



IOM International Organization for Migration

RWANDA

STRENGTHENING LABOUR MIGRATION IN RWANDA

LABOUR MIGRATION HAS A TRIPLE WIN EFFECT IF PROPERLY MANAGED. IT HAS FAR-REACHING POTENTIAL TO ENHANCE MIGRANTS' WELL-BEING, WHILE CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COMMUNITIES, COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION.

Millions of people in East Africa are on the move, in search of skilled and non-skilled jobs.

Rwanda joined the East African Community (EAC) in 2007, making it a five-member regional economic bloc that constitutes Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi.

The treaty establishing the EAC provides for free movement of people, recommending the partner states to

ease border crossing by the EAC citizens and harmonize common employment/labour policies, programmes and legislation.

Rwanda's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (EDPRS II, 2013) identifies the lack of skilled labour as a growing problem. The number of formal sector firms reporting inadequate skills as a major constraint has doubled since 2006.

The problem is more serious for large firms with more than 100 employees, 45 per cent of which reported an inadequately educated workforce as a constraint in 2011. The 2009 National Skills Audit reported an average 61.5 per cent skills deficit and

severe skills gaps in the private sector in Rwanda.

In support of its development goals, the Government of Rwanda has crafted a migration policy which aims to: (i) facilitate and encourage tourists to come to Rwanda; (ii) allow the entry of foreign skilled workers in occupations lacking in Rwanda's labour market; (iii) allow and facilitate the entry of investors with substantial funds to invest in Rwanda; and (iv) enable the Rwandan Diaspora to contribute towards nation-building.

IOM IN ACTION

- The Labour Migration project in Rwanda is funded through IOM's Internal Development Fund. It started in January 2014 and will come to a close in May 2015.
- IOM is working closely with the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA) to support the Government in its migration management efforts through development of policy frameworks and information systems.
- IOM is assisting MIFOTRA in establishing stronger protection mechanisms to Rwandan migrant workers as well as labour migrants within Rwanda.

The Government believes that skilled migrants will greatly contribute to Rwanda's economic development by bringing highly skilled workforce, contributing to government revenue through taxation and facilitating skills/knowledge transfer to the local population.

In order to position Rwanda as a major tourist destination, and as a regional skills and investment hub, the Government has simplified the procedures to obtain required documents within a reasonable timeframe, while making most of the services available online. Citizens of the EAC partner states are eligible to obtain visa on arrival free of charge. The work permit fee for the EAC citizens has been waived. As a result, an increasing number of skilled experts target Rwanda's emerging economy.

According to the Third Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV III, 2012), international migrants currently represent about one per cent of Rwanda's population. Most come from neighbouring countries: the Democratic Republic of Congo (43%), Tanzania (31%), Burundi (14%), Uganda (11%) and other African countries (1%).

Other EAC Partner States are in the process of amending their laws to ease issuance of work permits to EAC citizens and enable them to work anywhere within the EAC region without discrimination.

The IOM Labour Migration Management project is therefore providing a critical boost in the Government's efforts to explore ways in which labour migration benefits could be applied to the Rwandan context.

Project Activities and achievements to date:

- Conducted two training workshops on labour migration management for government officials and other stakeholders (*conducted in February and August 2014*);
- Organized a study tour to Mauritius involving relevant government officials and other stakeholders to share best practices and lessons learned pertaining to labour migration;
- Conducted a comprehensive Skills Gap Assessment to identify the skills gaps in Rwanda's labour market and improved mechanisms for skills testing and evaluation of foreigners working or applying to work in Rwanda;
- Developed a comprehensive labour migration roadmap, including a resource mobilization strategy for longer-term labour migration management;
- Labour Export project proposal has been developed and is under review; and
- Updating the existing List of 'occupations in demand', to allow skilled foreigners to work in Rwanda.



Participants in a group discussion during a training workshop for Government officials

The Government of Rwanda has expressed an interest in assisting Rwandan citizens in gaining new skills and improving their lives in the region and beyond.

WE WORK WITH:

- Ministry of Public Service and Labor



MIGRATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

International Organization for Migration
IOM Rwanda Office | KG 632 St, Gasasa,
Rugendo, Kimihurura.
P.O. Box 1126 Kigali
Phone: +250 252 586710
Fax +250 252 586711
Tel Mobile: +250 786 134 270
Email: iomrwanda@iom.int

Website: <http://ronairobi.iom.int>

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WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNER:

