**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON LABOR MIGRATION GOVERNANCE:**

**Toward Integrated and Planned Policies**

Mexico City, Mexico

4-5 September 2018

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

Human mobility is a fundamental feature of today’s world and of the region. Integrated markets, transnational networks and the rapid evolution of communication technologies have contributed to the increase of the movement of migrant workers across international borders. Globalization led to a demand for professionals from other countries, with different manual and intellectual skills and with low, medium and high qualifications, to work in different sectors of the economy.

However, significant challenges exist concerning the development of planned and integrated policies on migration and labor mobility, based on an effective analysis of the labor markets and implemented through adequate administrative systems in order to facilitate, regulate and manage the movement of migrant workers in an expedited manner. These challenges, in turn, limit the positive potential of migration for the development of migrant workers, countries of destination and communities of origin.

In this regard, dialogue and intraregional cooperation are essential to promoting the planning of labor migration flows. The proposed workshop will provide an inter-institutional forum to discuss the existing challenges and experiences.

Several countries in the region are facing the triple challenge of: a) the integration of new and diverse profiles of immigrant workers into their labor market, together with the traditional intraregional movements; b) the lack or shortage of qualified human resources to meet the needs of national labor markets; and c) the reintegration of their own returned nationals. Addressing these challenges requires renewed, integrated and well-planned policies on labor migration at the national, bilateral and regional level.

Consequently, the Plan of Action 2018 of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), entitled “The Sustainable Development Goals - Toward the Governance of Migration” has included labor migration as one of its central themes, in accordance with Target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda: *Facilitate orderly, safe and regular migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.*

In the framework of the Liaison Officer Network for Consular Protection, a regional training effort was implemented with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The workshop was for consular officers and staff from the ministries of labor, to strengthen their capacities for the protection of the rights of migrant workers in the region.

The present document proposes the implementation of a regional workshop on information exchange and dialogue between institutions addressing migration, labor and foreign affairs of the RCM Member Countries, as well as employers and unions, with the purpose of promoting inter-institutional and intraregional coordination aimed at the development of regular and safe channels for labor migration (temporary, circular and permanent) as a way to protect the rights of all migrant workers, reduce irregular migration and improve the match between employment offer and demand in the region.

The social dialogue between governments, employers and workers will make it possible to take into account the perspective of all the involved actors, who will also be key in the promotion and implementation of labor migration policies.

This initiative will give continuity to and draw on various previous regional efforts on this matter, including the following:

* Previous workshops and seminars held in the framework of the RCM, the most recent being the Workshop on Consular Protection of Migrant Workers held in Panama City, Panama on 25-26 April 2018. In addition, the results from the Workshop on Migration Governance and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be conducted in the framework of the RCM in August 2018 will also be important.
* OAS-ILO-IOM Workshop on Labor Migration: Contributions from the Ministries of Labor of the Americas, San José, Costa Rica, 13-14 July 2017.
* Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Labor of Central America and the Dominican Republic on Labor Migration, August 2018[[1]](#footnote-1).

Furthermore, relevant input from international initiatives, instruments and spaces for dialogue will be taken into account (in addition to the applicable regulatory instruments of ILO), among others:

* Multilateral Framework on Labor Migration, ILO, 2006;
* Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations Organization, 2015;
* Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF), IOM, 2015;
* Migration Governance Indicators (MGI), 2016;
* Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labor market, ILO, 2016;
* General principles & operational guidelines for fair recruitment, ILO, 2016;
* Conclusions of the 106 International Labor Conference, ILO, 2017.

**OBJECTIVES**

**General Objective**

To provide a space for dialogue to discuss challenges and opportunities and exchange experiences (policies and programmes), with the aim of strengthening the design and implementation of policies on governance of regular, safe and planned migration in the Member Countries of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM).

**Specific Objectives**

* To identify the main existing mechanisms to collect information on the needs of labor markets and the links with labor migration.

