EUROMED Migration III project

Migration and Development Peer-to-Peer Meeting:
Migration and Development in the Mediterranean Region – State of Play

18-19 December 2012
Madrid

CONTRIBUTION FOR
MEETING REPORT AND FINALISATION OF PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

As agreed in the concluding session of the Madrid meeting, delegates are kindly asked to:

- Carefully read the meeting report and revert to the EUROMED Migration III Team to indicate their preference with regard to the thematic to focus on for the 2 peer-to-peer meetings and 4 trainings. Please note only ENPI South Partner Countries are requested to indicate preferences regarding training activities. 5 thematic are proposed while there are 4 trainings foreseen, thus kindly indicate your preference in an order from 1 to 5;
- Answer the indicated questions in the discussion guides.
- Send back to the Mr. Gordon Purvis, Project Coordinator, gordon.purvis@euromed-migration.eu by 11 February 2013.

Your contribution will support us in assisting you in the best possible way. We thank you in advance for your feedback.
The EUROMED Migration III Project aims at fostering cooperation on migratory issues between ENPI South Partner Countries and EU Member States, as well as between countries within the South and East Mediterranean region itself. Alongside Legal Migration and Irregular Migration, Migration and Development constitutes one of the key thematic components of the project, for which assistance is given to partner countries in their efforts to govern international migration. By strengthening institutional and technical capacities to develop evidence-based migration policies, the project wishes to support partner countries in better benefitting from linkages between migration and development.

As a preliminary step in this direction, the first EUROMED Migration III peer-to-peer meeting on Migration and Development was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain in Madrid on 18-19 December 2012. 42 Delegates from Algeria, Egypt, France, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Spain and Tunisia, together with the European Commission, FIIAPP, GFMD 2012 Mauritius Presidency, ICMPD, ICT-ILO, ILO, IOM, OFII and a civil society representative from the diaspora AFFORD, as well as the EUROMED Migration III Key Expert Team, from took part in the meeting.

Drawing on policy, academic, technical, and operational perspectives, this meeting aimed at reviewing the general context of Migration and Development and reflecting on key issues of relevance for ENPI South Partner Countries. More concretely, the meeting explored topics that could be further discussed in 2 peer-to-peer policy meetings, and form the basis of 4 training modules on Migration and Development. The meeting thus laid the grounds for these forthcoming activities within the EUROMED Migration III project to respond to the needs and priorities of ENPI South Partner countries and for final choices of themes and issues to be rooted in a shared consensus.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain opened the proceedings and illustrated the experience and specificities of the Spanish approach to migration. The European Commission presented the broader regional cooperation setting within which the EUROMED migration III project was established. The EUROMED Migration III Team followed suit, presenting the project’s overall aims and structure, highlighting achievements so far as well as the way forward. (Including a description of the project management tool and migration profile road map.)

These introductory addresses were followed by the presentation of the main background document Migration and Development in the Mediterranean Region – State of Play, expert presentations and open discussions among participants uncovering the complexities of the linkages between Migration and Development organised in five main working sessions, the main outcomes of each of which are outlined next.

**Working Session 1. Migration and Development in the global, regional and national discourse.**

The meeting offered an opportunity to explore how discourse about Migration and Development has evolved in discussions at the global, regional and national level and how this is of relevance for the South and East Mediterranean region. Presentations by the GFMD, the European Commission, and Spain and Egypt (as receiving and sending country) illustrated these various perspectives, evolutions and respective priorities. These interventions were followed by open-floor discussions where it emerged that migration policies including Migration and Development are ever more complex, notably due to a change and/or mixing of status of concerned countries e.g. country of origin, transit and destination, and require ever more flexibility, regular updating and adaptable support mechanisms. In this regard, the boundaries of the thematic Migration and Development remain unclear and are often easier to specifically define in a geographically limited framework e.g.
bilateral cooperation agreement, a focus on a migrant-centred approach that puts migrants at the centre of discussions as human beings is gaining importance within Migration and Development discourse at all levels. It remains however unclear how this concern should trickle down to other levels and be translated into practice. Most Migration and Development policy, technical and operational efforts, in fact, focus on mainstreaming migration into development rather than the other way round. It was suggested that much emphasis is placed on the central level, whereas the local dimension is more appropriate when it comes to migrant contributions to development and further pursuing a migrant centred-perspective.

