



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

# Stocktaking of progress on the implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan (2018–2020) and future prospects

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# List of Acronyms

<b>AP</b>	Marrakesh Action Plan
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>GFMD</b>	Global Forum on Migration and Development
<b>ICMPD</b>	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
<b>IRD</b>	Institute of Research for Development
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>JVAP</b>	Valletta Joint Action Plan
<b>MIDWA</b>	Migration Dialogue for West Africa
<b>MMC</b>	Mixed Migration Centre
<b>NFP</b>	National Focal Point
<b>PR</b>	Rabat Process
<b>RCPs</b>	Regional Consultative Processes
<b>SOM</b>	Senior Officials' Meeting
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UNHCR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

# Introduction

## 1.1 | Background

Founded in 2006, the Rabat Process (RP) is an **intergovernmental migration dialogue** that brings together the countries along the migration route linking Central Africa, West Africa, North Africa and Europe.

### Main objective

To create a framework for consultation and cooperation within which concrete initiatives reflecting the political will expressed by the partner countries can be implemented.

### Key Milestones

**5 Ministerial Conferences<sup>1</sup>** with the adoption of Ministerial Declarations and the Multi-Annual Cooperation Programmes have set the strategic direction of the Rabat Process since its inception.

Today, the RP is based on the **Marrakesh Action Plan 2018–2020**, which includes a Political Declaration and an operational Action Plan (AP), focusing on 5 priority domains, 10 objectives and 23 actions. In addition, six crosscutting priorities have been included in the Ministerial Declaration with a view to *“implementing the Action Plan in an effective and balanced manner”*.

The AP aligns with the 5 priority domains of the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP) in order to promote coherence and complementarity with the outcomes of the Valletta Summit on Migration of 2015. The Marrakesh Political Declaration also reiterates the RP mandate to monitor progress in the JVAP implementation, jointly with the Khartoum Process.

The Ouagadougou SOM of February 2019 (Burkina Faso Chairmanship) marked the **launch of the implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan**.

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<sup>1</sup> Rabat 2006; Paris 2008; Dakar 2011; Rome 2014; Marrakech 2018

Development benefits of migration/Root causes of irregular migration & forced displacement	1. Maximise the positive impact of regular migration for development <b>(+3 actions)</b>	2. Understand the root causes of irregular migration & forced displacement <b>(+2 actions)</b>	<b>+6 cross-cutting priorities:</b>  <b>(1) A human rights-based approach;</b>  <b>(2) Gender issues and the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations;</b>  <b>(3) Combating xenophobia, racism and discrimination;</b>  <b>(4) A regional approach;</b>  <b>(5) An inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach;</b>  <b>(6) Data collection, analysis and sharing.</b>
Legal migration and mobility	3. Promote regular migration & mobility (especially young, people, women) <b>(+3 actions)</b>	4. Encourage facilitation of visa issuing procedures <b>(+2 actions)</b>	
Protection and asylum	5. Strengthen the protection of refugees & the forcibly displaced <b>(+2 actions)</b>	6. Promote the integration of refugees, the forcibly displaced into host communities <b>(+2 actions)</b>	
Irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings	7. Build capacities for border management & combating migrant smuggling and THB <b>(+3 actions)</b>	8. Improve the protection of those who have been smuggled & of victims of THB <b>(+ 2 actions)</b>	
Return, readmission and reintegration	9. Build capacities for identification processes & the issuing of travel documents <b>(+2 actions)</b>	10. Encourage the safe return & sustainable reintegration of migrants <b>(+2 actions)</b>	

This objective of operationalisation has remained a constant priority during the **French Chairmanship**, which has given primacy to activities of an operational nature, both in terms of the target public (practitioners, experts) and the objective pursued (development of good practice guides and concrete recommendations). However, the Presidency's programme has been seriously impacted by the global health crisis related to COVID-19, leading to the postponement of several activities (see list of postponed activities on page 14).

## 1.2 | Objectives of the stocktaking report

1. To take stock of the implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan since May 2018.
2. To develop medium and long-term perspectives and recommendations aimed at encouraging reflection on the future of the Dialogue, taking into account the requirements of an ever-changing environment in migration management.

The major highlight of this political meeting is the operational commitment of the partners with the setting up of two tools to facilitate the operationalisation of the Dialogue:

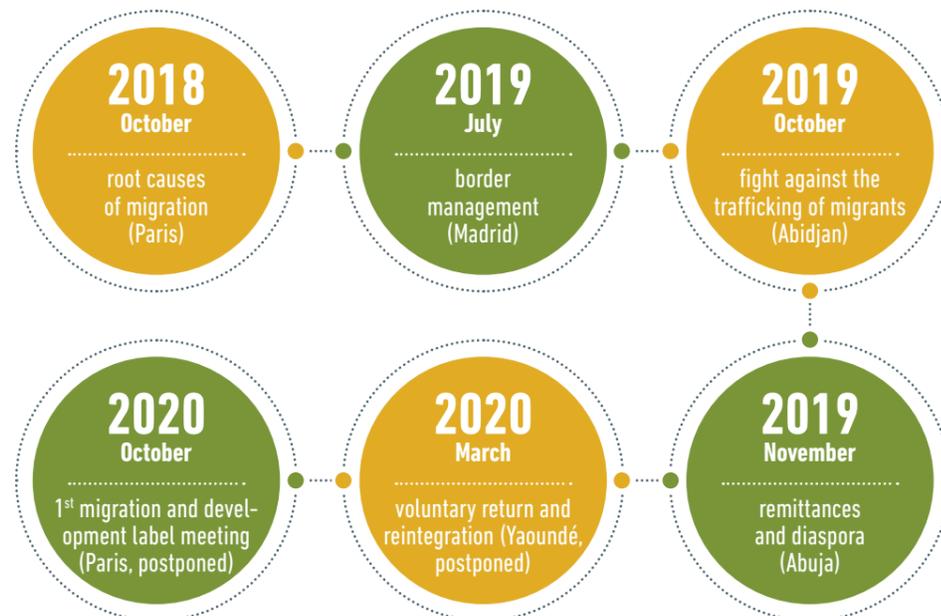
1. **A commitment mechanism – Objective:** to enable partners to support the implementation of concrete actions of the Marrakesh Action Plan on a voluntary basis.
2. **A system of “reference countries” – Objective:** to ensure better monitoring of the implementation of each domain of the Marrakesh Action Plan.