* To promote a better understanding of the need to integrate data on migration into the labor market information systems and to incorporate the needs of labor markets in the design of migration policies.
* To identify lessons learned and recommendations based on the exchange of experiences and practices relating to the different programmes and policies on migration flows planned at the national and regional level.
* To promote intergovernmental coordination between the different actors involved in labor migration governance, with the aim of strengthening the adoption of a comprehensive and integrated approach and the protection of the rights of migrant workers.
* To integrate and recognize the importance of expanded social dialogue in the design and implementation of labor migration policies.
* To promote the establishment of a technical group composed of representatives from each country, as deemed appropriate, in order to develop a prospective regional study on regional labor markets and their complementarity in the different occupational groups or levels.
* To provide tools that help design specific programmes aimed at the socioeconomic integration of migrant workers in host countries in order to facilitate access to better jobs and therefore, increase their labor mobility.

**PARTICIPANTS**

The workshop is oriented toward representatives (sub-directors or chiefs of departments) from migration authorities, ministries of labor and ministries of foreign affairs of the RCM Member Countries.

The organizers will cover the participation expenses of three delegates from each country (one from each participating institution).

In addition, invitations will be sent to the observer organizations of the RCM and the Regional Network for Civil Organizations on Migration (RNCOM). Furthermore, as an exception, representatives of the employer sector and the union sector will also be invited.

The workshop is being organized within the framework of the Work Plan of Panama as President pro tempore of the RCM and hosted by the Government of Mexico. In addition, IOM will provide technical and financial support through its Mesoamerica Program, financed by the US Department of State, and ILO will provide financial support through its regular budget.

**METHODOLOGY**

Given that the primary objective is to exchange experiences and best practices and identify existing needs, the workshop structure has been designed as follows:

1. A brief conceptual presentation including examples of best practices or international standards;
2. Two or three presentations of each country, by subject, illustrating specific experiences and challenges;
3. Followed, for some of the topics, by group work or plenary sessions to discuss what actions could be implemented in the future.

For reasons of time, the presentation of best practices of all participating countries is a challenge. In addition, some actions are not exportable, others address specific problems of each country, etc. Therefore, each country is asked to submit its draft presentations in advance (by 15 August), and a selection will be made by the organizing committee.

**PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Thursday 4th September

**8:00 – 8:45 Opening session: welcoming remarks**

Secretariat of the Interior (SEGOB), Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS), Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE), ILO, IOM, RCM Technical Secretariat, PPT

**8:45 -9:00 Presentation: objectives and participants**

**9:00-9:30 Introduction:** **key principles and considerations** relating to good labor migration governance

**9:30-9:45 Coffee break**

**Session 1:** **Data collection and analysis: evidence to strengthen the links between labor policies and migration policies**

9:45 – 11:00 Trends and current status of migration in the region: data on labor migration and challenges relating to the design of labor migration policies

11:00 – 1:00 Planning for the needs of labor markets: the key role of labor market information systems

* Example: Colombia (to be confirmed)

1:00 – 2:00 Lunch

**Session 2: Labor migration governance: the “integrated governance” and “expanded social dialogue” approaches**

2:00-3:00 Regional integration frameworks and bilateral and multilateral agreements

3:00 -4:00 National coordination policies and mechanisms: toward horizontal and vertical integration

* National policies in countries of origin, destination and return: returning nationals, migrants with regular or irregular migration status
* Example: Coordination mechanisms in Costa Rica, El Salvador (to be confirmed)

4:00-4:15 Coffee break

4:15-5:30 Specific programmes by category (labor/migrant): feasibility, monitoring, control and transparency

* Procedures for granting work permits
* Mobility of students and availability of different work permits after graduation
* Administrative efficiency and regular admission channels: strengthening predictability

5.30 Closing session of Day 1

Wednesday 5th September

8:15-8:30 Recap. of Day 1

8:30-9:45 Specific programmes by category (labor/migrant): feasibility, monitoring, control and transparency (cont.)

9:45-10:00 Coffee break

**10:00-12:30 Session 3: A key phase of migration: recruitment (principles on fair recruitment), deployment and employment**

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch

**1:30 – 3:30 Session 4: Socioeconomic inclusion and integration of migrant workers: the role of vocational training, recognition of skills and certification of acquired competencies**

* Guidance prior to departure
* Recognition of skills
* Programmes aimed at facilitating return and reintegration
  + Programmes on implementation of enterprises and manufacturing plants in the regions with the highest migration movements

3:30-3:45 Coffee break

**3:45-4:30 Recommendations / next steps (at the regional and/or national level)**

**4:30 Closing session**

1. To be confirmed. Does not include Canada, the United States and Mexico. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)