**Working Session 2. Policy Making on Migration and Development**

Examples were presented and discussed of how sending and receiving countries have engaged with policymaking on Migration and Development at the national level. French co-development policy and Morocco’s efforts to integrate a concern for migration within its National Initiative for Human Development ([Initiative Nationale de Développement Humain, INDH](#)) illustrate successful governmental efforts to combine national Migration and Development policy with a focus on the local dimension through decentralised programmes. Nevertheless a balance between the often global, regional or national macro expectations related to migration and development i.e. the scale of impact on migration and on development, and the generally rather micro potential of most of migrant-centred initiatives should be sought and reflected in the policy making process on migration and development. It was also highlighted that a focus on local levels must be supported by a larger framework that ensures acceptation by, coherence and coordination with other levels. In other words, local approaches must be aligned with national strategies, as well as regional and intra-regional mobility and development settings. This calls for strong partnerships with stakeholders at different levels, and the IOM stressed the role of international actors (e.g. inter-governmental and UN agencies) in providing national governments with assistance in achieving this. As confirmed also in a presentation by the ICMPD’s [on-going effort to map Migration and Development policymaking](#), in fact, inter-governmental actors are in a privileged position to have comparative insight into achievements and challenges at the national level, from which they can draw cross-cutting lessons that are advantageous for all. This is particularly important when we consider that governments rarely invest in assessing and evaluating the effects of their Migration and Development policies. The discussion in this session underlined how a focus of Migration and Development at central and local levels is dependent upon the shape and strength of administrations within each country. ENPI South Governments that are currently experiencing democratisation processes may require greater and longer efforts to emplace the decentralisation and governance structures required to implement a human development perspective on Migration and Development.

**Working Session 3. Migration and development, government-academia cooperation**

This session explored experiences of cooperation between governments and academia in the field of Migration and Development. The [experience of the GOVAC project](#) aiming to build training and analytical capacities on migration by strengthening cooperation between academia was presented. This initiative illustrates how collaboration and exchange between government and academia, through the elaboration of a common curriculum, offers the opportunity to strengthen evidence-based policymaking and enhance the capacities of both researchers and government officials. Algeria presented a different angle by giving greater importance to another aspect of government-academia cooperation, namely the opportunity of drawing on skills and knowledge detained by expatriate communities for scientific advancement in the home country. The discussion that followed privileged this interpretation of government-academia collaboration, with many participants highlighting knowledge gaps in specific tools that are essential to foster the
engagement of expert migrants in short-term missions in their homeland or in business creation. Exchange programmes, schemes facilitating e-learning, development of collaborative research, web-based portals for the indexing of migrant skills and areas of expertise, as well as de-bureaucratisation and criteria for the identification of promising sectors for migrant investment were among the specific challenges discussed. Arabic speaking countries, moreover, expressed concerns for sustainable ways of ensuring home-language education opportunities to their overseas communities and a need to foster e-learning tools and mechanisms as well as collaboration with civil society and migrant associations to broaden the reach of present efforts.

**Working Session 4. A technical angle to migration and development – setting the mechanisms**

This session discussed technical instruments for Migration and Development, ranging from mechanisms supporting dialogue and collaboration with migrant communities and between governments at the regional level. Spain presented the experience of its Migration and Development fund with ECOWAS countries. It was highlighted that choosing a geographically circumscribed approach has allowed the fund to integrate attention for regional, national, local and cross-border levels in all ECOWAS countries. On behalf of the Global Migration Group (GMG), the ILO presented the handbook on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning, supporting national policymaking processes. The presentation underlined that many countries face severe challenges due to lack of data and indicators on which to base decisions and that this may be the outcome of different institutions simply not talking to each other rather than true absence of data. This highlights the importance of discussions at the national, bilateral and regional levels. ICMPD’s presentation of the Strengthening African and Middle Eastern Diaspora Policy through South-South Exchange (AMEDIP) programme further underlined the need to enhance government institutional capacity and exchange in the creation of diaspora policies and support mechanisms, including the need to make better data and research available as well as improving methodologies for data collection. It is worth noting that some of the concerned countries have already cumulated decades of experience and invested in sharing this experience through South-South exchange. Building trust and enhancing communication with the diaspora emerged as a challenge and priority for governments of countries of origin. This point was particularly stressed in the presentation by AFFORD, representing diaspora constituency in the meeting, who is currently involved in efforts to strengthen civil society and diaspora associations through the establishment of a Africa-Europe Platform (AEP) on diaspora for development. Diaspora outreach and diaspora ownership were identified as basic elements for any Migration and Development effort and particularly central when human development perspectives are adopted.