## Stocktaking of the implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan 2018-2020

### 2.1 | A variety of activities on the five domains of the Action Plan

During the reporting period, the implementation of the AP focused mainly on domain 1 (actions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) and domain 4 (actions 15, 16 and 17), in line with the needs and interests expressed by the partner countries.

#### Thematic meetings



#### Steering Committee meetings



#### SOM Meetings



#### Other events



## Domain 1

### Development benefits of migration and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement

Thematic Meeting on Root Causes of Irregular Migration, 23-24 October 2018 in Paris: AP Action 4 and 5

Organised by France and Senegal.

#### Objective

To reach a common understanding of, and responses to the concept of “root causes of migration” in the Rabat Process region, in order to facilitate the development of appropriate policies capable of responding to the identified structural factors.

#### Results

1. **A study on the root causes of international emigration** based on field interviews in Senegal and Italy, conducted by a renowned researcher who is specialised in migration in West Africa (IRD - Development Research Institute) (see Box 5).
2. **36 technical recommendations** on optimising human capital, combating social exclusion, strengthening the agricultural sector, creating sustainable urban policies and contributing to a balanced narrative on root causes and migration.

#### Participants

- Number of delegations: 41 delegations from Dialogue partner countries and organisations participated in the meeting.
- Profile: Policy-makers, researchers, international organisations and representatives of civil society.

#### Participant reaction<sup>2</sup>

Overall positive, highlighting the desire to engage more with local authorities on issues related to urbanisation and migration.

<sup>2</sup> According to the evaluation forms completed by the participants at the end of the meeting.

Technical Workshop on Diaspora Remittances and Sustainable Development, 5-6 November 2019 in Abuja: AP Actions 2 and 3

Organised by Nigeria and co-chaired by France and Belgium.

#### Objective

To exchange good practices in the area of mobilising remittances for productive investment in countries of origin and to improve technical understanding of instruments and initiatives in this area.

#### Results

**A compendium** listing a **dozen initiatives** that leverage diaspora remittances for development and offering **recommendations** to governments on the one hand, and to other actors such as diaspora members, experts and financial institutions on the other.

#### Participants

The first technical workshop of the RP, it brought together some 20 experts and partners from national administrations.

#### Participant reaction<sup>3</sup>

Very positive. Participants indicated that they “*could use the knowledge gained at the workshop in their jobs*” and that “*the workshop provided them with the opportunity to expand their networks, create synergies and develop their business (private sector).* »

<sup>3</sup> Based on the evaluation forms completed by the partners at the end of the meeting.

## Box 1

### Compendium of good practices on diaspora engagement strategies



In line with Action 1 of the Marrakesh Action Plan, a compendium of good practices on diaspora engagement strategies has been elaborated in order to respond to the common priority of Dialogue partners to better know, understand and involve their diaspora and to enhance their economic, social and cultural potential for development. This document provides partner countries with a knowledge tool and a guide for the comparison and analysis of diaspora engagement initiatives and strategies implemented in the different Dialogue regions, with a view to facilitating the transferability of the most innovative strategies between Rabat Process countries.

#### Results

A document entitled *“Some good practices in the implementation of border management projects”*: This document (in a new format) provides concrete recommendations on project formulation, implementation and good practices in border management (see Box 3).

#### Participants

- Number of delegations: 33 delegations from Dialogue partner countries and organisations participated in the meeting. Lebanon, a non-partner country, also participated upon the Dialogue’s invitation.
- Profile: Technical experts from, among others, border guards, police, customs or armed forces of African and European countries.

#### Participant reaction<sup>4</sup>

Very positive impact. As a result of the knowledge gained, the partners felt that they would be able to *“develop projects and improve their Border Management Action Plan, improve interoperability in border management and enhance information sharing between national security services and neighbouring countries.”*

Technical workshop on the fight against the smuggling of migrants,  
24 October 2019 in Abidjan: AP actions 15, 16 and 17

## Domain 4

### Preventing irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings and fight against these phenomena

Thematic meeting on the cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination in the area of border management, 1-2 July 2019 in Madrid: AP Action 15

Organised by Spain and co-chaired by Morocco.

#### Objective

To share good practices and experiences in bilateral and regional cooperation in the fight against irregular immigration and border management more generally.

Organised by Côte d’Ivoire, at the initiative of the French Chairmanship of the Rabat Process.

#### Objective

To exchange experiences and formalise recommendations based on good practices implemented by the 18 States signatories of the Niamey Declaration, whose annual follow-up meeting organised by UNODC took place on the two previous days.

#### Results

1. Adoption of **conclusions taking up the main ideas of the Niamey Declaration**, namely the need to establish appropriate legislative frameworks and a specific institutional framework, the optimisation of judicial cooperation tools at national/regional level and the development of operational mechanisms for regional cooperation.
2. Rabat Process partners that are not members of the Niamey Initiative were able to learn about the actions carried out by these countries in the fight against the smuggling of migrants and to draw inspiration from them.

<sup>4</sup> Based on the evaluation forms completed by the partners at the end of the meeting.

## Box 2

### The AP implementation in a nutshell

From the four events (two thematic meetings and two workshops) held between May 2018 and May 2020, domains 1 and 4 of the Marrakech Action Plan are two priority areas most commonly addressed.

Under domain 1, the themes chosen reflect the importance of the link between migration and development and the theme of the root causes of migration within the Dialogue, as recalled in the Marrakesh Political Declaration and Action Plan: "Strengthening the synergies between migration and development is a priority area and a specificity of the Rabat Process. The Dialogue partners therefore agree to continue along this path. »

Under domain 4, the activities selected focused on border management on the one hand and the fight against the smuggling of migrants, and more specifically the strengthening of national tools to combat it, regional and international cooperation and prevention campaigns on the other.

