

Thematic meeting on  
**The root causes of irregular  
migration**

*“Towards a common understanding and solutions”*

*Under the Chairmanship of the French Republic and the co-chairmanship of the Republic of Senegal*

**23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> October 2018**  
**Paris, France**



Project funded by the European Union

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In the framework of the project  
“Support to Africa-EU Migration  
and Mobility Dialogue (MMD)”

Project implemented by ICMPD



## Introduction

The root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement are a priority topic for intercontinental cooperation between Africa and Europe. Given the importance of this migration theme, dialogue partners organised a meeting on the root causes of irregular migration in the Rabat Process region, in order to appreciate the complexity of the issue and the diversity of migration dynamics in Central Africa, West Africa, North Africa and Europe and between these different migration regions. Due to the multiple root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, as well as the specific mandate of the Rabat Process, it was decided that the scope of the meeting be limited exclusively to the so-called "structural causes" that are at the root of irregular migration.

The thematic meeting contributed directly to the strategic objectives that currently guide this framework for consultation. In 2015, Rabat Process partners explicitly recognised the importance of addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement when they adopted the Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP). This common will is also reflected in the Rabat Process Marrakesh Political Declaration and Action Plan, which emphasise the search for a common understanding of these phenomena in the region of dialogue, in particular through two specific actions:

**Action 4:** *Analyse the root causes and make practical recommendations (particularly through the organisation of thematic meetings on this subject) with a view to improving the incorporation of these issues into policy development.*

**Action 5:** *Promote a more systematic inclusion of issues related to the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement into socio-economic development strategies and programmes at national level, and into development cooperation programmes, whilst also promoting ownership of existing regional normative frameworks*

### **Objectives of the thematic meeting**

During this meeting, participants took a close look at the multi-faceted subject of root causes. They worked together to reach a common understanding of and solutions to the root causes of irregular migration in the Rabat Process region, in order to facilitate the formulation of policies that are adapted and capable of responding to the structural causes identified. The main objectives of this thematic meeting were as follows:

- To carry out a joint analysis of the concept of root causes in all its forms in order to reveal the complexity of root causes;
- To deconstruct and reframe the debate on root causes, building on new lines of thought provided by the meeting and the in-depth study on the root causes of irregular migration;
- To make recommendations for the attention of different stakeholders, such as policy makers or project and programme managers working root causes;
- To strengthen the link between research and evidence-based policy making

To do this, empirical research and practical experiences were presented and discussed in plenary sessions and in working group sessions which took into account rural and urban factors. The working groups enabled the dialogue partners to formulate specific recommendations addressed at policy makers and project managers in rural and urban areas. The meeting resulted in the co-chairs – the French Republic and the Republic of Senegal – issuing joint conclusions. France hosted this two-day event with the perspective of its future Chairmanship of the Rabat Process in mind (it will take over the Chairmanship from Burkina Faso in May 2019).

### **What is the definition of "root causes"?**

First, it should be emphasised that there is no internationally recognised official definition of the concept of "root causes". The term "root causes" is sometimes used synonymously with other concepts such as "triggers", "drivers" or "determinants" of migration. However, more recent<sup>1</sup> approaches distinguish between drivers, determinants and root causes of migration, while recognising that these definitions sometimes overlap. For Carling and Talleraas<sup>2</sup>, root causes are defined as the conditions of states, communities, and individuals that underlie a desire for change, which, in turn, produces migration aspirations. Root causes are thus considered as the social and political conditions that encourage people to migrate (especially poverty, repression, conflict and violence) while the "drivers of migration" encompass mechanisms which produce "outcomes" in terms of migration (social networks and access to information would for example be part of these "drivers of migration") without being considered as "root causes".