**Working Session 5. Operationalizing Migration and Development**

Finally, the last session of the meeting focused on some concrete initiatives taking place on the ground, so as to cover also the operationalization of Migration and Development into specific programmes, projects and institutional bodies. Presentations included insight into some of the initiatives promoted in Italy, France (in particular through OFII), Spain (in particular through FIIAPP), and Tunisia (through the establishment of a one-stop desk providing support to the Tunisian community residing abroad). The discussions that followed focused extensively on the importance of home country policies and initiatives in facilitating migrant investment into more productive sectors. These should include not only legislative measures to simplify bureaucracy, but also the setting up of investment services that enhance coordination between the different services provided to investors, ideally by bringing them together in a common location. ENPI South Partner countries expressed an interest in such initiatives and shared their experience, positive and negative as well as lessons-learnt (e.g. regarding one-stop desks, the necessity to ensure a solid and functioning back office system to the front office), in setting up similar services. Participants in the
meeting also underlined the importance of collaboration with receiving countries in facilitating migrant investment. Return and reintegration schemes were also discussed. The use of local branches/offices or reliable partners in countries of return was deemed essential to ensure a proper support to ensure the sustainability of the return home.

Overall conclusion

The meeting outlined that migrants make heterogeneous contributions to development, transferring to their countries of origin economic, human and social capital. It was underlined that development impacts are also heterogeneous and differ on the basis of the considered scale (national level or local level of greater relevance for individual migrants, their families and communities), timeframe (immediate or long-term), and setting (including the volume of migration, skill profiles of migrants, specificities of areas of origin and destination). Ultimately, Migration and Development emerged as an issue that holds implications for very diverse fields and needs to be addressed simultaneously from various perspectives (from academic, through to policy, technical and operational).

Among the main outcomes of discussions at the meeting is the acknowledgement that migration has different development impacts, largely depending on the way in which development is conceived. Global, regional and national discourses on Migration and Development have evolved in recent years, coupling a concern for national development impacts of migration with a concern for migrant-centred perspectives along the lines of human-development approaches. The ENPI South country experiences shared at the meeting, in fact, show that most countries have a double interest for impacts of migration on development at the aggregate level (e.g. effects of remittances on national balance of payments, economic development through migrant investment, involvement of migrant expertise to strengthen sectors such as scientific research and health) and at the local level (e.g. effects of migrant remittances on poverty reduction, migrant contributions to infra-structural development and governance in their home communities). Fostering the development effects of migration at these two scales, however, calls for very different policy responses, operational mechanisms and practices, as well as for strong coordination and coherence between stakeholders at all levels.

Another important overall finding of the meeting is that development effects of migration in the homeland largely depend on a country’s development needs. Given the specificities of the region, countries South and East of the Mediterranean have extremely diversified development priorities. Moreover, their expatriate communities are also strongly diversified and include migrants with varying skill and professional levels in different proportions. This has implications for how development and migration can be most efficiently linked. Attention should be paid to how the specific compositions of an emigrant community match homeland development needs, as Migration and Development policies and programmes may be directed towards emigrant communities at large or may be targeted towards a selected minority of migrants with specific profiles and potential.

Recommended themes for follow-up activities

Given the relative complexity of Migration and Development as a multi-thematic field, as well as the significant differences across ENPI South Partner countries in terms of their migration experiences and the development benefits that they might reap from migration, identifying common themes of interest for peer-to-peer meetings and trainings emerged as a significant challenge. Nonetheless, some topical areas were repeatedly addressed by speakers and during discussions, marking priority concerns for the participating countries and institutions around which
there is a shared interest. The topics outlined next, therefore, should be used as a guideline to collect further feedback among partners and narrow down available options to more punctual choices.

From an organisational perspective, it was suggested that peer-to-peer meetings should be structured into separate working groups addressing different sub-themes and reporting back to a plenary.

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Comments

Suggested themes for peer-to-peer meetings (addressed to both EU Member States and ENPI South Partner Countries):

- **Development benefits and policy/institutional responses at the national and local level.** A peer-to-peer meeting could focus on the development of national policies of relevance for migration and development, as well as mechanisms favouring a decentralized approach. Mechanisms enhancing alignment and coherence between stakeholders at different levels (local, national, regional, intra-regional) should also be explicitly addressed, as this is shown to foster best results. In particular, it would be useful for the meeting to include a focus on concrete examples of collaboration between institutional actors in sending and receiving countries (e.g. bilateral agreements and cooperation programmes, agreements between local authorities, etc.).

  ![Agree Disagree No position Preference from 1 to 3](image)

  Comments

- **Government-business partnerships.** Although the involvement of the private sector was not extensively discussed during the meeting, strong interest was shown by ENPI South Partner Countries for better exploitation of linkages with emigrant communities for economic growth. Businesses are key potential partners in this process, and the government could support a framework facilitating contact between corporate and business environments and overseas migrants. Emplacing a facility of this kind would ease market-driven encounter between supply and demand. Limited knowledge currently exists about similar schemes, so this topic would be best addressed during a peer-to-peer meeting that could map on-going experiences. This topic could be easily linked to concerns for migrant skill transfer and migrant economic investment, both of which are indicated below as potential topics for the training component of the EUROMED Migration III project.

