary migration programme to unlock opportunities for Mauritians to take up temporary employment abroad, to acquire skills and save money before coming back to start a small business or invest in other economic activities;
- (ii) to encourage remittance flows and enhance their development impact; and
- (iii) to harness the intellectual and financial resources of our diaspora, facilitating return migration and encouraging assistance in the development of the country – something the Asian countries, particularly China and India have already achieved.

4.0 Creating the enabling environment for Circular Migration to take off

Many countries are seeking to adopt policies, legislation and structures promoting foreign employment as part of their strategy to reduce unemployment and generate remittances. However, to achieve these objectives, they need to develop appropriate capacity building schemes and put in place the appropriate institutional framework.

Mauritius recognises that for an effective development of Circular Migration, it is vital to create a conducive environment for Circular Migration to take off. In fact, the reform programme undertaken by the Government since 2006 paved the way for creating an enabling environment. The reform programme focused on the following four planks: (a) fiscal consolidation and restoring fiscal discipline; (b) improving the Investment Climate and development of SMEs; (c) mobilising FDI; and (d) restructuring the economy.

After 4 years, the Government has successfully turned around the economy and has managed to bring it back to a high and balanced growth path, making it more resilient and shielding it from the global economic downturn. The following are some key results: -

- (i) In the Doing Business Survey (DBS) 2010, Mauritius ranked 17th among the 183 economies across the world. It is the top Sub-Saharan economy for the second year in a row in terms of the overall regulatory ease of doing business. Also, there has been an upsurge in the number of SMEs created which has increased from 75,000 in 2002 to 92,000 in 2007.
- (ii) Mauritius is the easiest country for trade in Africa. It ranks 1st in Africa and 33rd out of 121 countries in the Global Enabling Trade Report 2009. This report analyses the factors enabling trade in industrialized and emerging economies and provides information on the ease of free flow of goods across national borders.
- (iii) Mauritius is the best-governed country in Africa and is ranked first for the third year running, according to the 2009 Ibrahim Index of Good Governance, which assesses national progress in sustainable economic development, human development (health and education), transparency and empowerment of civil society, democracy and human rights, rule of law and security.
- (iv) The Government has also invested massively in major infrastructural projects such as development of roads and telecommunications. Concurrently, the Government has encouraged strategic partners to come and set up business in Mauritius, such as the Apollo Bramwell Hospital and the Mauritius-Jinfei Economic Trade and Cooperation Zone Project and many others.
- (v) Also, on the human resource development side, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has opened up to strategic partnerships in tertiary education. Some 50 universities and medical schools have opened up educational institutions in Mauritius. In line with the government policy to develop Mauritius into a regional Knowledge hub, an Open University campus will be set up to accommodate some additional 8,000 students and costing around Rs 600 million. The setting of the Regional Multidisciplinary Centre of Excellence (RMCE) with the objective of offering quality education and work based education in Mauritius for the region will further consolidate Mauritius as a Regional Knowledge Hub. Government has also set up a Ministry for Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology.
- (vi) The Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD), which is responsible for vocational training in Mauritius, has also entered in strategic alliance with Monash Corp (Canada). This will provide opportunities for the Mauritian workers to get qualifications based on Canadian standards and facilitate their integration in the Canadian labour market.

5.0 A Major Breakthrough: Bilateral Agreement on Circular Migration with France

Mauritius has been particularly active in promoting a circular migration pilot. In September 2008, it signed a Bilateral Agreement on Circular Migration with France, which has been ratified in April 2010. Its implementation will soon start.

Under this agreement, Mauritian workers will be allowed to go and work in France for a specific period, gain experience, save money before returning to Mauritius to find employment in new sectors of the economy, set up their own business or invest in other economic activities.

This agreement will provide opportunities for some 1000 Mauritian professionals to access to the French labour market. Businessmen, intellectuals, lawyers, scientists, artists and sportsmen are provided with a short-stay multiple-entry visa of three months for every semester. The visa will be valid for a period of 1 year to a maximum of 5 years. Mauritian students at the Master's level will be allowed to stay in France for 12 months after graduation; 18-months visas are given to low-skilled and/or young workers willing to accept specific positions.