Neven Mimica, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, proposed a definition of **structural causes as negative political, economic and social circumstances** (which can be accentuated by environmental conditions)<sup>3</sup>. He distinguished these so-called structural causes from the "*acute causes*" of migration, such as armed conflicts, civil wars and other forms of violence. With regard to the Rabat Process, it is over these structural causes – in particular the social and economic factors, such as the lack of employment opportunities or access to vocational training – that the dialogue has greatest leverage. The strategic framework of the dialogue (the Marrakech Declaration and Action Plan 2018-2020) includes, for example, actions aimed at reducing the costs of remittances, training young people to provide them with the necessary skills to enter the labour market, creation of jobs and networks of vocational training institutes in Europe and Africa.

The thematic meeting (and the study organised in preparation), however, encouraged partners to go further in their analysis of "root causes": in practice, "root causes" should no longer be considered as being based solely on external determinants. This assumption is based on an observation: within a group of people facing the same external determinants, some will leave, and others will not: it is therefore necessary to ask why. To do this, **it is appropriate to consider migrations "from within"**, i.e. from the point of view of the first stakeholders of migration (potential future migrants, those who have already migrated and their relatives) because, in the decision to migrate, the context and the environment do not have more of an influence than the individual's own circumstances, and vice-versa. The challenge, now, is to strive for a intricate and complex understanding which is in line with the reality of the causes of migration.

### **Documents produced by the Secretariat, the Co-presidency and the Institute for Research for Development (IRD)**

A series of documents were produced by the Rabat Process Secretariat, the co-chairmanship of the thematic meeting and the IRD, not only to support and guide the discussion but also to ensure that debates would lead to relevant recommendations and represent a real added-value for dialogue partners.

#### ▪ **Study on the root causes of irregular migration**

Prior to the meeting, a study on the root causes of irregular migration in the Rabat Process region was carried out by the IRD, coordinated with the Rabat Process Secretariat. The study was mandated by France and the idea to conduct a study was approved by the dialogue Steering Committee, in order to produce scientific and conclusive data to guide discussions at the thematic meeting. The outcomes of the study, grouped in the form of operational recommendations, are intended to serve as a basis for the development of tailored and targeted policy instruments to improve migration management.

This innovative tool in the context of the Rabat Process aims to improve dialogue partners' knowledge of the factors that influence the choice to migration, and the aspects which determine different types of migration movements,

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<sup>1</sup>[Root causes and drivers of migration, Implications for humanitarian efforts and development cooperation Jørgen Carling, Cathrine Talleraas, Peace Research Institute Oslo](#)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>A definition given at a conference held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 entitled "Tackling the Root Causes of Mass Population Movements" organised by the European International Movement

particularly in the Rabat Process region. In the future, future comparison with other regional analyses (for example, of migration between Africa and the Persian Gulf countries) could enrich the understanding of the factors of migration. As mentioned above, the study **adopts a migrant-centred approach and invites us to think about migration “from the inside”**. It provides new **lines of thought** by presenting an in-depth analysis of structural root causes, and show how the same structural causes can have varying consequences on the decision to migrate, depending on the individual. The final outcomes of the study will enable us to better understand the interrelationship, interdependence and overlapping nature of the different root causes, given that the desire to emigrate is the result of a series of factors which do not occur in isolation.

▪ **Infographic: "Infographic: Untangling the Roots of Forced Displacement in the Lake Chad Basin"**

Given the specific focus of the thematic meeting, an infographic on the root causes of forced displacement in the Lake Chad Basin was developed by the Rabat Process Secretariat. This complementary tool aims **to improve the knowledge and awareness of dialogue partners** with regard to all root causes (both structural and cyclical factors) of irregular migration and forced displacement. In practical terms, the infographic aims to analyse the links between root causes and triggers of forced displacement in the Lake Chad Basin. The Lake Chad Basin crisis was chosen as the main object because it is one of the most disregarded crises in Africa, directly or indirectly affecting several partner countries of the Rabat Process (Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad). This tool was developed from extensive desk research and a series of consultations with thematic experts.

**Level of participation**

The thematic meeting brought together a total of 82 participants, including 63 partner countries of the Rabat Process and 19 observers from international organizations, civil society and the world of academia.