It should be noted that several events planned within the framework of the French Chairmanship had to be postponed due to COVID-19, namely: the technical workshop on voluntary return and reintegration (scheduled to take place in Yaoundé on 18-19 March 2020); the Rabat Process-labelled technical workshop on the link between migration (scheduled to take place in Paris on 21 April 2020 and postponed to 19 October 2020); the Steering Committee and Senior Officials' Meeting (scheduled to take place in Paris on 2-3 June 2020 and postponed to 20-21 October 2020); the thematic meeting on cities, local authorities and migration (planned in early 2021), and the first technical workshop on migration scenario building, in partnership with the Centre for Mixed Migration (CMM), initially planned for the last quarter of 2020.

However, it is important to note that it was possible to implement some activities taking into account an analysis of migration in times of crisis and used virtual techniques for data collection or exchange of expertise. These are:

- Production of 2 case studies on the cities of Bamako and Tunis financed by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and produced by MMC in coordination with the Secretariat (presentation of results was planned to take place at the SOM in Paris).
- Webinar on 16 September 2020 presenting the results of the *Assessment of Anti-Trafficking Gaps, Needs and Transferrable Practices in the Member States of ECOWAS and Mauritania*, produced by ICMPD in the framework of the Rabat Process.
- Note on migration and mobility in times of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Rabat Process region (to be published in December 2020), produced in partnership with the MMC.

In addition, several knowledge tools were developed, such as research papers and concrete recommendations aimed at enabling Dialogue partners' evidenced-based decision making.

#### Participants

- Number of delegations: 27 delegations from Dialogue partner countries and organisations participated in the workshop.
- Profile: Magistrates, judges, police, security officers and representatives of administrations in charge of the fight against trafficking and smuggling of human beings.

### 2.2 | Monitoring and implementation of the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP)

The Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process are engaged in updating<sup>5</sup> the JVAP, in accordance with the joint conclusions of the Senior Officials' Meeting held in Addis Ababa in November 2018.

To update the JVAP, two series of consultations were organised with the partners of the Rabat Process, and two Steering Committees set up to discuss the draft document updating the JVAP.

#### Activities

##### 13 May 2019

First round of consultations with the Rabat Process Focal Points to examine their contributions and recommendations on policy developments and priority actions to be reflected in the updated text of the JVAP.

##### 16 September 2019

Second round of consultations with Rabat Process Focal Points invited to provide comments due to the low response rate to the first round of consultations.

##### 13 November 2019

Discussion on the update of the Valletta Joint Action Plan (JVAP) at the Rabat Process Steering Committee (SC) meeting. It was agreed that the Secretariat would integrate all comments received into a single document and prepare a proposal for a revised text to be presented to SC members in February.

##### 18 February 2020

Rereading and validation by the partners of the Rabat Process of the draft JVAP update document.

<sup>5</sup> The term "update" was agreed to ensure that the text reflects recent developments and current migration realities, while largely maintaining the principles and structure of the JVAP.

## Monitoring Tools

The **JVAP Database** is used in all Dialogue meetings, both in advance and as a basis for preparatory documents.

The tool also assesses how the Dialogue recommendations help guide partners in implementing policies, programmes and legislation, and to what extent these recommendations are actually useful to them.

Since its launch in 2016, the tool has been regularly updated and enhanced with new features to reflect the information received from JVAP partners and to facilitate access to data. Since 2020, a Data Visualisation Tool (DVT) with real time updates, allows the JVAP partners to have dynamic visualisations of aggregated data. To date, 32 partners<sup>6</sup> are part of the data collection process.

## 2.3 | Steering Committee Meetings

Deliberations and/or conclusions of the SC meetings:

### 25 June 2018, Brussels (Belgium)

Discussion on the report drafting process for the Valletta SOM.

### 25 July 2018, Brussels (Belgium)

Participation in the drafting of the report for the Valletta SOM.

### 24 September 2018, Paris (France)

Preparation of the Valletta SOM, including consideration of comments received from Rabat Process partners on the individual analysis report - discussions, validation.

### 23 January 2019, Brussels (Belgium)

Review of the question of SC governance in response to the interest expressed by Niger and Cameroon to become members. Recall of the joint responsibility of the two regional dialogues in monitoring the JVAP implementation.

### 11 February 2019, Ouagadougou (Burkina-Faso)

Review of the question of SC enlargement and decision to keep a restricted forum, composed of the current members, without enlargement but with possibilities of association.

### 3 June 2019, Brussels, (Belgium)

The Presidency of Burkina Faso is handed over to France.

<sup>6</sup> This figure includes partners who have already submitted data as part of the data collection cycle, or those who have agreed to do so (their data are expected).

### 13 November 2019, Brussels, (Belgium)

Exchanges on the results of the consultation with the Rabat Process partners in the framework of the JVAP update.

### 18 February 2020, Brussels, (Belgium)

Exchanges on the future African Presidency of the Rabat Process and review and validation of the draft update document of JVAP.

### March 2020 and July 2020

Steering Committees postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2.4 | A more operational way of working

*“Target concrete actions that reflect the specific added value of the Rabat Process. This lies mainly in its capacity to connect the technical and political actors concerned through networking.”* Marrakesh Political Declaration.

### I. Production of documents for operational purposes

#### Objective

More operational meeting minutes / useful and impactful documents for decision-making or the formulation of projects and technical programmes (maps, guides, infographics).

### II. Participant profiles increasingly adapted to the issues addressed in the meetings

At the February 2019 SOM in Ouagadougou, the Rabat Process partners *“considered it imperative that technical expertise feeds into the political dialogue and recommended the participation of thematic and technical experts with relevant profiles at future meetings”*.

## Box 3

### Three examples of operational documents with a very positive impact

**Guide entitled "Some Good Practices in the Implementation of Border Management Projects"** - Thematic Meeting on Cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination in the field of border management", July 2019, Madrid, Spain.

#### Objective

to provide recommendations on the formulation and implementation of future projects in the field of border management.

