



**Rabat Process**  
Euro-African Dialogue on  
Migration and Development

## High Level Thematic Meeting

# "Migration and Development in 2022: the role of migration cooperation; new actors for a new context"

**12 & 13 May 2022**

**Madrid, Spain**

*Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Union Européenne et Coopération,  
Plaza Marqués de Salamanca 8, 28006*

**Final  
document**



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## Introduction

High Level Thematic Meeting on the Migration and Development nexus:

- Co-chaired by Spain and Morocco
- Echoing the priorities of Area 1 of [the Marrakech Action Plan 2018-2020 on legal migration and mobility](#)
- The meeting attracted a diverse audience of over 100 participants, including 77 in person and 32 speakers
- The meeting began with a high-level opening ceremony, attended by Ms. Pilar Cancela Rodriguez, Secretary of State for International Cooperation and Mr. Moïse Diardiégane Sarr, Secretary of State to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad, in charge of Senegalese Abroad

**Overall objective of the meeting:** To update the knowledge of Rabat Process partners and stimulate reflection on how development cooperation can contribute more effectively to addressing the root causes of migration, while capitalizing on the positive effects of migration.

**Expected outcome of the meeting:** To formulate key points and orientations for the Rabat Process as a dialogue and platform for regional cooperation on migration and development and to formulate key points and orientations for practitioners and technicians to guide them in the implementation of actions in this area.

This document provides an overview of **the main conclusions of the meeting**, as well as the **challenges and opportunities** related to the nexus between migration and development.

### • High level opening ceremony

The high-level opening ceremony was attended by Ms. Pilar Cancela Rodriguez, Secretary of State for International Cooperation, Mr. Moïse Diardiégane Sarr, Secretary of State to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad, in charge of Senegalese Abroad, Mr. Francesco Luciani, Head of Unit - Migration and Forced Displacement in DG INTPA and Ms. Monica Zanette, Senior Coordinator, Support Project to the EU-Africa Dialogue on Migration and Forced Displacement, DG INTPA. Francesco Luciani, Head of Unit - Migration and Forced Displacement at DG INTPA and Ms. Monica Zanette, Senior Coordinator, ICMPD EU-Africa Dialogue on Migration and Mobility (MMD) Support Project.

All agreed that the Rabat Process has, since its inception in 2006, consistently promoted the positive potential of regular migration and the key role of the diaspora for countries of origin, transit and destination. It was recalled that managing migration was a common challenge and **that it was everyone's responsibility to make migration an increasingly safe, voluntary, orderly and regular phenomenon**. The speakers also mentioned that the Emergency Trust Fund (ETF) had made it possible to implement concrete actions, both in terms of security and in terms of the migration and development approach, and that it was important to continue along the path of a global and common approach to migration within the framework of the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument "NDICI - Europe in the World" and the "Team Europe" or "Equipe Europe".

### • The migration and development nexus: the current state of the debate

This first session aimed to give an overview of **the current state of the debate and recent developments** in the field of migration and development, but also to discuss **the root causes of emigration** which constitute a priority issue for cooperation between Africa and Europe. This session allowed for a "double debate": on the one hand, the effects of migration on development and, in a complementary manner, the effects of development on migration.

#### ***Migration is a development factor in both countries of origin and destination***

**Migration is a factor of development in countries of origin**, notably insofar as 1) emigration acts as a safety valve for the labour market, 2) remittances represent a source of financing for development, 3) diasporas are a

driving force for social development, and 4) brain circulation contributes to strengthening human capital and innovation.

**Migration is also a factor of development in destination countries** as (1) immigration contributes to reducing the skills mismatch, (2) immigrants expand the domestic market, (3) immigrants contribute to the financing of social protection systems, and (4) immigration can foster innovation and entrepreneurship.

**Recommendations for maximising the benefits of emigration in countries of origin :**

- Invest in skills development in countries of origin to foster human capital accumulation ;
- Help reduce remittance costs and invest in financial literacy ;
- Fund diaspora projects in countries of origin ;
- Develop return programs oriented towards productive investment.

**Recommendations for maximising the benefits of immigration in destination countries:**

- Support education and invest in social protection and health services to foster the integration of immigrants in destination countries.