Return and Reintegration

The most important component of the agreement that promotes circularity is the provision for return and reintegration of the workers.

Under this Agreement, both Mauritius and France will ensure that appropriate schemes would be devised for the economic and social integration of the workers back in Mauritius. The workers who upon return would set up a business that would lead to employment creation would receive appropriate assistance from the French Authorities in terms of training, equipment and financial assistance for the launching of their project and monitoring.

Training

Both Mauritius and France will put in place appropriate training programmes. A provision of 1 Million Euros over a 3 year period has been placed at the disposal of Mauritius for:

- training of trainers,
- creation of a centre for training of professionals, and;
- upgrading existing training centres and facilities

6.0 Circular Migration on the move

The National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) is the Implementation Agency for the Circular Migration Programmes. The NEF has set up an Implementation Working Group (IWG) comprising representatives of the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment to drive the whole process.

The NEF has been fully involved in the implementation of the Circular Migration Programmes:

Pre-departure training

The NEF through the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) has facilitated many training programmes to migrant workers before their departure to satisfy the requirements of the labour

market: Basic ICT training, English courses on Functional Literacy, basic numeracy and financial literacy courses. They are also exposed to the various business opportunities in the SME sector so as to prepare for their return.

Setting up of the Mauritius Circular Migration Database (MCMD)

From experiences gathered in the process put in place for the recruitment exercise - which was found to be cumbersome and time-consuming, the Government of Mauritius in collaboration with IOM has developed a Mauritius Circular Migration Database (MCMD). The MCMD is an important tool for the effective implementation of our Circular Migration Programmes. It is an online registration system that will:

- i. create a database of Mauritian workers interested in employment abroad to match supply with employers' demands and to expedite accessibility to such opportunities for all Mauritians;
- ii. facilitate the selection of candidates, as well as reduce overall costs and time required for selection, thereby making recruitment in Mauritius more competitive and cost-effective; and
- iii. generate reports for analysis and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) purposes.

The NEF now hosts the MCMD which can be accessed by logging on the site www.nef.mu/mcmd.

6.1 Circular Migration with Canada

In 2008, Mauritius started a first Circular Migration programme with Canada with the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). As at date, some 300 workers have joined the CM programmes in Canada. This was done on a progressive basis with several small batches of workers being sent there.

6.1.1 Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) Exercise

A Monitoring and Evaluation exercise was conducted in October 2009 in Canada. The mission had as objective to evaluate Circular Migration projects undertaken so far with Canada. Interviews, questionnaires and visits to families of workers in Mauritius were the three major methods of information-gathering that were used for the M&E exercise. Meetings were held with (i) employers in Canada, (ii) Mauritian workers in Canada, and (iii) relatives of workers in Mauritius. Questionnaires were distributed to some 90 workers in Canada, whom the mission could not meet due to time constraints. Families of workers were visited in Mauritius and invaluable information was gathered from these on-site visits. Feedbacks from both the employers as well as the workers were vital for improving future projects.

In this regard, field visits were organized in different provinces.

a) Meetings with employers

The employers mentioned that Mauritian workers have integrated well in their new living and working environment. Language was not a barrier for Mauritian workers as compared to some other foreign workers. Mauritians are punctual, hardworking and overall very good workers, especially with regard to work ethics. Some difficulties were however encountered, whereby some workers had either left or had been dismissed. Supervisors noted that this was mainly due to the nature of the work (i.e., automated, intensive work and rigid hours).

b) Meetings with Mauritian workers

Meetings with the Mauritian workers were organized. The majority of them are very happy to have had this opportunity, although they have indicated that adaptation to their new life and work was difficult at

the beginning. They also mentioned that arriving in January during the cold winter was very challenging. The main findings were as follows:

- On average the workers are sending approx Canadian Dollar (CAD) 600 (approx Rs 20,000) per month.
- Some of them have had increase in salaries due to satisfactory performance and some have even obtained job promotion.
- In terms of communication, they are using laptops to keep in touch with their kids and family members via Skype.
- In terms of accommodation, the workers live in shared housings. However, after several months, some of them have adjusted themselves and are living on their own. Some other workers still share in order to save money. They are nevertheless all comfortable.
- Some Mauritian workers have integrated several socio-cultural organisations and are even doing voluntary work during the weekends.

c) *Questionnaires distributed to 90 Mauritian workers*

In provinces where on-site monitoring could not be conducted due to time constraints, surveys were carried out: 90 questionnaires were distributed and the overall feedback was very positive.