#### Participant reactions

very positive. As a result of the knowledge gained, the partners felt that they would be able to

*"develop projects and improve their Border Management Action Plan, improve interoperability in border management and enhance information sharing between national security services and neighbouring countries."*

**Mapping initiatives in the area of diaspora contribution to sustainable development** - Technical workshop on "Diaspora remittances and sustainable development", November 2019, Abuja, Nigeria.

#### Objective

to improve the understanding of technical instruments and initiatives enabling diaspora to contribute to development in the Rabat Process region.

#### Reactions from participants

very positive. Participants stated that

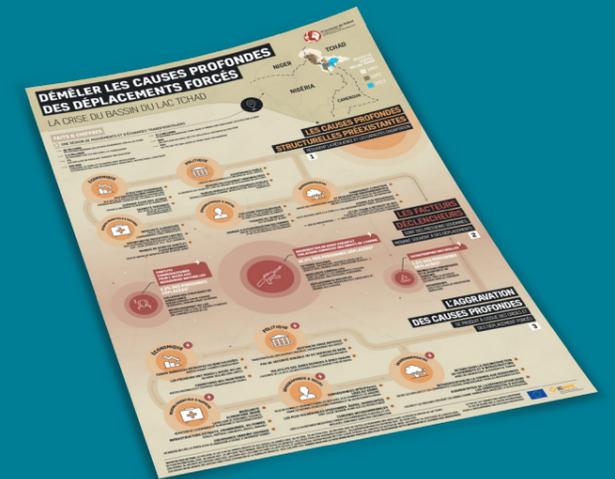
*"they could use the knowledge gained at the workshop in their work" and that "the workshop had provided them with the opportunity to expand their networks, create synergies and develop their business (private sector)."*

**Infographic entitled "Untangling the root causes of forced displacement: the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin"** - Thematic Meeting on the Root Causes of Irregular Migration, October 2019, Paris (France)

#### Objective

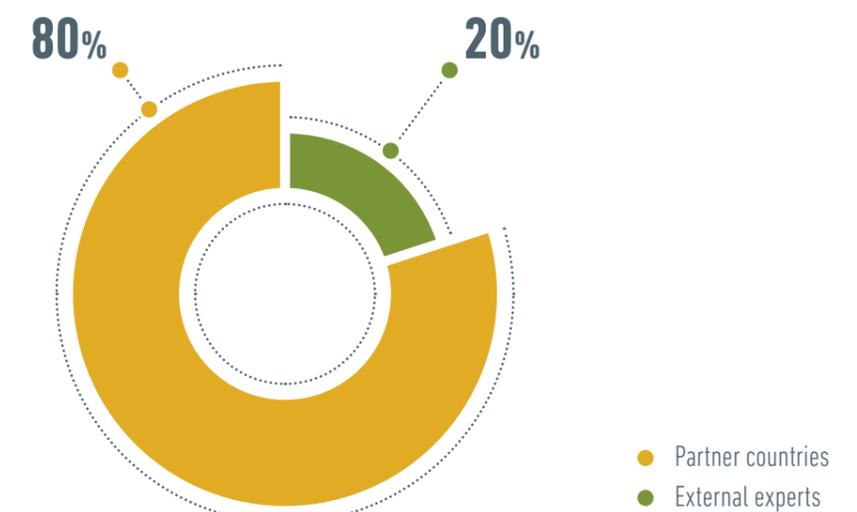
to serve as a complementary tool to improve partners' knowledge and awareness of the full range of root causes (both structural factors and short-term triggers) of irregular migration and forced displacement.

The crisis in the Lake Chad Basin was chosen as the subject of this infographic because it is one of the most neglected displacement crises in Africa, directly or indirectly affecting several partner countries of the Rabat Process.



During the period 2015-2018, which precedes the reference period of this document, the share of "external" experts (such as civil society organisations, university representatives, researchers, international organisations, diaspora organisations and the private sector) participating in the thematic meetings was quite limited, as shown in the graph below<sup>7</sup>.

### Profile of participants in thematic meetings from 2015 to 2018 (percentage)



<sup>7</sup> Percentage calculated on the basis of the 5 thematic meetings organised between 2015 and 2018: Porto, Brussels, Bamako, Cape Verde, Paris.

In addition, the participation of “national” experts (those with a technical profile that corresponds to the issues of the meeting and who were selected by the National Focal Points to participate) was low. For example, at the thematic meeting on human trafficking and migrant smuggling held in Porto in 2015, the majority of participants (55%) had a non-technical profile.<sup>8</sup>

It should be noted that since the Ouagadougou SOM in February 2019, the **participation of external and national experts in the Dialogue meetings has increased**, as shown in the figures below:

- 66% of the participants at the July 2019 thematic meeting in Madrid had a technical profile and worked on border management on a daily basis;
- 57% of the participants at the October 2018 thematic meeting in Paris had a technical profile and were specialised in addressing the root causes of migration;
- 55% of the participants at the Abuja technical workshop in November 2019 were external and national experts working on the issue of diaspora remittances.<sup>9</sup>

Bringing together both **external experts (from the private and public sectors)** and representatives of the Rabat Process partner countries and organisations has contributed significantly both to enriching the quality of the exchanges, creating a pool of qualified thematic experts on issues related to the Marrakesh Action Plan and to energising the Dialogue. It should be noted that the National Focal Points played an important role in identifying and mobilising national experts – sometimes working in other departments and ministries. The increased exchanges with experts in the framework of the Dialogue are partly thanks to their efforts.

For the technical workshop on “International Migration and Development”, which was planned to take place on 19 October 2020, the importance of the participation of technical experts on the subject was reiterated in the invitation to member countries.

This should be continued, and the search for technical profiles for future thematic and technical meetings should be intensified. Practitioners and technicians are indeed in a position to bring their expertise to the meetings and contribute to strengthening the relevance of the discussions and recommendations.

<sup>8</sup> That is to say, they came from the diplomatic corps or had a high level civil servant profile.

<sup>9</sup> The workshop was attended by 73 participants, including 41 representing governments of Dialogue partner countries, 12 representing Dialogue partner organisations and 20 external technical experts.