**Partner countries:** Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Spain, France, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Hungary, Italy, Libya, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Congo, Republic of Guinea, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Sao Tome-and-Principe, Senegal, Switzerland, Chad, Togo, Tunisia.

- **Partner organizations:** European Union (European Commission, Council of the European Union, European External Action Service).
- **International Organizations:** International Centre for Migration Policy Development - ICMPD, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations - FAO, International Organization for Migration - IOM.
- **Public bodies:** French Development Agency - AFD, Expertise France.
- **Research organizations:** Centre for Migration Studies - CMS (University of Ghana), Institute for Research for Development - IRD.
- **Civil Society Organizations:** United Cities and Local Governments of Africa - UCLG, Forum of International Solidarity Organizations resulting from Migration - FORIM, Grdr Migrations-Citoyenneté-Développement, Young Entrepreneurs Incubation Centre (Mali Agri Business Incubation Hub - MAIH).

**Opening ceremony**

In their opening speeches, the co-chairs of the meeting stressed the crucial importance of the theme of root causes of irregular migration for the Rabat Process, recognised as a priority axis of the current strategic framework for the dialogue. Mr. Pascal Teixeira (France), Ambassador for Migration, reiterated the **need to progress collectively towards a common understanding of this complex phenomenon** with the aim of identifying operational solutions and policy recommendations. Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Thiam, Ambassador / Technical Advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad, welcomed the unique and innovative nature of this meeting, the first of its kind in this space of dialogue in which African States and Europe exchange ideas on migration issues openly and in a spirit of partnership. Both speakers also mentioned the importance of **confronting the policy and institutional framework with research**. It is for this reason that an in-depth study on the root causes of irregular migration, mandated by France, was conducted by the IRD prior to this meeting, in order to obtain evidence and scientific data to guide the discussions of

the thematic meeting. The outcomes of the study are intended to serve as a basis for developing tailored and targeted policy instruments to improve migration management.

Ms. Jacqueline Zaba, Burkina Faso's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium, Benelux and the EU, then took the floor to recall that the fight against the root causes of irregular migration is a priority for both continents, and requires a comprehensive and multilateral approach. The representative from Burkina Faso took the opportunity to recall that this theme, and moreover the Rabat Process, is in line with the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) which will be adopted in Marrakesh on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018, and which provides a basis for improving governance and international understanding of migration in all its dimensions.

The EU representative, Mr. Nicolas Berlanga, Special Advisor on Migration at the European External Action Service, took the floor to emphasise that the thematic meeting is part of the preparation of the Senior Officials' Meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Addis Ababa. Subsequently, he highlighted the complexity of the topic of the root causes of irregular migration and the need to reposition the debate by taking into account other elements, such as space for youth, access to information, urbanisation and the role of cities in providing basic services to new populations. He also stressed the need to take migration into account in the development of internal and external policies and in the provision of information to the public. Mr. Berlanga concluded by arguing that the root causes of irregular migration are no different from the root causes of regular migration, emphasising the need to analyse African realities (indeed, 85% of migration is intra- African).

The opening ceremony ended with a speech from the Rabat Process Secretariat, funded by the European Union and implemented by the ICMPD. Mr. Ralph Genetzke, Head of ICMPD's Brussels Mission, reiterated the objectives of the meeting, adding that the study conducted by the IRD aimed to provide new food for thought for a better appreciation of the complexity of this issue, and to reframe the debate on root causes. Mr. Genetzke also mentioned the importance of contributing to the development of a more balanced narrative on migration, defined as one of the specific objectives of the meeting and the study. The Marrakesh Action Plan mentions as a cross-cutting priority the promotion of a balanced narrative on migration and the diaspora, based on factual data and highlighting their positive contribution to the development of countries of origin, transit and destination.

## The Root Causes Study: methodology and preliminary findings

The presentation on the Root Causes study, funded and coordinated by the Rabat Process Secretariat, was divided into two parts: first, the researcher presented the methodology chosen, then the preliminary findings (the analysis of the data is still in progress). The study comprised a meta-study (State of the Art literature review) and field surveys.