6.1.2 Meetings with relatives of workers in Mauritius

In parallel, meetings were held with families of the migrant workers in Mauritius and it was noted that the families are progressing on the social ladder:

- i. There is a constant flow of remittances from abroad
- ii. Some of them have already settled their debt
- iii. The wives of some of the migrants are following training programmes, which they were unable to do before.
- iv. One lady was employed in a kindergarten and she is now the owner of the kindergarten.
- v. Many are very thankful to the Government of Mauritius and some of them are willing to send other members to join the Circular Migration Programme.

7.0 Social Protection of migrants

As part of the initiative taken to develop Circular Migration, the GoM has sought ILO's assistance to enhance social security coverage for Mauritian migrant workers mainly through the negotiation of Bilateral Social Security Agreements for ensuring adequate protection for our workers and for facilitating reintegration on their return.

A workshop was organized in Mauritius by ILO to sensitize all relevant stakeholders (Ministries / Departments) on the "*Protection and Promotion of Rights of Migrant Workers*".

An expert has been recruited by the ILO for the framing and formulation of a model on social security agreements, targeting Canada in the first instance and France eventually. The ILO expert has worked on this project and has proposed best options for Mauritius and the way forward.

These have been submitted to the Ministry of Social Security for views and appropriate clearances. Ministry of Social Security is awaiting clearance from State Law Office (SLO) on the draft Model Agreement on Social Security before deciding on the way forward.

8.0 Conclusion

Mauritius recognises that for an effective development of Circular Migration, it is vital to create a conducive environment for Circular Migration to take off. The reform programme undertaken by the

Government since 2006 has paved the way for creating an enabling environment focused on an investment-friendly business environment, modernising the infrastructure and continuously investing in human resource development.

By taking these courageous and bold reform initiatives, Mauritius has emerged as the leading country in Africa and is poised to showcase its “Circular Migration Model” to the world as it firmly believes it could unlock new avenues for development for each and every country across the world.

MEXICO:

Recognition of migrant skills

Programs to evaluate and certify middle skilled workers. - The programs are intended to serve migrants with relatively lower levels of formal education but that have acquired significant and complex skills through on-the-job learning. Migrants that fit this profile include, for example, skilled construction workers, experienced garment manufacturers, workers in the high-end service and hospitality industry, and home-health care providers. In 2005, the Mexican government designed a program to recognize and certify work capacities in a specific labor area with the support of institutions of bi-national recognition.

To be able to receive a diploma which avails their technical knowledge:

- Affects positively the self-esteem of the migrant workers
 - Offers them the opportunity to obtain a better wage.
 - Helps to strengthen cooperation between the Mexican Consulates and the employers and unions in the United States.
 - Promotes knowledge transference so that migrants wishing to return to Mexico may bring back this knowledge in order to promote the development of our country.
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- The first “**Pilot Program to Evaluate and Certify Labor Performances**” took place on February 2005 with the certification of 24 Mexican milkmen in 5 farms in Buffalo, northwest Wisconsin and Winona, southeastern Minnesota. The program was promoted by the University of Wisconsin’s Bridges Program and the Mexican Ministries of Education (SEP) and Agriculture, Cattle, Rural Development, Fishing and Food (SAGARPA) through INCARURAL.
 - In 2006, the Mexican government began two new pilot programs, one in Chicago which certified 153 Mexican Migrants working in food management and one in Dallas which evaluated 70 Mexicans working in the construction industry.
 - These results were important in strengthening the **Program to Evaluate and Certify Labor Performances** since, according to the Pew Hispanic Center, in 2008 the majority of Mexicans in the United States were lower and middle skilled workers with a reduced participation in occupations requiring greater specialization.
 - In 2010, the program was reinforced and is currently working to launch 6 pilot programs in Wisconsin, Oxnard, Chicago, Dallas, Kansas City and Orlando.
 - In September 2010, a Workshop on Evaluation and Certification of Middle Skilled Workers will take place in Mexico City. The event will explore:

- The possibilities for harnessing the “know-how” of migrants with mid-level skill for the economic development of the sending country
- The processes of skill acquisition among this group of migrants.
- The institutional and policy factors that support skill development and skill demonstration.

