



International labour migration is defined as the movement of people from one country to another for the purpose of employment.

As of 2013, an estimated 150.3 million persons were working in a country other than their country of birth. Despite the efforts made to ensure the protection of migrant workers, many remain vulnerable and assume significant risks during the migration process.

When properly managed, labour migration has far-reaching potential for the migrants, their communities, their countries of origin and destination and their employers. While job creation in the home country is the preferred option, demographic, social and economic factors are increasingly the drivers of migration. A growing number of both sending and receiving countries view international labour migration as an integral part of their national development and employment strategies.

On one hand, countries of origin benefit from labour migration because it relieves unemployment pressures and contributes to development through remittances, knowledge transfer, and the creation of business and trade networks. On the other hand, for destination countries facing labour shortages, orderly and well-managed labour migration can lighten labour scarcity and facilitate mobility.

OUR GOAL

TO PROTECT MIGRANT WORKERS AND TO OPTIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF LABOUR MIGRATION FOR BOTH THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION AS WELL AS FOR THE MIGRANTS THEMSELVES



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THE IOM APPROACH TO LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

As a transnational phenomenon, labour migration is most effectively managed through well-formulated national policies, and bilateral and multilateral partnerships. Through its global network of more than 401 offices, IOM, the UN Migration Agency is able to bring together stakeholders to establish labour migration programmes and mechanisms that balance their various interests, and address migrants' needs. The IOM approach to international labour migration is to foster the synergies between labour migration and development, and to promote legal avenues of labour migration as an alternative to irregular migration. Moreover, IOM aims to facilitate the development of policies and programmes that are in the interest of migrants and society, providing effective protection and assistance to labour migrants and their families.

POLICY ADVICE AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

By lending policy and operational advice to governments, IOM supports the development of policies, legislation and administrative structures that promote efficient and effective labour migration flows. In countries of origin, IOM assists governments to promote safe labour migration practices for their nationals, training possibilities and regulation of the recruitment of workers. IOM also works with governments in destination countries to better manage their labour inflows and the integration of labour migrants in their new workplace and society.

FACILITATION OF FOREIGN RECRUITMENT AND TEMPORARY MIGRATION

Many countries require temporary foreign workers to meet labour market shortages when qualified national are not readily available. Facilitating temporary migration between countries that is fluid and organized can respond to short-term requirements for labour, while at the same time maximizing the development impact of migration in countries and communities of origin.

Increasingly, governments and the private sector have sought IOM's assistance to implement transparent and efficient recruitment systems within the framework of bilateral agreements, thereby ensuring that migrant workers are placed in acceptable working conditions. IOM's focal areas include information dissemination, database set-up and registration of potential migrant workers, matching skills with demand, candidate selection, pre-departure orientation, transit and post-arrival assistance, complementary orientation in the receiving country, and return and reintegration in the country of origin.

INFORMATION-SHARING AND AWARENESS-RAISING

IOM's awareness-raising activities and dissemination of information to migrants throughout contribute to the reduction of irregular migration and the vulnerability of migrants. Its migrant training programmes and Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) inform workers about the risks and realities of labour migration, thereby empowering them to make better decisions.

LABOUR MIGRATION RESOURCE MATERIAL

IOM produces resource materials to assist States in developing new policy solutions and approaches for better management of labour migration such as:

- Regional Guidelines for the Development of Bilateral Labour Agreements in the Southern African Development Community
- Regional Guide to Facilitate South-South Labour Mobility in Southern Africa

These publications and other information related to labour migration policies and best practices can be accessed at: www.iom.int/labour-migration

For more information on the above activities please contact the Labour Mobility and Human Development Division (LHD), Email: lhd@iom.int, Twitter: @IOMLHD