## 3 Ten Recommendations for the Dialogue

### R1 | Energise the Dialogue governance

#### Role of the SC

As a strategic and permanent body of the Rabat Process, the Committee prepares the political guidelines, stimulates the work and cooperation within the Dialogue and follows up on the successful implementation of the multi-annual cooperation programmes developed at the Senior Officials’ Meetings and adopted at the Ministerial Conferences.

#### Role of the SOM

Strategic and decision-making body of the Rabat Process. The SOM analyses, discusses and approves the policy and operational orientations proposed by the SC. Any partner in the Rabat Process may transmit information and submit suggestions and ideas to a member of the Steering Committee, the Presidency or the Secretariat.

#### Chairmanship

It has a one-year term of office<sup>10</sup> and respects geographical alternation. It exercises representative functions and stimulates the political dynamics of the Dialogue beyond operational activities. The Presidency can be carried out on a tripartite model (troika) by associating the outgoing and future Presidencies.

#### Recommendation

An opening of nominations for the Presidency outside the SC could be considered in the event that no candidate is running for the SC. Such an opportunity would stimulate the political momentum of the Process and give it a new impetus. The tripartite (troika) Chairmanship model could be retained to accompany and advise new countries.

<sup>10</sup> The duration of the Presidency may nevertheless be flexible, taking into account the calendar priorities of the Dialogue.

## R2 | Improve the dissemination of recommendations and practices in partner countries

A follow-up of the conclusions and recommendations of the thematic and technical meetings is necessary to contribute to tangible results, facilitate decision-making processes and influence policy development.

### Participant reaction

Although Rabat Process partners expressed satisfaction with the quality and content of the thematic and technical meetings, many felt that the concrete follow-up to these meetings remains weak.

### The key role of National Focal Points

- Ensure that the key messages and results produced in the Rabat Process are conveyed to all relevant national stakeholders.

### Action taken by the Secretariat in this regard

- Consultations conducted by the Secretariat with the NFPs on these issues through surveys or questionnaires. The Secretariat intends to continue such consultations.
- Use of the different communication channels as a **private space integrated into the Rabat Process website**, where the NFPs can access all relevant documents from the Dialogue meetings.

### Recommendation

Propose an active follow-up of the recommendations developed in the framework of the Dialogue activities

## R3 | Further develop synergies with other regional processes and stakeholders

The Rabat Process is now cooperating with other regional processes and fora. This process of dialogue must be continued to ensure a comprehensive approach to migration. The exchange of good practices between processes on migration allows the Dialogue to be continuously enriched and new practices and activities to be developed.

### Cooperation with the Khartoum Process and the Valletta Framework

Since the Valletta Summit on Migration in November 2015 in Malta, the Rabat and the Khartoum Processes have been working closely together to follow up on the JVAP implementation, aimed at strengthening cooperation on migration and mobility on both sides of the Mediterranean. Joint activities have been organised on several occasions, such as during the thematic meeting on non-accompanied minors, organised between the African Union Horn of Africa Initiative, the Khartoum Process and the Rabat Process, on 8-9 November 2017 in Luxor. These joint activities could be systemised.

### Close exchanges and contacts with the Prague Process and the Budapest Process

(Secretariat provided by ICMPD)

Regular exchanges between the Secretariats take place to ensure cross-fertilisation of ideas and practices but also to ensure consistency in timing and activities (avoid duplication).

### Cooperation with regional organisations

The EU and ECOWAS are partners in the Rabat Process and members of the Steering Committee. The EU finances the Rabat Process. The partners have repeatedly raised the added value of occasionally or more regularly inviting other Regional Economic Communities, such as ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States) or moving closer to the African Union (a partner in the Khartoum Process).

### Cooperation with International Organisations

Given the specialised and sometimes technical nature of the thematic meetings organised during the reference period, international organisations were regularly involved in the preparation and conceptualisation phases of these meetings, as well as in the meetings themselves, through the participation of competent experts. The joint collaborative workshop on the smuggling of migrants held in Abidjan in October 2019 provided an opportunity to **collaborate with the partners of the Niamey Declaration, for which the UNODC Secretariat is responsible**. This workshop created synergies between the RP and the Niamey Declaration, which brings together 18 RP partner countries and aims to strengthen the fight against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings.

### Exchanges with the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)

The added value and modalities of collaboration between the RP and the GFMD were discussed at the February 2020 SC meeting, based on the interest expressed and priorities of the Presidency of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to foster synergies between the GFMD and Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs). Among the options explored were the dissemination of RP studies, reports and knowledge products at GFMD events.

Finally, a good example of success was also the invitation made to **RP non-partner countries** during some meetings to learn from practices developed in regions outside the African continent. For example, the meeting on border management in Madrid allowed representatives from Lebanon to share their experience on the matter with RP partners. This type of invitation to external countries could be encouraged.

## R4 | Strengthen the interaction of the Dialogue with cities and local authorities

The Marrakesh Political Declaration endorsed, as one of its crosscutting priorities, an “inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach” to migration management.

### Objective

Commit to progressively creating in the coming years an exchange of technical expertise with cities and local authorities within the framework of the Dialogue. This would enable it to demonstrate its capacity to be an inclusive and flexible Dialogue, capable of adapting to circumstances and developments.

### Examples

A panel on migration and urban planning organised during the thematic meeting on the root causes of migration mentioned above allowed fruitful exchanges on this subject. In the final recommendations of the meeting, the partners decided to create sustainable urban policies and to include local actors in migration issues, notably by involving them in discussions on migration governance.

### Added-value of this commitment

- Multi-level migration governance.
- This opening would help to encourage consultation and coordination between national governments - partners in the Rabat Process - and their cities and local partners.

### Approach

This openness will be achieved through interaction with cities and local authorities as operational and technical partners in the Rabat Process, rather than as political partners. This will involve interaction/ and exchanges on an ad hoc basis, and on issues or themes of common interest. In order to explore possible options, a technical workshop on the inclusion of cities and local authorities in migration management has also been planned in the framework of the French Presidency of the Rabat Process. It has been postponed to the first half of 2021 and will be held in Paris, France, under the African Presidency.