Migrant education

Mexico United States Cooperation Initiative on Education. - During the past 20 years the Governments of Mexico and the United States have developed, within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding subscribed in 1990 by both countries, a series of programs aiming to facilitate access to education for Mexican migrants, and, by so doing, increase their potential to adapt to the receiving society and improve their quality of life. Here are the main examples of such agreement:

- ***Community Plazas*** where education services vary from alphabetization of adults to high school. These services are provided for the migrant community in more than 300 Plazas through the coordination of different government institutions such as IME, (the Institute for Mexicans Abroad), the Mexican consular network, the National Institute for the Education of Adults (INEA), social organizations and non- profit institutions.
- **The IME-Becas Program**, designed to overcome one of the main obstacles migrants face in order to achieve their education goals, IME (the Institute for Mexicans Abroad), in collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley, created the IME Becas Program for the education of adults in 2005. Since then, 386 organizations have been benefitted with it. In 2010 the higher education chapter was created.
- **The Open and remote Higher Education Program** directed to all Mexicans living abroad who are interested in studying High school in the open and remote modality. The program is possible thanks to the support and collaboration of the Undersecretary of Superior Education's office at the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP).
- **The Mexico-United States, bi-national program for Migrant Education** is a bi-national cooperation mechanism aiming to ensure continuity in the education of migrant children who attend part of the school year in Mexico and part in the United States.
 - **Project of Basic Education without Borders.** – This project, created in 2008 provides intercultural educational services to immigrant and emigrant students at the basic level, with the purpose to improve the educative performance of students from foreign Elementary schools in the National Educational System and promote the correct educative attention to the girls and boys that leave the country. This project has already published a series of bilingual books “While I get to my school” from which students can take conscience of their situation as migrants and their rights as people and students, in order to facilitate their transit between the different Schooling Systems.
 - **The Transference Document.** – This Instrument, created by SEP and distributed in the United States through the network of Mexican Consulates offers students of elementary and junior high school who return to Mexico, to be officially placed in a corresponding classroom according to their age, grades, and qualifications.
 - **Teachers’ Interchange.** – This initiative provides Mexican and American teachers an opportunity to share learning and education methods. This allows them to help migrant

children with whom they work to improve their education and to strengthen their national identity.

Migrant health

Mexico and the United States have designed strategies to preserve, improve and care for the migrant population's health. The prevention actions in health that are carried out with the migrant population, reduce the incidence of chronic and/or degenerative diseases and also the economic impact in rendering services to avoid the use of hospital emergency rooms.

- **Ventanillas de Salud (VDS) or Health Counters.** - Is a program aiming to facilitate Mexican immigrants' access of to health services and, at the same time, to create an environment of prevention, information and participation in health matters. The scope is to prevent diseases, improving the health of the Mexican migrant population and favoring the knowledge and responsibilities of each individual in order to improve his/her quality of life. It was created in collaboration with Mexico's Ministry of Health and operates in the Mexican Consulates in the U.S. with the active participation of local social organizations.
- **Semana Binacional de Salud (SBS) or Health Bi-national Week.** - This initiative is one of the greatest social mobilizations in favor of the health of the more vulnerable migrant groups of Latin American origin living in the United States and Canada. It promotes a series of activities to grant health education which take place during one week and a half and include workshops, reference to clinics, medical insurance and laboratory tests. It was created in collaboration with Mexico's Ministry of Health and the Initiative "Health for the Americas of the University of California, Berkley.
- **Seguro Popular or Public Insurance.** - It aims to inform Mexican nationals living in the United States about the actions promoted by the Mexican Government so that their relatives in Mexico may have access to the services offered by the Social Protection in Health system. Currently it is offered by five Mexican Consulates in the U.S. People affiliated to the Public Insurance are entitled to medical, surgical, pharmaceutical and hospital services without cost in Mexico. In this first stage, Mexican nationals will be able to present an application form at the Ventanilla de Salud (Health counters) located in the consulates of Mexico in Denver, Chicago, Sacramento and San Diego, as well as in the Consular Section of the Embassy of Mexico in Washington, D.C. Here, they will receive an electronic card in which health information about all the family members is stored regardless of whether they live. The idea is to make this benefit available in every of Mexican consulate in the United States. The goal of Mexico's Health Ministry is that, by year 2012 all Mexicans have medical services, even those living in the United States, since the estimation is that currently 40 percent of migrants do not have access to health services. The incorporation of migrants to this model of insurance allows them the possibility of returning to Mexico to receive treatment and medical attention at any time.

