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MIGRATION PROFILE AS A TOOL FOR STRATEGIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT?

IOM'S WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA EXPERIENCE

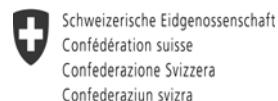
Migration Profiles and their possible uses

Policy coherence in the field of migration and development requires accessible and appropriately compiled data and research findings, national policy coordination, active international cooperation at the bilateral, regional and global levels. The creation of Migration Profiles as outlined in the European Commission's Communication on Migration and Development (2005) and the Global Approach to Migration One Year on: Towards a Comprehensive Migration Policy (2006) responds to these challenges through an evidence-based approach. Migration Profiles go beyond simply compiling a statistical report on migration. They also provide a framework for bringing existing information from different sources together in a structured manner at both national and regional levels and a means to identify and develop strategies to address data and policy development needs.

As an information and capacity-building tool, Migration Profiles can:

- Promote discussion about migration policy, coherence and coordination between a large range of ministries.
- Support national and regional initiatives to mainstream migration into development plans through country analysis and monitoring and evaluation of outcomes.
- Facilitate regional processes such as Regional Consultative Processes and Regional Economic Communities through information-sharing at the regional level.

In order to be an effective information tool for policy making, Migration Profiles need to be government-owned and updated regularly.





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Background

Over the past three years, IOM has prepared Migration Profiles for governments in 32 countries in Eastern Europe and the CIS, South America and Africa. These profiles are the result of a range of different projects of various size and duration. This note focuses on IOM's largest Migration Profile project in West and Central Africa involving ten target countries (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Cape Verde) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

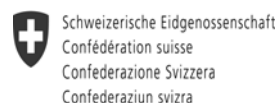
The "Migration in West and Central Africa: Profiles for Strategic Policy Development" project differs from other projects not merely in its size, but also because it explicitly adopts a capacity-building approach to the preparation of Migration Profiles. In the context of this two-year AENEAS project, funded by the European Commission (EC)¹, the Swiss Federal Office for Migration (FOM) and the Belgian Development Cooperation, Migration Profiles are conceived of as being more than just statistical reports. They are also government-owned tools to facilitate national policy development.

The aim of this note is to explain the overall approach of this research and capacity-building project and to highlight some of the project's preliminary outcomes. The note concludes with some of the lessons that can already be learned from the ongoing Migration Profile exercise.

What are the objectives of Migration Profiles in West and Central Africa?

The overall objective of this project is to build the research and other capacities of the governments in ten target countries in West and Central Africa (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Cape Verde) in order to promote a coherent and proactive policy approach to migration at national and regional levels. This includes the development of "National Migration Profiles" that can serve as a framework for data collection and analysis in support of strategic policy planning.

¹ 10th European Development Fund (EDF), reference: EuropeAid/124151/C/ACT/Multi.





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The specific objectives of the project are:

- To enhance governmental knowledge about migration and its relationship to development
- To support governments in establishing mechanisms for regular reporting on migration-related trends
- To improve the use of migration information for policy development
- To foster greater inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration with respect to data collection and policy development

There are two broad sets of activities that aim to make the Migration Profiles both an information and a policy development tool.

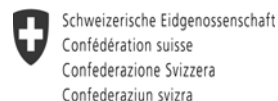
Migration Profiles as an information tool

Although reliable data on stocks and flows of migration remains scarce in target countries, data and information relevant to migration in these countries are nevertheless collected. However, these are often stored in many different locations both inside and outside governmental structures. Each target country, therefore, established **an intra-governmental mechanism specifically to support the preparation of a country profile**, discuss its findings and develop plans to address data and information gaps.

This data collection mechanism includes the following elements:

- **A comprehensive Migration Profile template**

The Migration Profile reports are compiled according to a standardized template. The purpose of the template is to evaluate available information relevant to migration in a comprehensive and systematic manner. The template not only includes information on migration trends but also on the broader development and institutional context related to migration.





