



International
Labour
Organization

Executive summary

- Mapping and analysis of temporary labour migration programmes and schemes in the Americas: good practices, priorities and challenges



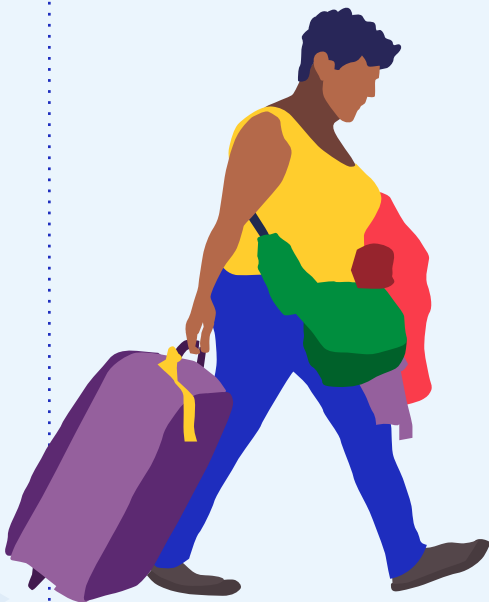
Introduction

Given the variety of temporary labour migration programmes being implemented in the Americas, there is an increasing need for a framework of analysis to monitor the progress and challenges faced by governments, employers and migrant workers in achieving labour mobility aligned with decent work objectives and the ILO's general principles and guidelines for fair recruitment, as reflected in the **United Nations Network's Guidance on Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (2022)**.

To this end, this study uses these guidelines as a framework for analysis, specifically the section "Government responsibilities in the implementation of BLMAs", which provides clear principles on shared responsibilities between countries of origin and destination from which it is possible to review the design and operation of the different temporary labour migration schemes in the Americas.

It is important to note that the aim of this exercise is not to rate the compliance of programmes against a standard, but to **determine convergences in existing mobility practices managed by governments**.

Along these lines, **11 temporary labour migration agreements in force in the continent, mostly in Central and North America, have been reviewed.**



Characteristics of the agreements analysed in this study:



Programmes promoted by the labour and migration authorities of countries whose employers request temporary foreign workers, such as the United States' H2 Temporary Work Visa Programme, Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Programme and Mexico's Border Worker Visitor Card.



Programmes managed by the migrant workers' countries of origin, such as the temporary work, migration and labour mobility programmes of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico.



Programmes that are the result of bilateral or multilateral agreements or conventions between countries of origin and destination, such as the Programme for the management of collective recruitment at origin between Spain-Honduras and Spain-Ecuador; the Programme for temporary agricultural workers between Mexico-Canada; the migration management procedures for temporary workers between Costa Rica-Nicaragua and Costa Rica-Panama and, finally, the Project for specialised Colombian workers for Germany.

Percentage of programmes analysed that reflect - to a greater or lesser extent - the 15 responsibilities proposed by the United Nations for the implementation of BLMAs:

● Apply ● Partially apply ● Do not apply



Good practices identified

Some outstanding practices of the programmes analysed are linked to the implementation of:

Specialised administrative units within the General Directorates for Employment, dedicated to the management of labour migration programmes and schemes.

Unique digital portals where employers' job opportunities in different destination countries, previously verified by governments, are disseminated.

Guidance, advice and consular accompaniment at destination and origin.

Eligibility requirement for employers of migrant workers.

In the United States and Canada, employers are required to demonstrate credible evidence of tangible efforts to provide abuse-free workplaces as a condition of receiving government authorisations to recruit and hire migrant workers under the programmes.

Confidential and **accessible complaint mechanisms**.



Priorities

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that some actions be prioritised at the level of design, operation and maintenance of temporary labour migration programmes in the region to improve their alignment with UN guiding principles and thereby boost outcomes and benefits for migrant workers, employers and governments. These priorities are:



Strengthen skills and knowledge in labour migration departments.



Promote coordinated work between authorities in countries of origin and destination and employers to facilitate the recognition of competencies and skills of migrant workers prior to departure and return.



Strengthen cooperation between countries of origin and destination with regard to the development of surveillance protocols involving the relevant labour inspection authorities.



Strengthen and mainstream a gender perspective, as well as develop coordinated policies and agreements between countries of origin and destination that facilitate savings, remittances and portability of social security benefits for migrant workers.



Develop and implement mechanisms to facilitate the collection of information and experiences of workers and employers.



Challenges

Despite significant progress and political will, shared challenges remain to improve the effectiveness of the programmes analysed, especially in areas such as:

1

Strengthening governance and communication mechanisms between authorities in destination countries to involve authorities in countries of origin.

2

Equal opportunities for participation and access to programmes.

3

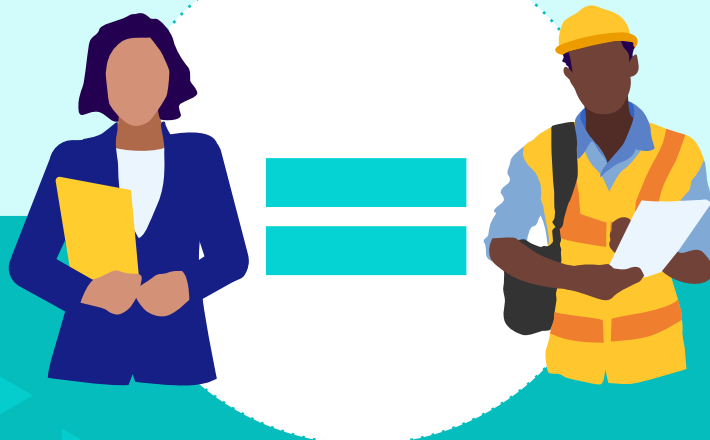
Registration and monitoring of intermediaries and private recruiters.

4

Inclusion of gender, savings and remittances issues, and recognition of competencies.

5

Access to comprehensive and understandable information on temporary labour migration programmes for workers and employers.



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