### Expected results

- To better understand the needs and experience of local authorities ;
- Benefit from the knowledge of local authorities on the implementation of migration legislation and policies at the local level (what works and what doesn't);
- Strengthen coordination between the local and national levels.

## R5 | Continue to organise sub-regional events

### Objective

To respond to the crosscutting priority of the Marrakesh Political Declaration to adopt a regional approach and encourage targeted consultations along migratory routes.

### Format

To provide a framework for consultation and exchange among a limited set of countries participating in the Dialogue (e.g. countries in a specific region, sub-region or Dialogue area) in order to address common priority themes. This type of meeting could take place prior to or in parallel with the thematic meetings. Interregional expertise could be envisaged (regional peer-to-peer exchange), also enabling Regional Economic Communities to play a specific role.

### Example

Exchange of experiences with the 18 signatory States of the Niamey Declaration, organised in cooperation with UNODC (see details above), enabled the countries of the Rabat Process that are not members of the Niamey Initiative to learn more about and draw inspiration from the actions taken by these countries in the fight against the smuggling of migrants.

### Impact

Advantages:

- Targeted discussions at the sub-regional level. High added value of the format and possibility to target countries concerned by one or more migration routes.
- Mobilisation of the network of sub-regional experts with the possibility of supporting and strengthening it.
- Possibility of creating and deploying sub-regional working groups in the long term.

Limitations :

- It is necessary that the results of such activities - carried out at sub-regional level - are shared with all partners and fed into the broader political Dialogue.

## R6 | Develop scenarios to inform decision-making on migration and better prepare for crises

A partnership was initiated in October 2018 with the Mixed<sup>11</sup> Migration Centre (MMC<sup>12</sup>), which provides independent and high-quality analysis on mixed migration.

<sup>11</sup> Mixed migration: the movement of people across borders, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking and people seeking a better life and opportunities. Motivated by a multiplicity of factors, people in mixed flows have different legal statuses as well as various vulnerabilities (MMC definition).

<sup>12</sup> The MMC is part of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), by which it is governed. The Centre plays a role of an independent source of data, research, analysis and policy development.

## Box 4

**First pilot exercise "Analysis of future mixed migration in 2030 in West and North Africa"** - Workshop, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), 24 October 2019, subsequently replicated in the framework of the Khartoum Process in March 2020 under the Chairmanship of the Netherlands.

### Objective

to test a new tool for migration decision-making and to provide an overview of the scenario development process aimed at better anticipating change and engaging in more effective and sustainable planning of mixed migration.

### Result

a report including several scenario matrices on the future drivers and results of mixed migrations.

### Objective of this partnership

To work together in the development<sup>13</sup> of regional scenarios with an appropriate format that meets the conditions required for the success of such an exercise.

### Added-value of this approach

- To have the necessary tools for thinking critically about the future, to better anticipate change, identify weaknesses and engage in more effective and sustainable planning and Dialogue.
- Work with quantitative and qualitative data collected in the field by MMC through data collection projects, such as 4Mi.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Scenarios (as distinct from predictions or forecasts) are detailed representations of what could be the main regional drivers and patterns of future migration. Many factors influence people's aspirations, capacities and decisions to migrate, and this process identifies and examines a wide variety of uncertain factors and sometimes unexpected triggers.

<sup>14</sup> Under the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi), 120 observers collect data on mixed migration in more than 20 countries across 8 migration routes around the world, conducting more than 10,000 in-depth interviews with refugees and migrants on the move each year. 4Mi is a key component of MMC's research, analysis and policy engagement and is increasingly used by a wide range of partners.

## R7 | Prioritise and operationalise actions through "Reference Countries".



## Introduction of the system of reference countries

SOM of Ouagadougou in 2019.

### Objective

to ensure better monitoring of the implementation of each domain of the Marrakesh Action Plan.

### How it works

The “reference countries” contribute to the overall coordination of activities related to their respective domain, share lessons learned and good practices with Rabat Process partners, facilitate expertise and information for future Dialogue activities, encourage the identification of actions where needs are expressed and ensure that priorities that have not yet been adequately addressed are addressed.

### Consultations

The “reference countries” have regular exchanges with the governance of the Rabat Process, i.e. the Steering Committee, the Dialogue Chair and the Secretariat. This system of “reference countries” reinforces the inter-governmental character of the Dialogue.

### Results

The “reference countries” develop and present an initial roadmap and a final progress review.

So far, several partner countries of the Rabat Process have volunteered to be reference countries:

Domain 1	Nigeria	Confirmed	✓
Domain 2	Cabo Verde, Portugal, and (Morocco)	Confirmed	✓
Domain 3	Switzerland	Confirmed	✓
Domain 4	Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Spain, and (Burkina Faso)	Confirmed	✓
Domain 5	Cameroon and Togo	Confirmed	✓

## R8 | Pursue the use of tools to stimulate the Dialogue: labelling and the laboratory of ideas

### The labelling system

#### Approach

A labelling system for initiatives led and/or funded by Rabat Process partners at the national level, which contribute directly to the implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan, was launched at the Ouagadougou SOM. The labelling system is one of the pillars of the Dialogue's engagement mechanism, through which Rabat Process partners can commit, on a voluntary basis, to support the implementation of one or more of the 23 actions of the Marrakesh Action Plan.

Bilateral, multilateral or regional projects, as well as meetings/events, can be labelled as “Rabat Process projects”.

#### Objectives

- Contribute to the overall implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan ;
- Give new visibility to national actions that fall within the scope of the Dialogue;
- Improve the sharing of good practices among Dialogue partners, which can feed into their policy development, planning and project implementation.
- Use the communication channels established by the Rabat Process to share the results and conclusions of labelled projects both at Rabat Process meetings (technical and political) and within the network of Dialogue partners;
- Expanded possibilities for strategic partnerships with International Organisations (joint and close preparation of labelled events).

#### Example

Migration and development workshop labelled “Rabat Process”: this workshop, planned to take place on 19 October 2020 in Paris and rescheduled for the first quarter of 2021, is organised and financed by France (Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs), with the support of the Secretariat. The value of this type of labelled event lies in supporting the implementation of concrete actions of the Marrakesh Action Plan (in this case Action 5 of the AP) and to contribute to the sustainability and durability of the Dialogue.