For the surveys, a qualitative approach was used, combining individual interviews and group discussions (focus groups). Two countries were targeted: first Senegal, especially the Dakar region (this choice makes it possible to analyse intra-African migration because it is not only a departure region for migrants to the EU, but also a transit point and an intra-African migration basin). Then Italy was chosen, as one of the main destination countries of West African migrants in Europe. The aim was to talk to immigrants who had recently arrived and who could therefore take a closer look back at the reasons for their departure and the changes / bifurcations during their migratory journeys. In order to appreciate the full complexity of these dynamics, surveys were conducted in two cities, Naples, in the south, and Milan, in the north.

In terms of **preliminary findings**, the following points stand out:

- The absence of a **fundamental difference between** the structural causes of irregular migration **and the** structural causes of regular migration. There is initially a migratory project and a decision to leave, and it is only in the implementation of the migration route that migration may become - possibly - irregular.

- **Emigration is an alternative to social immobility, largely attributed to the devaluation and downgrading of qualifications on the job market.** Therefore, it is seen as a response to "relative frustrations" (gap between expectations and resources / tensions between aspirations and their potential for satisfaction) and the individualisation of inequality of opportunity, in the areas of employment, education and political governance.
- **The re-composition of so-called kinship relations between individuals broadens the spectrum of emigration.** By questioning the deep structure of kinship in the society of origin, the family, the siblings and the entourage are placed at the heart of the emigration process. The future organisation of the social life of individuals is weakened.

## Recommendations from thematic presentations and working groups

### Balancing the narrative on the root causes of irregular migration

The media plays a dual role in the perception of migration. On one hand, it influences public opinion of the host country and, on the other hand, plays a role in the decision-making process which leads migrants to leave their country of origin. It also has an impact on the discourse of policy makers and political actors, and influences the process of migration policy making. It is therefore necessary to ensure balanced communication on the root causes of irregular migration, **by promoting an evidence-based approach**. This approach will make it possible to better understand the motivation, dynamics and causes behind migratory movements, in order to take decisions and develop appropriate and relevant migration policies.

Specific recommendations were made in order to facilitate balanced information around the concept of root causes of irregular migration. Mr. Soeren Bauer, ICMPD Communications Officer, presented the main challenges related to media coverage of migratory issues. These challenges were the subject of [a study conducted in 17 countries in the EU and the southern Mediterranean](#) in which journalists examined the quality of media coverage of migration from 2015-2016. This study confirms that media stories continue to shape public opinion, and shows that journalists are often poorly informed about the context and complexity of the migratory phenomenon. It also confirms that online media platforms, including social media, often have partial media coverage, with very little evidence base. This partial coverage contributes to the dissemination of false information, by playing on / manipulating emotions. The study provides a series of detailed recommendations for training, better funding for media action, and other activities aimed at supporting and encouraging more balanced and factual journalism on immigration, emigration, integration, asylum and other challenges related to migration.

Given the importance of ensuring balanced communication on migration based on solid evidence and reliable information, **participants made the following recommendations:**

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING GROUP 1:

#### COMMUNICATION AROUND THE ROOT CAUSES OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

1. Develop coherent messages and ensure coordination regarding migratory initiatives and policies so as to make messages more credible
2. Use neutral and professional terminology;
3. Seek to balance the power of images with public opinion with factual data and analysis;
4. Match information with contextualisation and evidence-based explanations based to better combat misinformation;
5. Establish a constructive dialogue between the authorities and the media on the subject of migration;
6. Identify different target audiences and tailor messages to them accordingly;

### **Addressing the root causes of rural migration**

Mr. Rodrigo de Lapuerta, Director of the FAO Liaison Office to the EU and Belgium, gave a presentation on [the global State of Food and Agriculture \(SOFA\) in 2018](#). This theme is the subject of this annual publication by FAO, which provides an in-depth analysis of internal and international migration flows and their links to economic development, demographic change and pressures on natural resources. Emphasis is placed on the causes of migration, and more specifically on the impact of rural migration, by showing that the priorities of rural migration policies and programmes depend on the national context, which is constantly evolving. The report argues that it is essential to ensure consistency between migration policies and agricultural and rural development policies in order to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration.