MOLDOVA:

Mobility Partnership between the EU and the Republic of Moldova

On June 5, 2008, the EU and Moldova concluded a Mobility Partnership, one of the most innovative and sophisticated tools to date of the Global Approach to Migration and contributing significantly to its

operationalisation. The EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership, offers to the Republic of Moldova, 15 EU Member States, EC, FRONTEX and ETF a framework of actions in all three major areas of the Global Approach to Migration: Migration and development; Promoting legal migration; Fighting illegal migration.

Since the launch of the Mobility Partnership, the partners have implemented 23 initiatives and started the implementation of 47 projects of various scale and scope. One of the ongoing projects in the partnership, “*Strengthening Moldova’s capacity to manage labor and return migration*,” is implemented in cooperation **with 12 EU Member States** and aims to facilitate the smooth reintegration into the national labour market of Moldovan voluntarily or forcibly returning home from the EU, and help Moldovan migrants to make the best possible benefit of migration for their own and Moldova’s development.

At the same time, the project focuses on improving the capacity of the Moldovan National Employment Agency and the Moldovan consular services in the EU countries to provide information about job opportunities in Moldova and the EU (both for Moldovan migrants and the public in general). Part of the project, implemented jointly with the European Training Foundation’s project „*Development of the Vocational Education and Training System in Moldova*” and in partnership with the Moldovan Ministry of Education also involves improving the mutual validation/recognition of exams, grades and certificates, both in the participating EU Member States and on the Moldovan labor market (for returnees as well as potential labor migrants) through the „Clearing House Function” launched in July 2009 and through the establishment of a database with information about the procedures of recognition and equivalence, used in some European states.

The recently launched IOM project ‘Supporting the implementation of the migration and development component of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership’ is the second flagship project approved by the EC within the framework of the Mobility Partnership and with the aim of furthering the implementation of its migration and development component. Inter alia, this project aims at fostering circulation of skills and innovative ideas by facilitating the temporary or permanent return and professional reintegration of highly-qualified Moldovans. A program has been launched offering Moldovans graduated from foreign universities professional placements in Moldova and a web-based interface for the target group and employers looking to employ specialized labour force will be developed.

A third major project under the umbrella of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership will be the upcoming World Health Organisation project ‘Better managing the mobility of health professionals in the Republic of Moldova’, aiming to promote/facilitate the circular migration of Moldovan health professionals and thus counteract the enduring brain-waste and skills shortage in this especially vital sector. Nevertheless, Mobility Partnership tool is addressing in the same time projects related to expatriated scientists in the sphere of Research & Development through the temporary return diaspora scientists and researchers to undertake a short-term research and/or tuition stays in Moldova at research and educational institutions, awareness of remittances and financial literacy raising’ focused on enhancing comprehensive long-term reintegration of Moldovan returnees through counseling, professional orientation, and vocational training.

In 2009 and in the framework of the Mobility Partnership, IOM Chisinau and IOM Athens implemented the project “Greek educational programme in Moldova”. Funded by the Greek Ministry of Interior, the project offered a three-month intensive training in Greek language and culture to over one hundred potential labour migrants, with the aim of facilitating their access to the Greek labour market and their integration in the host society.

SPAIN:

General considerations

Spain agrees with the Draft concept paper presented for Round Table 2.1 of the GFMD and would like to inform the co-chairs that the contribution of the General Directorate for the Integration of Migrants (Ministry of Labour and Immigration of Spain) will be essentially focused on the second strategic area of the paper: “Facilitating education, training, skills recognition and empowerment of migrants”.