***The effects of development on migration: the root causes of emigration***

In the study "[Social immobility versus social mobility - recent international emigration in Senegal](#)", Nelly Robin, Director of Research at the *Institut de Recherche pour le Développement* (IRD) makes **three key observations**: 1) it is necessary to place oneself from the point of view of the actors of migration (candidates for emigration, migrants and families), 2) it is necessary to go beyond external determinants (economic and demographic), and 3) it is necessary to free oneself from the idea that the causes of "irregular" migration and those of "regular" migration are different. Emigration is seen as an alternative to social immobility (academic failure, feeling of being downgraded) and as a reaction to inequality of opportunity. Emigration does not eliminate inequalities but transforms them by changing the usual hierarchies (the elder is deprived of his authority, the younger is the one who migrates to meet family needs). **It is therefore not so much the inequalities between the South and the North as the inequality of opportunities in the country of origin that explains emigration.** The latter is a major issue in the economic and political governance of countries of origin.

***The effects of development on migration: challenges and opportunities***

**Several challenges arise today when discussing the effects of development on migration**, including the persistence of poverty in rural areas, population growth, increasing competition for access to and control of resources, the context of return to the land (COVID-19), the weak anchoring of the decentralisation process in local realities, and geopolitical crises (Sahel, Ukraine). Faced with these challenges, **several opportunities can be seized for a sustainable management of migration**, such as the territorialisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), innovative financing, decentralised cooperation, investment and support opportunities in agriculture, or access to employment.

**Specific recommendations for local governments:**

- Facilitate the presence and active participation of migrants in territorial assemblies and councils for participation in decision-making and policy dialogue at the local level;
- Valorise the skills of migrants and their dual belonging to different territories, especially since they are important actors in the local authorities of their home and host areas.

**Recommendations specific to migrants :**

- Migrants' associations and returnees with projects should try to link their investments to the opportunities and priorities identified in the policy documents;
- To facilitate their reintegration into the economic fabric and to enhance their skills in the context of non-financial transfers (innovative spirit, know-how, etc.), migrants should communicate with the State and its deconcentrated services.

**Specific recommendations to the State:**

- Articulate diaspora investments with climate change adaptation policies and the promotion of the local economy;
- Invite the diaspora to invest in promising niches through incentives (taxation, access to financing and information, etc.);
- Encourage the diaspora to seize opportunities available in host countries (partnerships, sources of financing, networks, etc.).

• **Assessment and lessons learned from actions carried out at the Euro-African level**

This first session aimed to provide an **assessment of the various actions carried out at the Euro-African level**, particularly in the framework of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa which was created in 2015. These reflections allowed to analyse the policies and projects carried out in recent years to strengthen the link between migration and development and to look ahead to the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI - Europe in the World) and the "Team Europe Initiatives" for the Western Mediterranean/Atlantic and Central Mediterranean Routes.

***From the EU Emergency Trust Fund (ETF) to the new "Global Europe" instrument: a focus on the link between migration and development***

The UTF, which was established in 2015 following the Valletta Summit, in particular to support the African continent in addressing the root causes of emigration and combating irregular migration, has funded numerous development assistance projects, with 5 billion euros, which have benefited 26 of the most fragile African countries affected by instability, forced displacement and irregular migration. **Diasporas have played a leading role in development projects under the UTF**, as evidenced by the EU-funded Governance, Migration and Development (GMD) project implemented by Spain and Senegal. Other EU-funded projects have involved diaspora actors, such as the [InclusiFI](#) project funded by AECID and the Italian Caisse des Dépôts (CDP) which aims to facilitate access to finance for small businesses, and the [PRIME Africa](#) platform which aims to improve the management of remittances and their use for development impact in Africa.

While under the UTF, migration was seen through the prism of emergency, the new "NDICI: Europe in the World" instrument will make it possible to integrate migration into all policies, including development, legal migration and sustainable return policies. **It is a change of approach, with the EU moving from assistance to partnership**, helping partner countries to create their own migration management, reception and reintegration capacity building structures.