#### Courses of action

Several countries have expressed their interest in initiatives bearing the label of the Rabat Process such as France.

## The Laboratory of Ideas

### Approach

A new feature entitled "laboratory of ideas" has been created in the private part of the Rabat Process website, accessible only to the Focal Points.

### Objective

To serve as a tool for exchanges between the Dialogue Focal Points and to support the activities planned for the implementation of the different domains of the Marrakesh Action Plan. Through the laboratory of ideas, the Rabat Process partners can also submit their specific requests for technical and financial assistance to exchange with other Dialogue partners on possibilities for collaboration.

### Courses of action

So far, three project proposals have been submitted through the laboratory of ideas by Côte d'Ivoire (mapping of the Ivorian diaspora), Gabon (pilot project for the development of youth agricultural entrepreneurship) and Mali (support for the organisation of the Malian diaspora forum).

### Recommendation

A more regular use of this platform could be envisaged in the future to support the Rabat Process countries who wish to set up initiatives at the national or regional level. To this end, it seems essential to further promote the use of the laboratory of ideas among the Focal Points. E-mail notifications could be an effective tool to communicate the latest activities of the laboratory of ideas to the Focal Points and boost the platform. In addition, simplified e-mail contributions would reduce the barriers to its use. The laboratory of ideas could also serve as a privileged access point to the most essential resources produced by the Rabat Process, such as the conclusions of meetings.

## R9 | Continue to develop data collection, analysis and sharing tools adapted to the needs of partner countries

It should be recalled that the collection, analysis and sharing of disaggregated data is one of the crosscutting priorities of the Marrakesh Action Plan: *"Among the activities envisaged, partners will endeavour to identify existing initiatives and studies, share migration data and undertake, where necessary, specific studies for operational purposes at the national or regional level"*.

### Proposal

This priority could be integrated into the Dialogue by strengthening collaboration with institutes/organisations active in data collection and analysis in the Rabat Process region.

Such collaboration could take the form of formal partnerships, resulting in the following types of knowledge products: (a) briefing notes for partners, including analyses of recent migration data; (b) expertise in the form of interventions at thematic meetings or other activities; and (c) specific research and data generation to guide the Dialogue.

## Box 5

### Study "Social Immobility versus Social Mobility: The Root Causes of International Emigration" by Nelly Robin (IRD)

**Qualitative approach** based on two survey techniques: 1) individual interviews (8 in Senegal and 4 in Italy) and 2) focus groups (8 groups, 160 respondents, 4 sites in Senegal and 3 groups, 25 respondents, 2 sites in Italy).

### Objective

to examine the causes of emigration from the point of view of the primary migration actors: those planning to migrate, the migrants and their families.

### Main findings

It is not so much the inequalities between the South and the North but rather the inequality of opportunities and the feeling of immobility and social injustice in the country of origin, which explain emigration.

Link to the study: [here](#)



### Results

Access to reliable and relevant data and the effort to capitalise on information and knowledge on a given theme will not only better inform the Dialogue but will also provide a more solid basis for policy and technical recommendations. A stronger emphasis on data collection and analysis (often in the form of mapping or assessment of needs and knowledge) will enhance the relevance of the Dialogue and allow stakeholders to be continuously informed of developments in the migration context. Partners will thus be better able to establish trends, scenarios and forecasting frameworks to identify existing gaps and needs for policy development and anticipate future gaps and needs.

## Box 6

### Assessing gaps, needs and transferable practices in human trafficking

In Action 19 of the Marrakech Action Plan, the partners committed themselves to "formulate concrete responses for the protection and assistance of persons affected by smuggling and victims of trafficking in human beings (...) and to promote their inclusion in national, regional and sub-regional initiatives and policies." To implement this action, and in response to a concrete request from partners at the February 2019 SOM in Ouagadougou, an assessment of gaps, needs and transferrable practices was carried out under the coordination of the Secretariat. The assessment provides a comprehensive analysis based on anti-trafficking initiatives and includes a toolkit of practices that can be replicated/transferred from one region or country of the Rabat Process to another. The methodology includes desk research, written questionnaires, interviews and consultation meetings with key stakeholders in the sub-region, including the ECOWAS focal points on trafficking and Rabat Process Focal Points.

#### R10 | Consider the development of virtual tools

The COVID-19 crisis encourages us to think about virtual solutions useful to Dialogue partners. While taking into account the limits of connectivity and the difficulties of bringing together some 60 partners from 4 geographic regions. These online activities would also increase the participation of civil society or other external actors in the Rabat Process and reduce participation costs related to the organisation of Dialogue meetings.

#### Summary of recommendations

The table below lists the 10 recommendations made in this report. These relate both to the organisation and governance of the Rabat Process, and the actions needed to continue the operationalisation of the Dialogue, inform decision-making and adapt to the evolving migration context.

## Box 7

### Virtual solutions envisaged in the Dialogue

1. Disseminate pre-recorded videos or allow experts/participants to speak live during meetings via a video-conferencing system;
2. Make ICMPD e-learning courses available to the Rabat Process partners. Currently, the Rabat Process activities do not include a specific training component. Based on identified needs, the Dialogue meetings/activities could be used to promote continuous training of national administrations on migration issues through ICMPD e-learning courses;
3. Organise webinars to facilitate the exchange of practices between small groups of countries (sub-regional approach) to discuss specific migration issues or sensitive topics;
4. Organise thematic online seminars led by experts. Such web-seminars would mainly be aimed at technical staff of the national administrations concerned.
5. Develop online events to include local authorities.

#### R1. Energise the Dialogue governance

Consider opening nominations for the Presidency outside the SC in the event that no candidate within the Committee is running for Chairmanship.

#### R2. Improve the dissemination of recommendations and practices within partner countries

Disseminate the conclusions and recommendations of thematic and technical meetings through different channels.

#### R3. Further develop synergies with other regional processes and stakeholders

Consolidate cooperation with other regional processes and fora in order to enrich the Dialogue, develop new practices and activities and ensure a comprehensive approach to migration.