Spain agrees with the concept of work as a source of wealth, not only for host countries but also for countries of origin. In our view, it also is necessary to enrich the idea that migrants are a source of material wealth in the countries of origin and destination, thanks to:

- the increase of social security quotas,
- the modification of ageing population pyramids,
- the occupation of certain employment positions not filled by nationals.

But migrants also:

- multiply and disseminate cultural wealth in countries of origin and destination and
- portray skill and knowledge that will finally contribute to reduce the current inequalities in the world.

Regarding cultural diversity and its opportunities, we suggest a mention to the **European Ministerial Conference on Integration**, which took place in Zaragoza (Spain) in April 2010, during the Spanish EU Presidency. The final Declaration included the following reference: *“To view cultural diversity as an opportunity for social and economic development in Europe and as a tool for fighting discrimination, and to adopt a comprehensive approach involving various key stakeholders in order to encourage diversity management and the exchange of experiences as well as entrepreneurial actions”*.

Facilitating education, training, skills recognition and empowerment of migrants

Taking into account these general considerations, the need for migrants to receive education, training, the recognition of their skills and their empowerment is obvious.

In our view, the RT must reflect upon **the concept of “human capital”**, as a collection of intangible actives that every person acquires through their education and training. This capital is an economic resource that allows the creation of new ideas, knowledge, technologies and culture, which in the end mean new wealth.

In our opinion it is necessary to foster “human capital”, foreseeing the needs of the market and incorporating the gender perspective into migration policies (this issue will be discussed in Round Table 2.2).

There are two complementary strategies that could be considered: the training of migrants and the awareness of host societies as they contribute to the idea of integration as a two-way-process between migrants and the host society. In this process, the awareness of the “others”, their capacities and potential is essential.

Examples of good practices fostering the human capital of migrants in Spain are contained in the areas of the “Strategic Plan of Citizenship and Integration of the Spanish Government” related to education, employment and training, as well as the participation of migrants in the social, political and cultural life of Spain. This Strategic Plan is focused on the citizenship as a whole and establishes

proactive policies involving not only some public administrations but also the organised civil society and the society as a whole.

Regarding **education and training in temporary and circular labour**, it has to be said that Spain has signed Agreements and set up Projects on migratory flows in order to create circular labour programs with some countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Mauritania, Morocco and Mali). These Agreements and Projects foresee the possibility of circular migrants to receive education and training from contracting companies. In practice, they receive training in Spain before starting their work from the contractors, and they also receive basic training from NGOs and trade unions. No evaluations have been undertaken so far.

Regarding the EU context, the **EU-Cape Verde Mobility Partnership** was presented in Praia on July 28th, 2008. The Mobility Partnership is a pilot initiative in which Cape Verde has been included due to its good governance and its excellent relation with the EU. Spain has strongly supported the Mobility Partnership with Cape Verde from its very beginning and has actively participated in all kinds of projects and concrete activities covered by the Mobility Partnership.

For instance, as far as employment and the management of legal migratory flows are concerned, Spain participates, *inter alia*, in the following projects:

- Development of an **Information Centre on Legal Migration and Incentive for Reintegration** into the Cape Verdean Labor Market. Spain, through its official Cooperation Agency (AECID) co-funds this project (125.000€) with Portugal (125.000€) and the European Commission (1m€). An evaluation was undertaken in 2009, and there will be another one in November 2010.
- Programme of Workshops funded exclusively by Spain (950.000€). The objective of this programme is to give youngsters aged 17 to 30 years old with no financial resources the opportunity to acquire training skills that enable them to enter into the Cape Verdean labour market. The aim of the project is that the youngsters have incentives to stay in Cape Verde. An evaluation of this programme is carried out by the Spanish Agency of Cooperation every three months.

Providing health care for migrants and their families

Spain agrees with the GFMD's Draft concept paper regarding health as a fundamental human right crucial for human development. We suggest mentioning that access to healthcare for migrants and their families is guaranteed in Spain, as it is established in the "Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration", which contains the following main objectives in the area of healthcare:

- Guarantee of migrants' right to healthcare.
- Improvement of identification of socio-sanitary necessities of the migrant population.
- Improvement of training of healthcare staff in the management of migrant population health needs.

