



THEMATIC WORKSHOP

The Impact of Climate Change on Labour Migration: Exchanging practices and exploring opportunities for sustainable development, decent work and a just labour market transition

ILO HQ, Route des Morillons 4, Geneva

29 March 2023, 2:00-6:00 CET

Hybrid format

Agenda

2:05-2:15 Opening Remarks:

- Manuela Tomei, Assistant Director General, International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Emmanuelle Lachaussée, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in Geneva

2:15- 3:15 Panel discussion 1 – Labour migration as an adaptation strategy

Moderator: Agi Veres, Director UNDP Representation Office in Geneva

- Sumbue Antas, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Vanuatu
- Kajsa Fernström Nåtby, Ministry of Climate and Enterprise, Division for Climate, Sweden, Co-chair of the WIM Taskforce on Displacement, Paris Agreement/UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Dina Ionesco, Senior Advisor for Migration, Climate Vulnerability Forum
- Stephanie Sepúlveda, Immigration and Labor Specialist, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
- Elizabeth Warn, Head, Labour Mobility and Social Inclusion Division, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Careen Joel Mwakitalu, Co-Founder of NoTakaTanzania, Tanzania

3:15-3:45 Questions from the floor - Discussion Time

3:45-4:15 Networking Coffee Break

4:15-5:15 **Panel discussion 2 - Meeting new skills demand created by climate action - with a focus on youth**

Moderator: Michelle Leighton, Chief, Labour Migration Branch, International Labour Organization (ILO)

- Federico Villegas, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Argentina
- Victor Kotey, Deputy Director, Waste Management Department, Accra Metropolitan Assembly
- Dr. Tasneem Siddiqui, Chairperson of Department of Political Science, University of Dhaka and Founding Chair of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU)
- Joy Hernandez, Communications and Advocacy Officer, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)-Asia Pacific
- Maria Paz Anzorreguy, Director ILO Coordination, International Organization of Employers (IOE)
- Marc Tilley, Refugee, Asylum & Migration Policy Adviser to the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on Migration

5:15-5:45 **Questions from the floor - Discussion Time**

5:45-6:00 **Concluding remarks:**

- Olivier Lacroix, French Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva

6:00-7:00 **Networking drinks at the Bar des Délégués**

CONCEPT NOTE

Background, objectives and expected results

BACKGROUND:

Since its first edition in 2007, the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) has focused on labour migration, which represents the main movement of people at the internal and transnational levels. The issue of protecting, training and integrating workers and adapting models to respond to their needs in a context of climate crisis extends the GFMD 2020 discussions on labour migration and the need for a coordinated response in a context of emergency at the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), there were 169 million migrant workers worldwide in 2020, representing 4.9% of the global workforce in destination countries and 69% of the working-age migrant population (ILO, 2021). In addition to representing a significant share of the workforce, these workers often hold jobs in key sectors in destination countries such as health care, construction, transportation, services, agriculture, and agri-food processing.

In a context of decent working conditions, this workforce can facilitate the transfer of knowledge, contribute to development, intercultural exchanges and be a catalyst for growth and development for countries of origin, transit and destination. Disasters, climate change and environmental degradation are redefining the migration landscape, with lasting effects on economies, businesses and workers.

On one hand, climate change is increasing levels of poverty, inequalities and risk of social conflict; environmental phenomena are affecting livelihoods worldwide, with impacts on the agriculture and fishing sectors, prompting people to move and seek employment outside of their communities. In addition, the lack of institutional capacity and policy coordination at the national and local levels hinders the formulation of effective and gender-sensitive responses to these challenges to protect migrant workers, benefit host communities, help businesses and economies recover or seize new opportunities.

On the other hand, well-planned labour migration in line with international labour standards and social dialogue can support skills development, ensure the protection of migrant workers, generate remittance flows, and create networks between communities of origin and destination that contribute to development. Well-managed labour migration may also benefit destination countries by helping to fill labour shortages.

Climate action is creating new employment opportunities in key sectors (energy, transport, waste management, recycling, agriculture, fishing, forestry) requiring innovation, specific skill sets, working methods and technologies. As the world embarks on a just transition, opportunities exist to create new jobs and to allow upskilling of existing ones to foster adaptation and mitigation. This presents opportunities for skills upgrading and matching as well as for innovative forms of skills mobility partnerships including within the green and blue sectors.

Matching human capacities to the needs of companies and to national objectives of economic growth and development for both countries of origin and destination will become ever more important as the labour market is transformed by the environment and climate change.

Employment of young and future generations in decent and green jobs, ensuring gender equality, diversity and inclusion, is of particular concern, as opportunities and skills needs are changing. To adapt to these changing conditions and meet new skills demands, some countries have already implemented labour schemes as part of the solution. Increasingly more, workers are also seeking employment abroad in the green and blue economies.

OBJECTIVES:

Through the organization of this thematic workshop, the GFMD Chair aims to promote international dialogue on:

1/ how labour migration, grounded in the human and labour rights of migrants and the principle of gender-equality, can serve as an adaptive response for people facing the adverse impacts of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation.

2/ how skills anticipation and planning, and recognition and qualifications systems can support just transitions to green and blue economies.

This event will be structured in two complementary panel sessions and will address in a cross-cutting approach the six priorities identified by the French chairmanship, notably the need to adopt an approach centered on human rights, the promotion of regular migration in line with skills and employment needs, the production of a positive and objective discourse on migration, the mobilization of diasporas, the added value of engaging different stakeholders and levels of government to devise solutions.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

Promote an exchange of practices in order to:

- Better understand the conditions under which labour migration can serve as a successful adaptation response, drawing on existing examples, practices and lessons learned.
- Identify how climate action creates new possibilities for employment in new and existing sectors and how skills upgrading and skills mobility partnerships, including skills transfers, can support a just transition in key economic sectors.
- Provide inputs for the GFMD consultations related to these topics, in particular roundtables 1 and 4.