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  Comments
- **Migration and Development from an integration perspective.** When discussed the thematic of Migration and Development remains almost exclusively focused on the one hand, on the relation sending country towards its emigrant communities and the countries where they reside, and on the other hand, receiving country towards the immigrant communities it hosts and the country where they come from where beneficiaries are understood as being the migrants and the country of origin. However, in a fast evolving globalised world countries’ profile change and evolve constantly and nowadays, more often than not, countries are a mixed of origin, transit and destination. Looking into Migration and Development from an integration perspective could help partly bring closer Migration and Development and Integration policies. Migrants and emigrant communities are often bridges for trade whose role and activities can contribute to the development of both sending and receiving countries. Bridges need solid ground and foundations on both sides to sustain significant and long-term exchange. Encompassing integration, both domestic and abroad, in a country’s Migration and Development policy might further contribute to the ultimate goal that is further development.

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**Suggested themes for trainings** (only addressed to ENPI South Partner Countries):

- **Migrant remittances.** On the one hand, there was a general agreement that the most part of remittances is used for consumption purposes. On the other hand, measures to reduce remittance costs may not change this outcome and have already been introduced in many countries. Enabling a competitive environment (e.g. through remittances prices databases, improving the use of new technologies for money transfers, informing migrants about available transferring means) should ensure that cost reduction is a market-driven process, and linking remittances to micro-credit should favour the use of remittances for investment purposes. Progress in these areas focusing on migrants as remittance senders and users would allow government efforts to be directed towards ways of exploiting remittances for development at the central level. In this regard, some innovative and still underexploited tools exist that can better encourage impact investments in the home country (e.g. diaspora bonds, mutual funds, and tax relief tools). A training module could cover these measures that are in a better position to favour the governance of remittance flows and their channelling towards collective (rather than private) development goals.

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- **Economic investment.** Many ENPI South partner countries emphasised on-going efforts to support migrants wishing to invest economically in their country of origin. Trainings could be offered on schemes and structures able to respond to migrants bringing back different skills and returning to the home country under different conditions (from those returning because they have failed to achieve their goals in countries of destination, to those returning with strong investment ideas that could impact on the vitality of homeland economic and labour...
markets). While technical and operational facilities supporting migrant investors may be set up that require substantial funding, there is evidence that better coordination between already existing structures (e.g. one-stop windows or shops) can improve services with reduced additional costs. Similarly, legislative frameworks (e.g. reducing bureaucracy) may also facilitate investment. Trainings should also cover measures ensuring cooperation with countries of destination. Receiving countries, in fact, are not only important donors for projects supporting individual migrants in business creation, but collaboration may facilitate outreach to inform migrants about services and support available to them across sending and receiving countries. Another aspect of business development covered by the course could look at mechanisms allowing local businesses to exploit migrant networks in order expand and penetrate foreign markets.

- **Migrant skills.** Linking institutions (but also businesses) in the country of origin with competences and skills that are detained by migrants remains a high priority for ENPI South Partner Countries. Governments would benefit from training helping them to assess: what skill gaps the country is in most need of; what skills exist among emigrants; what technologies and instruments can assist countries (web portals, skill databases, etc.); what mechanisms best facilitate matching demand and supply (e.g. agreements between institutions in specific sectors); how to ensure the involvement and sustainable commitment of relevant stakeholders, including migrants.

- **Outreach with emigrant communities.** Any effort to involve migrants in the development of the home country has to first and foremost put migrants at the centre of the process. Seeking for migrant commitment requires reaching out to individuals and their families through one-to-one relationships, but also establishing communication with migrant communities at the aggregate level (e.g. dialogue with civil society associations, setting up of consultative bodies). Mapping the diaspora abroad is an integral part of similar efforts.

- **Collaboration between government and academia / research.** Better knowledge is needed to enhance government institutional capacity in the creation of diaspora policies. This will avoid the definition of policies based on unverified assumptions and enhance evidence-based policy making. Although policy and academic communities operate with different logics and priorities, mutual collaboration and exchange could be beneficial to both parties. For academia,
collaboration with governments could ensure better visibility and impact of research findings, and facilitate access to resources for undertaking research. For governments, collaboration with academia or research bodies could: enhance access to more rigorous data and knowledge; facilitate the collection of new data that is methodologically sound; assist in the evaluation of policies and programmes; facilitate the setup of training schemes for government officials and institutional staff. A concern should be included for collaboration at the national level as well as beyond (e.g. facilitating access to knowledge and information on emigrant communities also in destination countries).

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