#### **R4. Strengthen the interaction of the Dialogue with cities and local authorities**

Encourage flexibility and the capacity of the Dialogue to adapt to changing circumstances and developments by committing to gradually create a space for cities and local authorities within the RP.

#### **R5. Continue to organise sub-regional events**

Further encourage a regional approach and targeted consultations along migration routes.

#### **R6. Develop scenarios to inform decision-making on migration and better prepare for crises**

Work on the development of regional scenarios based on quantitative and qualitative data collected in the field, in order to better anticipate changes, identify vulnerabilities and engage in more effective and sustainable planning and Dialogue.

#### **R7. Prioritise and operationalise actions through “reference countries”**

Ensure better monitoring of the implementation of each area of the Marrakesh Action Plan through the system of “reference countries” that will contribute to the overall coordination of activities related to their respective domain.

#### **R8. Pursue the use of tools to boost the Dialogue: labelling and the laboratory of ideas**

Support the implementation of one or more of the 23 actions of the Marrakesh Action Plan through the labelling system which contributes to the financial/sustainability of the Dialogue and the more regular use of the “laboratory of ideas” to assist partner countries in the implementation of initiatives at the national or regional level.

#### **R9. Continue to develop data collection, analysis and sharing tools tailored to the needs of partner countries**

Strengthen collaboration with institutes/organisations active in data collection and analysis in the Rabat Process region to better inform the Dialogue, and provide a more solid basis for the development of policy recommendations.

#### **R10. Consider the development of virtual tools**

In view of the requirements of the COVID-19 crisis and in order to reduce the participation costs related to the organisation of the Dialogue meetings, consider virtual solutions and online activities.

# 4

## Conclusion

During the period 2018-2020, the Rabat Process has implemented numerous activities covering the entire spectrum of the Marrakesh Action Plan. The Dialogue has also adopted increasingly operational working methods through the identification of participant profiles adapted to the challenges of the meetings and by developing tools of practical use. Finally, the Rabat Process confirmed its leading role in the follow-up, implementation and updating of the JVAP.

It cannot be ignored, however, that the global health crisis has had an impact on the agenda and the fluidity of relations among the member states of the Process. Only after the health situation has normalised will the Process be able to resume its normal working rhythm.

Several courses of action are emerging to enable the Dialogue to continue to play an important role in the governance of migration between the EU and Africa. These include the need to boost the governance of the Dialogue, the development of synergies and collaboration with all stakeholders (in particular cities and local authorities), the strengthening of certain actions (dissemination of good practices, development of data collection and analysis tools, organisation of sub-regional events, development of virtual tools, etc.).

# Reference documents

## Documents produced by the Rabat Process Secretariat, in coordination with Dialogue partners from May 2018 to the present

### 1 | Political meetings

- Steering Committees
  - Document outlining options for association with the Steering Committee
  - Document on the proposals for the enlargement of the Steering Committee
  - Minutes and conclusions of the Steering Committees (May 2018, June 2018, January 2019, February 2019, June 2019, November 2019, February 2020)
  - Operating procedures of the Steering Committee
- Meetings of Senior Officials (SOM)
  - Verbatim of the Marrakesh Ministerial Conference and SOM, May 2018
  - Individual Analysis Report of the Rabat Process, JVAP SOM Addis Ababa November 2018
  - Report of the Ouagadougou SOM, February 2019

### 2 | Technical/thematic meetings

- Conclusions and recommendations of the thematic meetings (Paris 2019, Madrid 2019, Abidjan 2019 and Abuja 2019)
- Reports compiling the results of the evaluation forms (Paris 2018, Madrid 2019, Abuja 2019)
- Background note on the meeting on root causes of irregular migration
- Concept note on the technical workshop on diaspora remittances and sustainable development
- Background note on the workshop on international migration and development (meeting labelled Rabat Process)
- Concept Note on the Voluntary Return and Reintegration Workshop

### 3 | Strategic documents

- Review of the implementation of the Rome Programme 2015-2017
- Comparative table of the Marrakesh Action Plan with the Global Compact on Migration analysing crosscutting priorities and areas of focus
- Report on the analysis of participation in the meetings of the Rabat Process in 2015-2019
- Discussion paper prepared ahead of the Ouagadougou SOM of February 2019 on the future of the Rabat Process
- Roadmap for the Chairmanship of the Rabat Process: Responsibilities and tasks of the Chairmanship of the Dialogue

### 4 | Knowledge tools

- State of the Art synthesis - Study on the root causes of irregular migration in the Rabat Process region by the Development Research Institute
- Explanatory note on the analytical study on the root causes of irregular migration in the Rabat Process region
- Infographics on the root causes of forced displacement in the Lake Chad Basin crisis
- Compendium of Good Practices on Engaging with the Diaspora in the Rabat Process Region
- Assessment Report on Gaps, Needs and Transferable Practices in the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings in the 15 ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania
- Mapping Migration-Development Policies in the Rabat Process
- Questionnaire on voluntary return and reintegration

### 5 | Monitoring tools

- Calendar of Rabat Process activities (2018, 2019, 2020)
- Concept note on the implementation of Action 1 of the Marrakesh Action Plan
- Concept note on the implementation of Action 19 of the Marrakesh Action Plan
- Note on the labelling system for initiatives contributing to the implementation of the Marrakesh Action Plan
- Visual note on the role of reference countries
- Methodological note and concept note on the approach with cities and local authorities
- Note on the partnership with the MMC
- Documents summarising the results of the workshop to develop scenarios on mixed migration in West Africa in 2030 (MMC-led exercise)

### 6 | Communication tools

- Press releases for all meetings of the Rabat Process
- Articles on the website for all Rabat Process activities between May 2018 and present
- Brochure on the Marrakesh 2018-2020 programme
- Videos of the SOM press conference in Ouagadougou February 2019
- Video on the Technical Meeting on Border Management in Madrid, July 2019
- Video on the handover of the Presidency from Burkina Faso to France
- Videos with thematic experts during the workshop on remittances and sustainable development in Abuja, November 2019
- Rabat Process website: <https://www.rabat-process.org/fr/>