### **Recommendations for the implementation of the new "Europe in the World" instrument**

- Integrate migration policies into all policies, particularly development policies;
- Put in place legislation that allows for the concrete implementation of projects and limit the administrative and legal bottlenecks that hamper the implementation of development projects;
- Support institutions in charge of migration issues in the appropriation of these projects;
- Promote legal migration, development and transfer of talent (students and skilled workers) that benefit both sending and receiving countries;
- Work in a spirit of ownership and partnership to make migration mutually beneficial.

### ***Cooperation on migration and development must be migrant-centered***

The viewpoint supported by FIIAPP (International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies), which implements Spanish cooperation projects, is to consider **migrants as agents of change**. It is necessary to rethink the way migration is approached and managed. This means 1) strengthening legal channels for migration, 2) ensuring the protection of displaced persons and refugees, and 3) prioritising circular migration, which is as important for countries of origin as it is for receiving countries.

### **Recommendations proposed by FIIAPP:**

- Be mindful of how migration and security are linked as human trafficking and smuggling of migrants on migration routes are crimes that must be punished;
- Support return migration in a sustainable way;
- Consider migrants as forces for development and actors of circular migration that benefit both sending and receiving countries;
- Focus migration policies on migrants and people.

### ***Some examples of initiatives focusing on the link between migration and development***

#### **The Migration and Development Fund: an example of cooperation between Spain and ECOWAS**

The €10 million Spain-ECOWAS Migration and Development Fund supports the ECOWAS Commission and Member States in the development and implementation of the ECOWAS Common Approach to Migration and contributes to the financing of activities related to migration and development. It began in 2009 and is expected to end in 2023. Spanish support is structured around three axes: 1) institutional strengthening of ECOWAS member states; 2) funding of civil society projects; and 3) creation of national platforms and forums that integrate all actors (institutional and civil society) with expertise in the field of migration in each member state. The objective of these platforms is to monitor and ensure the sustainability of the activities financed by the fund.

This first regional fund on migration has achieved several results, including the establishment of an adequate institutional framework and the strengthening of the implementation capacities of CSOs and Member States in terms of project management.

### **The Governance, Migration and Development (GMD) project implemented by Senegal and Spain**

This project, implemented by Spain (AECID) and Senegal (Directorate General for Support to Senegalese Abroad - DGASE) and financed by the EU, provides support to returning migrants, potential migrants and migrant associations through regional and national funds. These funds contribute to the fight against irregular emigration and to offer perspectives to the populations in order to reinforce their training, their professional integration and contribute to the development of their country, Senegal. Thanks to this project, BAOS (Reception, Orientation and Follow-up Offices - in English) have been set up in the 14 regions of Senegal to 1) accompany the socio-economic reintegration of returnees (reception, assistance, orientation and follow-up), 2) provide information on investment, training and employment opportunities, 3) sensitise potential migrants and their families on the dangers of irregular migration, 4) accompany and strengthen the capacities of project leaders and 5) promote the region as an attractive destination for investment and resettlement.

## • **The power of diasporas as agents of change**

### **Several key success factors for diaspora engagement**

During the discussions, **several key success factors** for diaspora engagement were mentioned:

- Integrating diaspora engagement with other sectoral policies (social protection policy, land and tax policies, etc.);
- Supporting diaspora engagement at the local level (integrating diaspora engagement in country development plans);
- Knowing diaspora actors well to segment actions (tailor-made actions);
- Set up a favourable institutional framework (involvement of diasporas in the process of running their country's affairs), as in **Senegal**, where the diaspora participates in their country's elections, or as in **Belgium**, which set up its first strategic framework on migration and sustainable development (including diaspora involvement) in 2021;
- Take into account and raise awareness among all stakeholders (institutions, international organisations, CSOs, etc.) of the issues raised by diasporas;
- Set up public-private partnerships.

### **Some examples of diaspora engagement initiatives**

#### **The European Union Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF)**

EUDiF is a pilot initiative funded by the European Union's Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) that aims to consolidate diaspora engagement efforts for development. This facility is **based on a tailor-made approach of diaspora actors** in order to understand their needs and put in place the conditions for the sustainability of actions dedicated to them. This initiative aims to 1) facilitate access to knowledge on diasporas through an interactive map (country profiles giving an overview of the political and legal situation in more than 100 countries, key actors, regional analyses), 2) facilitate peer-to-peer exchanges between countries, 3) accompany diasporas in a practical way (micro-projects), 4) mobilise diaspora expertise (short-term placements of diaspora experts).