A schematic presentation of the migration flows from the report allowed us to visualise the many forms that migration may take: rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-rural and urban-urban. Mr. de Lapuerta explained that migration has mixed impacts on rural areas, stressing that the effects of migration on rural communities vary depending on the type of migration (short and long term, internal, international, seasonal, circular, return). According to the statistics collected in the report, rural areas host a large number of displaced populations during protracted crises (80% of refugees in sub-Saharan Africa live in rural areas). Mr. de Lapuerta therefore stressed the crucial role that migrants can play in supporting agriculture and the development of rural areas. Proper management of the influx of displaced persons can have positive effects on local economies by addressing skill shortages, promoting knowledge diffusion and stimulating demand for local goods and services.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. de Lapuerta recommended various policy and investment measures to address the root causes of rural migration. On the one hand, he recommended minimising the adverse drivers of migration through investments in job creation, land development and sustainable food systems. This can be achieved through the creation of decent work opportunities by strengthening agricultural value chains and the development of agribusiness; by increasing the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to crises; by promoting rural-urban links and promoting the development of regional urban centres. On the other hand, he mentioned the importance of making the best use of migration opportunities to stimulate rural development through : the exploitation of the potential of remittances and diaspora investments for agriculture and non-agricultural activities in the rural areas of origin; promoting return as a resource for agriculture and rural development and facilitating circular and seasonal migration.

Subsequently, Mr. Mohamed Lamine, Head of the Platform for Youth Entrepreneurship in Agribusiness in Mali, delivered a presentation on youth employment in the agricultural sector, focusing on the importance of revitalising the sector in order to limit the phenomenon of rural out-migration. The agribusiness incubation pole, called "Tètèliso", aims to promote entrepreneurship in rural areas, based on the opportunities offered by agribusiness such as seed marketing, processing of agricultural products and technologies. Given the fact that Malian agriculture engages 80% of the population, this incubation centre carries out activities with the aim of raising awareness about opportunities in the agricultural sector and works on issues related to youth employment (rural exodus, migration, terrorism, etc.).

Mr. Lamine then cited examples through which the centre aims to revitalise the agricultural sector, such as the establishment of appropriate training modules for capacity building of rural development actors, or the introduction of improved farming techniques<sup>4</sup> and meeting the needs of users. In addition, the incubator organises interaction days between producers, extension workers and researchers. In conclusion, Mr Lamine underlined the importance of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the field of agriculture. They are seen as an input to accelerate the transformation of this sector and increase the business opportunities in developing countries.

In the working group session, participants came together with the aim of making specific recommendations for policy makers and project managers with regards to rural areas. Ms. Cristina de Lorenzo, Programme Manager at the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) delivered a brief background presentation on the EUTF. She recalled the objectives of the EUTF, namely to help address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration. Ms. de Lorenzo then outlined the priorities of the fund and gave an overview of the different windows<sup>5</sup> and financial resources<sup>6</sup>. She mentioned the new framework, set out in the State of the Union Address, and the priority of the Africa-EU strategic alliance for investment and sustainable employment, which has a concrete goal of creating 10 million jobs over 5 years. Ms. de Lorenzo cited examples of on-going projects, such as PECOBAT<sup>7</sup> in Mauritania and YEP<sup>8</sup> in The Gambia. She also mentioned the regional project, ARCHIPELAGO<sup>9</sup>.