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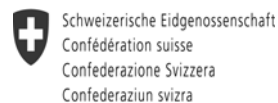
The reports are divided into the following sections:

- PART A: Development and a historical overview of migration patterns
- PART B: Analysis of the socio-economic context of migration
- PART C: Analysis of the migration situation in the country
- PART D: Factors driving migration
- PART E: Effectiveness of migration policies in managing the migration phenomenon
- PART F: Evaluating the consequences of migration and migration policy on development

The preparation of the reports went beyond mere information collection to include an assessment of existing data and information sources and possible strategies to improve data collection in the target countries.



- **The use of local research consultants** to prepare the Migration Profile reports in order to strengthen local research capacity and links between research and policy communities.
- **The establishment of inter-ministerial technical working groups (TWGs)** to:
 - Comment on and endorse the Migration Profile template
 - Support the local research consultant in data collection
 - Promote dialogue between data users and producers
 - Provide input to the report at different stages of the drafting process
 - Discuss and draft a data management plan





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Composition of the Technical Working Groups

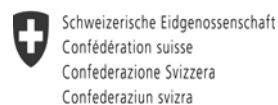
The Technical Working Groups (TWG) are on average composed of 20 representatives of different ministries and agencies institutions, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ministry of Law and Justice, the National Statistical Office (NSO), National Immigration Service, Border and Law Enforcement Authorities, National Population Council to mention a few. In addition to these national governmental actors, various international agencies such as, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and some local research institutes such as the *Institut de recherche pour le développement* (IRD) in Senegal, the *Centre Ivoirien de recherches economiques et sociales* (CIRES) in Côte d'Ivoire, the *Centre d'information et de gestion des migration* (CIGEM) and the *Centre d'études et de recherches sur la population pour le développement* (CERPOD) in Mali, also participated at the TWG meetings.

During the duration of the two-year project the TWG have been meeting regularly every two to three months (i.e. about 10 meetings in total). Although technical experts from the different ministries were the most regular attendees of TWG meetings, departmental Heads and Directors and even Ministers participated, especially during the launch of the TWG (at the end of the year 2008) and the National Policy Planning Workshop (April and May 2009). Ad hoc meetings for specific activities such as the drafting of a data management strategy particularly attracted the attention of Senior Ministerial Officials. In some countries, such as Cote d'Ivoire, Directors and Heads of Department attended on a regular basis. Other countries such as Mali plan to create extra-committee linked to the TWG for NGOs and other civil society actors.

A number of specific activities were designed to encourage government ownership and support the work of the TWGs in making the Migration Profiles a sustainable information tool.

National Policy Planning Workshops were organized at which the draft Migration Profile reports were presented and on the basis of which governments issued recommendations on future policy development and improved data collection. The workshops also addressed the issue of sustainability by identifying a specific institution responsible for updating the Migration Profiles.

A **Regional Workshop on Data Collection** was organized to familiarize representatives of the National Statistics Office and of the institutions responsible for updating the country reports with short-term strategies for improving the collection of data on international migration. The workshop participants formulated a recommendation to set up national task forces responsible for *drafting a data-management strategy*.



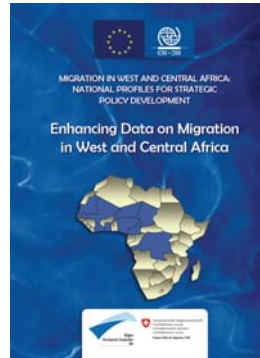


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Drafting a Data Plan

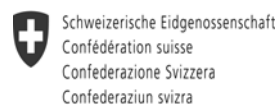
Many TWGs followed up the recommendation from Regional Data Collection Workshop (Dakar, June 2009), to set up a taskforce for developing migration data strategies/action plan. In Ghana the TWG decided to hire a consultant that would assist with the creation of a national migration database. In DRC, two experts groups have been tasked with the elaboration of a long-term data strategy and an action plan identifying the next steps, respectively. In Nigeria, the National Population Commission (NPopC) proposed a collective data strategy where all relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) will collaborate to determine a common approach to migration data management. In Mali, the Ministère des Maliens de l'Extérieur et de l'Intégration Africaine has announced to consider in its budget for the following year the expenses related to the update of the MP. In Cote d'Ivoire, the National Statistical Office has been selected to elaborate the national data strategy in collaboration with a data specialist from the Office National de l'Identification (ONI).