EUDiF organised **the second edition of the Future Forum** in May 2022, which brought together more than 50 speakers and moderators to exchange and discuss different diaspora engagement practices from around the world on the themes of entrepreneurship, investment, skills development and green innovation, placing human capital at the heart of the discussions.

### **The Support Program for Solidarity Initiatives for Development (PAISD)**

The PAISD is a mechanism for mobilising and supporting solidarity actions and economic initiatives of the Senegalese diaspora for the benefit of their country of origin. This mechanism benefits from the financial support of the State of Senegal, the European Union and the French Development Agency (AFD). It targets Senegalese living in France, Belgium, Spain and Italy. This program has made it possible to mobilise the talents and skills of the diaspora through two mechanisms: 1) by mobilising seniors established in countries of residence and 2) by including young people from the diaspora through **a system of solidarity volunteering for development**. It is essential to involve the youth from the 4th and 5th generations of diasporas to take into account their concerns and needs.

Today, there is talk of setting up a **regional PAISD** including other countries such as Mali, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

### **Belgian approaches and experiences in diaspora engagement**

According to the Belgian development agency Enabel, there are **four important areas** of diaspora engagement: 1) engaging diasporas to create decent jobs, targeting women, 2) providing social protection (health insurance), 3) engaging capital and skills of diaspora members to support entrepreneurial investments, and 4) implementing circular migration ([Pilot Project for Entrepreneur Mobility](#) (PEM) between Belgium and Senegal).

## **• Youth: job opportunities and entrepreneurship**

Discussions focused on how **to create an environment of opportunity for youth** as a powerful agent of change and positive impact. During the panel discussion, entrepreneurs from the MEETAfrica and "Building a Future - Make it in The Gambia" programs spoke and shared their enthusiasm and pride in their entrepreneurial journey. Several speakers emphasised the importance of the impact of the activities on the community (as a source of inspiration for other community members) and the monitoring and evaluation of the projects. It also became clear that it is important to open up new areas of entrepreneurship beyond the traditional areas (sports, culture, creative industries and social impact).

### ***Some examples of programs for young and new entrepreneurs***

#### **Starting a business here and there: the MEETAfrica I and II program**

The European Mobilisation for Entrepreneurship in Africa ("MEETAfrica") aims to create jobs and foster innovation in Africa by supporting students at the end of their studies and highly qualified young and new professionals from the African diaspora living in Germany and France. They are accompanied in their projects to create companies providing innovative solutions in the agricultural, industrial or service sectors of their country of origin. The program selects innovative start-ups from the diaspora, provides them with financial and technical support and also helps the authorities in their countries of origin to support these start-ups. The program is implemented by Expertise France, funded by the European Union and the French Development Agency. During the first phase of the project, **80 entrepreneurs were supported in 6 African countries** (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Cameroon, Senegal, Mali) **of which 1/3 were women and 300 jobs were created**. The second phase was built around the successes of the first phase while strengthening the components relating to 1) the dissemination of information to entrepreneurs in the diaspora, 2) a simplified coaching pathway for co-incubation between Europe and Africa and 3) the provision of seed financing.

Discussions are underway **to extend this project to other countries**, in conjunction with the German GIZ.

### **Building a Future - Make it in The Gambia" Program / Tekki Fii for Gambian Youth**

The "Building a Future: Make it in The Gambia" program implemented by Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr (IMVF), the International Trade Center (ITC) and Enabel, funded by the EU Emergency Trust Fund, aims to improve the economic development and future prospects of Gambian youth, including returning migrants. It aims to promote employment/economic opportunities for youth in rural areas (agricultural sector), but also to provide a social cohesion dimension by working with schools to raise awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities. Technical training and coaching sessions are provided to young beneficiaries for 6 months.