Given the importance of revitalising the agricultural sector in order to minimise rural exodus, the participants affirmed the importance of concerted action involving all main stakeholders, including civil society, local government authorities and decentralised state services. More specifically, participants **formulated the following recommendations:**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING GROUP 2:**

### **POLICY MAKERS AND PROJECT MANAGERS FOR RURAL AREAS**

1. Involve local authorities and leaders of social groups (religious, traditional and customary leaders) more closely in the decision-making process in rural areas, whilst also involving financial and technical partners and research institutes;
2. Promote decentralisation processes with the collaboration of state technical services
3. Invest in job creation, territorial development and sustainable food systems by: i) creating decent work opportunities by strengthening agricultural value chains (including through research) and agribusiness development; ii) increasing the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to threats and crises; iii) establishing a dialogue with the market sector and all relevant stakeholders including cooperatives, youth associations, rural-dwellers, etc.;
4. Stimulate rural development by: i) harnessing the potential of diaspora remittances and investments for agriculture and non-agricultural activities in rural areas of origin; ii) promoting returns (nationally and internationally) as a resource for agriculture and rural development and maximizing the potential of migrants resettled in rural areas; (iii) facilitating seasonal migration; (iv) combating land degradation; (v) promoting access to basic services;
5. Raise awareness and provide information on: i) living conditions and opportunities both in rural and urban areas; ii) success stories from rural areas, by using young farmers as "Ambassadors" as a vehicle for promotion.

the construction sub-sector in local materials, the setting up of professional and innovative training courses, construction training centres. Expected Result: 450 people trained, 315 jobs created, 5 schools built.

<sup>8</sup> A project implemented by the International Trade Centre to the tune of 11 million. It focuses on youth employability, access to entrepreneurship and micro-credit, and promoting dialogue with the private sector and the definition of subsector roadmaps.

<sup>9</sup> A regional project involving 12 countries, implemented by SEQUA, Euro-chambers and CPCCAF up to 15m. This is a twin-type program between the EU and Africa / Sahel Chambers of Commerce. Establishment of dual training courses for young people that meet the needs of the private sector. Expected result: training of 6,000 people and their insertion in the labour market.

<sup>10</sup>The global share of urban Africans is expected to increase from 11.3% in 2010 to 20.2% in 2050. Nearly 2/3 of population growth will occur in urban areas ([ONU-Habitat, 2014](#))



be paid to cities, as stakeholders in the implementation and development of migration policies. Cities are home to a growing number of migrants, who need access to employment and basic services. Despite the challenges this poses, growing cities represent a source of opportunity for migrants, providing them with access to livelihoods and the possibility to engage in entrepreneurship projects.

Within this context, Professor Joseph Teye, Director of the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana, gave a presentation on the main factors of migration and urbanisation in Africa. He began his presentation by recalling that of all regions of the world, Africa had the lowest intercontinental emigration rates, with about 53% of African migrants<sup>11</sup> who remain in the region. In 2017, the main hosting countries<sup>12</sup> of intra-African international migrants were South Africa (2.2 million) and Côte d'Ivoire (2.1 million).

Professor Teye then confirmed that rural-urban migration remains a dominant trend in Africa. He shared with participants an overview of the urbanisation trends in various African countries<sup>13</sup>, which predicts a very high urbanisation rate for 2050 for some countries such as Gabon (91%), Libya (95.7%) and Algeria (82.1%). According to Professor Teye, much of the urbanisation in Africa can be explained by cities' natural rate of increase (because of high fertility) and also by reclassification (the expansion of urban boundaries) which leads to larger contiguous urban areas, or by adding new, distinct urban areas. However, long-term migration to urban areas is an important part of urban growth. In addition, most of the projected urban growth will be in intermediate and small cities rather than megacities<sup>14</sup> like Lagos and Cairo. According to UN-Habitat, the vast majority of new urban dwellers are expected to move to intermediate and small cities, which will require increased capacity for urban management.

Recent urbanisation in Africa, according to Professor Teye, has resulted in rapid and unplanned urban growth, leading to inadequate housing, water and sanitation, transportation and health care. Teye then cited concrete examples of the effects of urbanisation on housing and sanitation in Africa (overcrowded houses with limited electricity supply, poor access to drinking water, precarious living conditions for inhabitants who risk being forcibly evicted by the municipal authorities, etc.) He listed not only the positive impacts (easier access to hospitals and better information on modern health practices), but also the negative impacts (an unsuitable environment and housing that can affect health, contamination of water sources leading to the contraction of diseases) of rural-urban migration on health. In addition, urbanisation has negative economic and social effects such as unemployment, crime and "social vice" (drug abuse, for example) and a lack of social support for children at school and at home. It should be emphasised, however, that there migration to urban areas can bring about positive change, such as the creation of small businesses, mainly in the informal sector. Economic opportunities in slum areas are not "equal" but incomes are at least often higher than in the areas from which migrants originate.