Access to public health care assistance on an equal basis is one of the elements that conditions the integration of migrants and their full participation in the host society. In Spain, Law 16/2003 on Cohesion and Quality of the National Healthcare System sets forth that Spanish citizens and aliens who are in the country are entitled to the right to healthcare protection. The Organic Law 4/2000 on the Duties and Liberties of Aliens in Spain regulates in its Article 12 the right to healthcare assistance and sets forth that aliens registered in the Local Register of Inhabitants of the municipality of their residence are entitled to healthcare assistance on equal conditions with the Spaniards.

These people are entitled to urgent public healthcare assistance, in case of serious illnesses or accidents, regardless of their cause.

Similarly, foreign pregnant women that find themselves in Spain have the right to medical care during pregnancy, labour and post-labour.

Migrant workers have the same medical coverage as Spaniards. Spanish legislation requires that part of the salary should go towards medical coverage (to which the employer also contributes).

The actions aiming to comply with these objectives, as well as any other action regarding any of the 12 areas of the Plan, are carried out in collaboration with the private sector or in collaboration with different Spanish public administrations.

The Spanish “Training Course for Trainers in Intercultural Competences” could be mentioned as an example and good practice in the area of training in cultural healthcare diversity. This course is carried out by the Spanish Ministry for Labour and Immigration in collaboration with the Andalusian School for Health Care of the Andalusian Healthcare Office.

Ensuring social security for migrants

Spain agrees with the Draft Issues Paper on the statement that the lack of social protection of migrants may result in serious distortions in the job markets and in an increase of vulnerability of migrant population.

In order to foster good practices in this area, **Spain underlines the importance of subscribing bilateral and multilateral agreements which encourage the portability of social rights that protects migrants and their families**. On the other hand, labour inspections which sanctions bad practices, such as the hiring of illegal migrants, are deemed of crucial importance.

The signature of **agreements for the portability of rights** by Spain could be mentioned as an example of good practices in the issue. These agreements have been signed with the following States: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, United States of America, Russian Federation, the Philippines, Morocco, Mexico, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The Social Security agreement between the Kingdom of Spain and the Dominican Republic is a good example of this kind of agreements. Further details can be given upon request during the meeting.

SRI LANKA

Introduction

International Labour Migration from Sri Lanka has increased more than tenfold in the last two decades. Recent estimates suggest that over a million migrants work abroad while recent annual outflows have averaged about 200,000 persons. The share of females in foreign employment is about 49% at present. Middle Eastern Countries still remain as the major market for Sri Lankan labour. Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) is the regulatory and statutory body for overseas contract migration.

(i) Reduce the costs and risks of migration(such as high recruitment fees or exploitation / abuse of migrant by recruiters, employers, etc.)

Sri Lanka currently provides extensive services to migrant workers in the pre- departure stage in migration, but still migrant workers, at different stages in preparing for migration namely recruitment, registration and training, face difficulties, exploitative situations and abuses.

Issues and challenges

Since the majority of the migrant workers are females, their vulnerability is more. Migrant work force, characterized by relatively low level of education, lack of language proficiency other than in the mother tongue and representing the younger age group are more vulnerable to exploitative and abusive condition at the time of pre- departure stage & at work.

The role of sub- agents (Middlemen) in the recruitment process is one of the main causes of abuse and exploitation; unlicensed sub-agents working at the community level often commit malpractices and violation of regulations related to recruitment Industry in Sri Lanka.

Overcharging of fees and falsification of documents. Migrant workers will not be aware that their documents for which they have been charged/overcharged are forged, till they arrive in their destination country and are caught by the authorities.

Policy responses

Recruitment aspect of the labour migration, is regulated and managed by the SLBFE through administrative policies and procedures, licensing scheme, codes of conduct to recruitment agents and penal provision to address offences.

To minimize illegal recruitment, Sri Lanka took several measures such as provision of free insurance cover, keeping 24hour counters at the airport, training and awareness programmes.

A special investigation division consisting Police Officers has been attached to the SLBFE since 1996 to check the performance of licensed recruiting agencies and to minimize illegal recruitment.

An amendment to the SLBFE Act has been made establishing approved rates for job placements fees to prevent overcharging by recruitment Agencies. Model Service Contract for job seekers has been introduced.