A draft mapping study on migration questions in household surveys in the target countries and a data manual is intended to provide further support to the work on data management strategy.



Migration Profiles as a policy development tool

National Migration Profile reports go beyond simply reporting on data. Through the establishment of a dedicated intra-governmental mechanism to support their preparation, the reports also constitute a tool to better inform and advance policy planning on international migration in the target countries.





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The following organizational components of the data collection mechanism will particularly serve to enhance the use of Migration Profiles as a policy development tool:

- **Policy section of the Migration Profile**

The policy section of the report brings together information about the actors and institutions involved in migration-related activities and policy frameworks in general. This kind of information is not easily available, even to government members in the country.

Civil Society Participation in TWG meetings

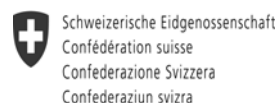
In most countries of the MP project, civil society actors participated or at least were invited to TWG meetings. However, the modalities of participation of the civil society seem to differ from country to country: in the DRC, the Service de renforcement des appuis à la société civile et aux communautés de base (SERACOB) has been created by the civil society and plays an active role in all of IOM's activities, including in this project. In Cote d'Ivoire, l'Agence d'Etudes et de Promotion de l'Emploi (AGEPE) attended regularly the TWG meetings, while some other civil society organisation (such as the NGO Porte Flambeau d'Afrique, Caritas and the Université de Bouaké) participated less regularly. The Ivorian Government is open to the participation of civil society, but reserves the right to limit TWG meeting to governmental representatives if issues related to the sovereignty of the country are to be discussed. In Mali, le Haut Conseil des Maliens de l'Extérieur (HCME), has been identified as representative of the civil society; the Comité national de pilotage allows other actors and partner such as NGOs, CBOs, etc. to share their points of view with the members of the TWG. In Senegal, a range civil society and private sector organizations participate in the TWG meetings such as CONGAD, ENDA Tiers-monde, RADDHO and the Chambre de commerce, d'industrie et d'agriculture de Dakar. In Ghana, the TWG includes the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana; in Mauritania two NGOs AMLII and SARIA are part of the TWG.

- **Inter-ministerial TWGs**

The TWGs not only facilitate but also foster coordination and policy coherence between entities inside and outside the government. These workshops bring different ministries and non-governmental actors together, often for the first time, to discuss the issues of information-sharing and coherent policy development related to migration.

- **National Policy Planning Workshops**

The National Policy Planning Workshops issued recommendations, based on an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the institutional and policy framework outlined in the report, to feed into improved policy development.





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A number of targeted trainings and research activities aimed to further strengthen the policy development capacity of the target countries:

- **Training based on IOM's *Essentials for Migration Management (EMM)* manual for TWG members**

Basic training courses based on IOM's EMM were held in all target countries to introduce members of the TWG to basic concepts of migration management.

- **Technical Research Papers on key policy issues**

A series of Technical Research Papers - three per country - were commissioned on policy themes identified as important by TWG members in order to deepen the governments' understanding of available policy options in a particular area.

- **Regional Policy Workshop on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning**

A regional training workshop on mainstreaming migration into development plans was organized in Accra to improve understanding of the ways in which migration can be mainstreamed into development planning. The participants were introduced to a draft Handbook on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning, developed by IOM in partnership with the UNDP, UNICEF and ILO. The workshop also highlighted how the Migration Profiles can be a useful situation analysis and assessment tool in the early stages of the mainstreaming exercise.