## • **The role of women as drivers of development and agents of change**

### ***The transfer of skills and knowledge is one of the major contributions of the diaspora***

This roundtable discussion highlighted the importance of women as agents of change with specific needs. Diaspora actors are diverse and are much more than financial vectors (through remittances), they also and above all **transfer skills and knowledge**. Culture plays an essential role in this transfer of skills (role of women in society, identity as a diaspora, importance of cultural barriers, etc.).

According to the testimony of Bola Bardet, [founder of the health start-up "Susu"](#), "**creating my company was a real obstacle course as an African woman** and moreover in the middle of the COVID crisis". Bola Bardet insisted on the fact that the main challenges were 1) to anchor her business locally, 2) to be accompanied at the start of the project (tax deduction, etc.) and 3) to impose herself in an ecosystem of men and in the health sector, rather male. She concluded with several recommendations: 1) obtain financial support to start her business, 2) create funds specifically dedicated to women entrepreneurs (few exist in English-speaking African countries), and 3) build a network of partners through new tools (social networks, personal branding).

### ***Some examples of initiatives to promote and strengthen the role of women***

#### **IOM's Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) Program**

Connecting Diaspora for Development is an initiative launched by IOM with the first phase running from 2016 to 2019. Phase 2 of the program, which will end in June 2023, supports the development of priority target sectors in selected countries and builds the capacity of key institutions through the engagement of diaspora experts in the Netherlands and other EU member states. Through physical and online missions, diaspora professionals residing in the Netherlands or other EU member states are connected with institutions in four target countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, and Somalia. From the beginning of the project, **several actions were taken to mobilise diaspora women's skills**: 1) mainstreaming gender in all phases of a project, 2) collecting information on diaspora women (mapping) and 3) taking into account the specific needs of diaspora women.

According to Zuhur Mohamed, one of the CD4D ambassadors from Somaliland, "**transferring knowledge and skills is one of the key aspects of diaspora contributions**. While the first generation of diaspora has mostly transferred money to their home countries, the second and third generations are very much involved in skills transfer.

#### **Migration and development: the place of women in Spain's cooperation projects**

The AECID emphasised that Spanish cooperation specifically targets women in its cooperation projects to facilitate their access to health, education, training and employment. The Spanish cooperation fights against the root causes of emigration, paying special attention to women. According to the Spanish development agency, women are not just subjects but key agents of development and change. Their political and economic empowerment can truly transform societies, as shown by many examples of Spanish cooperation projects.

## • Closing ceremony

The meeting was closed by Mr. Antón Leis, Director of AECID and Mr. Amadou François Gaye, Director General of Support to Senegalese Abroad (DGASE). In his speech, Antón Leis reiterated AECID's commitment to achieving, through cooperation with partner countries, decent living conditions, employment opportunities and development so that migration processes are orderly, safe, voluntary and regular, and respect for the human rights and dignity of migrants is guaranteed. To achieve this, it is essential to take into account **the role of young people and diasporas, but also to work on gender equality**, which is a cornerstone of Spanish development cooperation on the African continent.

Mr. Amadou François Gaye emphasised that the "Governance, Migration and Development - GMD" project implemented by Spain and Senegal has produced convincing results and has made it possible to operationalise the territorialisation of migration policy in Senegal in an integrated approach. This project model deserves to be perpetuated and could be duplicated in other partner countries of **the Rabat Process because multi-level governance is at the heart of the Euro-African dialogue on migration and development.**

### Analysis of Meeting Attendance

- The event attracted a diverse audience of over 100 participants, including not only partner countries and organisations, but also representatives of international organisations and civil society.
- The thematic meeting met participants' expectations, such as learning more about diaspora engagement, the entrepreneurial potential of youth, and the role of women in migration. Numerous comments were made about the quality of the debates and discussions, as well as the choice of moderators and speakers.
- The participants retained the following key points: the importance of involving the diaspora in the countries of origin and destination, notably by supporting entrepreneurship and facilitating access to training, as well as the involvement of women in development projects and the role of the family in the choice of migration.
- However, participants would have liked more time for questions, exchanges and discussions. In addition, some participants would like to see more English-speaking countries included in the Rabat Process, especially by ensuring that French is not the dominant language of the Dialogue.
- The event was widely reported on Twitter, with 56 tweets posted.

\* This analysis is based on participants' responses to the evaluation forms.