Professor Teye concluded that current political prescriptions – which tend to slow down the rate of urban growth by discouraging people from settling in urban areas and by implementing slum clean-up policies – are doomed to fail unless the factors underlying rural exodus are taken into account. Urban authorities must take into account the interests of all categories of migrants in urban planning and urban policy making in order to make cities more inclusive. Mr. Lionel Nzamba Nzamba, responsible for the migration programme at the United Cities and Local Governments Africa (UCLG), then gave a presentation on the implementation of sustainable urban policies which encourage migrant

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<sup>11</sup>Nearly 79% of migrants in Africa are originally from the region - [https://www.rabat-process.org/images/TM-root-causes/Migration-and-Urbanisation-in-Africa\\_Uni-of-Ghana.pdf](https://www.rabat-process.org/images/TM-root-causes/Migration-and-Urbanisation-in-Africa_Uni-of-Ghana.pdf)

<sup>12</sup>Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya (more than 1 million each, in descending order) were also the main host countries for intra-African international migrants.

<sup>13</sup>Other countries in the Rabat Process region include Cape Verde, Congo, Tunisia, Sao Tome e Principe, Mauritania, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria - [https://www.rabat-process.org/images/TM-root-causes/Migration-and-Urbanisation-in-Africa\\_Uni-of-Ghana.pdf](https://www.rabat-process.org/images/TM-root-causes/Migration-and-Urbanisation-in-Africa_Uni-of-Ghana.pdf)

<sup>14</sup>Major cities include: Lagos, Nigeria (21 million); Cairo, Egypt (20.4 million); Kinshasa, DR Congo (13.3 million); Luanda, Angola - 6.5 million; Nairobi, Kenya - 6.5 million; Abidjan, Ivory Coast, 4.8 million; Alexandria, Egypt - 4.7 million; Johannesburg, South Africa (4.4 million); Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (4.4 million); Casablanca, Morocco - 4.3 million and Accra, Ghana - 4.1 million - [https://www.rabat-process.org/images/TM-root-causes/Migration-and-Urbanisation-in-Africa\\_Uni-of-Ghana.pdf](https://www.rabat-process.org/images/TM-root-causes/Migration-and-Urbanisation-in-Africa_Uni-of-Ghana.pdf)

integration. Mr. Nzamba emphasised that the recent involvement of local and regional authorities in global discussions on migration governance was the result of long-term advocacy to highlight the migration of people from one city to another.

Mr. Nzamba subsequently explained that the interest in carrying out a discussion on the theme of cities and migration is not to focus on the aspects related to the legality of migratory flows, but rather to consider the benefits of the triptych of cities-migrations-development. He argued that today, migrant inclusion in cities poses the biggest challenge due to the emergency constraints (humanitarian and security constraints) which require public authorities to respond effectively within a relatively short time. He explained that the formulation of an urban policy must first fully capture the issue of reception, which requires the ability to cope with the mass arrival of migrants without breaking cohesion and social, political and territorial harmony. For local authorities, many of whom already experience difficulties in integrating nationals and people from “under-integrated” neighbourhoods, implementing an urban policy which encourages migrant integration could in fact produce the opposite effect to what is envisaged by this policy. Urban policies, however targeted they may be, can create stigma and social tensions.

According to UCLG’s vision, cities must be designed in such a way that their inhabitants – including migrants – live there and can access all basic services (training, housing, employment, care, education and means of communication). However, Nzamba stressed the difficulty of building sustainable cities or designing sustainable urban policies when policies which are designed to stop migration are put in place. In this context, Mr. Nzamba mentioned coalitions and networking between cities, which allow for decentralised cooperation. This framework of exchange allows above all for the circulation of information and the exchange of good practices (such as the promotion of scientific and cultural activities of migrants in cities; participation in the drive for solidarity and the initiation of dialogue with migrant associations) as regards to reception and integration policies for migrants.