- **Technical support to the ECOWAS Free Movement Department**

As the majority of the target countries are members of the ECOWAS community, the ECOWAS Department of Free

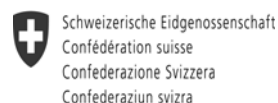
Migration Profiles' Publications

As a result of the activities included in this 2 year project, the following publications will be produced to assist governments, international agencies and other key actors working on migration in West and Central Africa:

- 10 National Migration Profiles for the target countries (Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Cape Verde) (IOM Geneva, 2009)
- Regional Overview of Migration Profiles in West and Central Africa (forthcoming, 2010)
- Mapping study on migration questions in household surveys (Schachter, 2009)
- Guide to enhancing migration data (forthcoming, 2010)
- 24 technical research papers on key policy issues in the ten target countries (forthcoming, 2010)

All of these publications will be made available to target countries on a specific website:

<http://www.africa-migration.com/>





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Movement was given technical support in linking national migration profiling to the ECOWAS Common Approach to migration. The ECOWAS Free Movement Department also supports the drafting of a regional synthesis report of the Migration Profiles, to be launched at a Regional Policy Planning Workshop in Abuja in January 2010.

- **Regional Policy Planning Workshop in 2010**

A Regional Policy Planning Workshop is planned in Abuja at which target countries will discuss the implications of the national Migration Profiles exercise for the development of a coherent regional approach to migration and development. A regional report, synthesizing the main findings of the national reports, will facilitate the discussion at the workshop.

Preliminary lessons learned

Within the framework of the “Migration in West and Central Africa: Profiles for Strategic Policy Development” project, the National Migration Profile reports are the outcome of broader government-supported processes aiming to enhance the use of data for policy development and foster policy coherence.

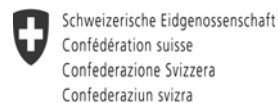
Although the project is still ongoing, some preliminary lessons regarding the use and added value of Migration Profiles can already be learned.

As an information tool, Migration Profiles:

- Improve the accessibility and availability of data and information relevant to migration
- Present a cost-efficient strategy for enhancing the use of existing data
- Are useful capacity-building tools to help identify information gaps and promote information-exchange at national and regional levels.

Initiatives to make Migration Profile sustainable

In order to be a sustainable mechanism for preparing Migration Profiles, Technical Working Groups (TWG) need to become a permanent fixture in the government structure: an official endorsement by the Government is a first step in that direction. During the last meeting of the TWG in Nigeria, the Director of the National Commission for Refugee (NCFR) guaranteed to sustain the TWG beyond the end of the MP project by convening and hosting TWG meetings after January 2010. In Mali, the Délégation Générale des Maliens de l'Extérieur has been charged to contact again the Ministère des Maliens de l'Extérieur et de l'Intégration Africaine to proceed with the official endorsement of the TWG as inter-ministerial working group by the national government. In Côte d'Ivoire, the TWG has nominated a small working group tasked to elaborate new terms of reference to transform the TWG into an inter-ministerial working group officially endorsed by the Government. In Ghana, the TWG will probably be incorporated by the Ministry of Interior and become a sub-working group under the National Migration Bureau.





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As a policy tool, Migration Profiles:

- Promote discussion about migration policy, coherence and coordination between a large range of ministries
- Deepen understanding of policy options and information needs
- Are appreciated and quickly endorsed by Governments.

In order to become an effective tool for strategic policy planning, Migration Profiles need to be updated regularly. Only through regular country reporting can policymakers improve their understanding of how migration trends and related policies are changing, and identify more precisely capacity-building needs and policy development opportunities. Although some headway has already been made, with governments recognizing the usefulness of the TWGs, the sustainability of the country reporting still remains a key challenge due to the lack of capacity.

Other challenges include the improvement of the baseline data on which the reports draw and of the reporting format, in order to enable a more sophisticated analysis of migration-related trends and their impact.

The “Migration in West and Central Africa: National Profiles for Strategic Policy Development” project has started to address these challenges - such as through the drafting of data plans and strategies - but further interventions are required to ensure that the Migration Profiles remain a regularly updateable information tool for policy development in these countries and extended to other countries in the ECOWAS region.