Since 1996 pre-departure training has been made compulsory for all female Sri Lankans going abroad for work. The SLBFE has been providing the training, free of charge, with residential facilities at 26 training centers all over the country. The programme includes orientation on financial management, health issues including HIV / AIDS component, personality development, counseling, basic language skills, house keeping, cultural awareness of destination countries.

Sri Lanka government initiated a Pre- departure loan scheme at low interest rate through State Banks, to ease the financial burden to the job seekers at the pre- departure stage.

(ii) Education, training and skills recognition and enhancement of the migrant/Diaspora and family at home and abroad

Issues

Human rights of low-skilled migrant workers could easily be violated and they could face harassment and abuse at the work place more than skilled workers.

National responses

A ten year development plan is being developed for safe, skilled overseas labour migration, and a comprehensive training plan aimed specifically at increasing the capacity of less-skilled workers to access skilled employment is being implemented with the involvement of National vocational training agencies and the private sector.

A plan will be developed and implemented under the National Migration Policy to harness the resource, skills, and expertise of Sri Lankan Diaspora by providing incentives to them to make contributions for the development of their home country .

(iii) Health care for migrants and their families

Issues

Health issues associated with the migration process require prime emphasis from the pre-departure stage due to, vulnerability for HIV/infection and psychological issues due to isolation, cultural shock and alienation.

Temporary separation of mothers due to foreign employment, affects young children's health conditions may cause malnutrition, drug addiction and physiological disorders etc.

Policy responses

- * Government of Sri Lanka provides free health to all Sri Lankans.
- * Special Health care programmes are conducted through Workers welfare fund.
- * Pre- departure training on health aspects including family health, reproductive health & HIV/AIDS, is conducted
- * Recently launched a programme by the Ministry of Health for preparing a Health Policy for Migrants including migrant workers.
- * Free health insurance scheme for documented workers and their families is implemented.
- * Special project is being implemented to take care of children of migrant workers with the assistance of National Child protection Authority, Health Ministry & the UNICEF.

(iv) Social welfare Plans

Issues

The re- integration of returning labour migrants is a often neglected aspect of labour management programmes when compared to other stages of migration. Due to absence / lack of income, livelihood, re-integration opportunities upon returning home, many women are pressured to re-migrate.

Policy responses

Special programmes and services available to assist in re- integration of returning migrants are given below.

- *A low interest loan scheme for housing, starting self –employment projects.
- *family development programmes to help families to invest their savings in self- employment activities.
- *Counseling programmes on health issues.
- *Scholarship programme for Children of the migrant workers.
- *Free Health insurance scheme to cover health expenses for migrant workers and their families.
- *Contributory pension scheme for return migrant workers with the assistance of state owned insurance providers.

Suggestions for good partnership practices

* Respect for universal human rights instruments and the ILO Declaration on fundamental Principles and Rights at work would go a long way towards protection of basic human rights of the migrant workers. This is because many current violations relate to basic human rights of migrant workers. Needless to add that mere ratification would not guarantee protection; it depends on countries incorporating these international standards into national laws and instituting effective means for their enforcement.

* Labour sending Asian countries have to carefully balance between “promotion” of foreign employment and “protection” of their migrant workers abroad.

* Due to the complexity of migration processes and problems experienced, it is clear that no single party or agency can ensure protection of migrant workers. Efforts must be taken at national, regional and global levels. All stake holders must give hands in this task, governments, employers, workers, civil society organizations, migrant workers’ associations themselves. Networking of unions, employers’ organizations, NGOS between sending and receiving countries is essential. These partnerships are especially important for vulnerable women migrant workers and irregular migrant workers.

* Promoting bi-lateral and regional consultations is necessary to proceed with orderly migration policies which can ensure co-operation between sending and receiving countries.

* Greater participation of social partners on migration issues is essential. Networking among employers and workers’ organizations in sending and receiving countries should be encouraged.

* Co-ordinated and multi-pronged approach for protection of women migrant workers is necessary.

* Information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration, trafficking should be started in both sending and receiving countries. On the other hand rights of migrant workers and available measures should be disseminated to all parties.

* Bi-lateral labour agreements should be promoted to enhance the security and welfare of the migrant workers providing for terms and rules of settlement of employee grievances and the recognition of employment contracts.