Mr. Nzamba concluded by recalling that in November 2015 in Johannesburg, African local authorities adopted the African Local Governments' Charter on Migrants which aimed to contribute to the development of practices in the field of protection and promotion of migrants' rights at local and regional government level. In concrete terms, the charter provides local authorities with an instrument to bring them together and confirm their shared commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of migrants. It recommends: the reorganisation of migration policies by decriminalising international migrants and presenting the positive aspects of their presence in host cities; the integration of migrants into the formal and informal economic sectors of host cities; dialogue with migrant associations and support for the development of such associations, in order to facilitate exchange between local communities and migrant communities.

In the working group session, participants reached **specific recommendations for policy makers and project managers in urban areas**, emphasising the need to consider migrants in urban policy making:

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING GROUP 3:  
POLICY MAKERS AND PROJECT MANAGERS FOR URBAN AREAS**

1. Take into account migration issues and different categories of migrants in urban planning in large cities but also in intermediate cities and small towns;
2. Promote rural-urban links through city networking (e.g. inter-municipal level) and take into account urban and peri-urban areas to facilitate, in particular, the transition from rural to urban areas;
3. Carry out urban planning within the wider framework of territorial development, in partnership with national and local authorities, but also work with all stakeholders in the wider peri-urban area, including traditional authorities, who can play a role in land management. Go beyond the formal definition of the city;
4. Strengthen the articulation and coherence of decentralization and devolution policies and sectoral policies;
5. Promote the development of regional urban centres in a sustainable, inclusive and non-discriminatory manner (rights-based approach - access to basic services, etc.), involving in particular civil society organisations (migrants'

## Outcomes of the meeting

According to the evaluation forms completed by meeting participants, the quality and relevance of the presentations and speeches were rated as good, and the meeting met the expectations of majority of the participants. With regards to learning, and the possibility of contributing to the exchange of knowledge and good practices, 100% of the respondents claimed that they intended to share the information received at the meeting with colleagues from their respective administrations, and through their existing networks. Some participants even suggested sharing meeting information with universities and the media. With regards to areas for improvement in the future, several recommendations were made, including the need to involve local communities and to bring more experts from the various dialogue partner countries.

The main outcome of the meeting was the development of [36 technical recommendations](#) for partners and split into the following categories: understanding the complexity of the migration dynamics; optimising human capital; fighting against social exclusion; reinvigorating the agricultural sector; creating sustainable urban policies; contributing to a balanced narrative on root causes and migration. These recommendations included partners' recognition of the role of cities, the positive effects of urbanisation and the importance of engaging with local authorities on issues related to urbanisation and migration.

### **Next Steps**

- Preliminary findings of the study on root causes were shared: they fed into and stimulated discussions and debates. The final results will be sent to partners of the dialogue at the end of January 2019, and recommendations will be published in a specific publication.
- This study represents an important step for dialogue partners, as it is the first time that primary data has been generated specifically for and at the request of partners. This is included the cross-cutting priority of the Marrakesh Action Plan which calls for "*particular attention to the collection, analysis and sharing of disaggregated*

*data*" and lays the groundwork for the future work of the Rabat Process on the collection and use data for the development of migration policies.

- In addition, the role of local authorities and cities should be explored as part of the dialogue, as the increasing urbanisation of migration requires particular attention to cities, as key actors in migration. There is a need for cities and national governments to collectively address the challenges of developing and implementing migration policies, hence the importance of adopting an "*inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach*" (as recommended in the Marrakech Action Plan). It is therefore proposed that while the Rabat Process is maintained as a dialogue between national authorities, it will open up to gradually involve local authorities and representatives of cities. This will also enable the partners of the dialogue to better align their national migration policies with the realities "on the ground".