

Interregional Programme to promote
decent work for migrant workers from
Africa to the Arab States – Phase II



Timeline

September 2024 – May 2028

**Geographic
scope**

East and West Africa (Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria), Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates), Jordan and Lebanon

**Development
partner**

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

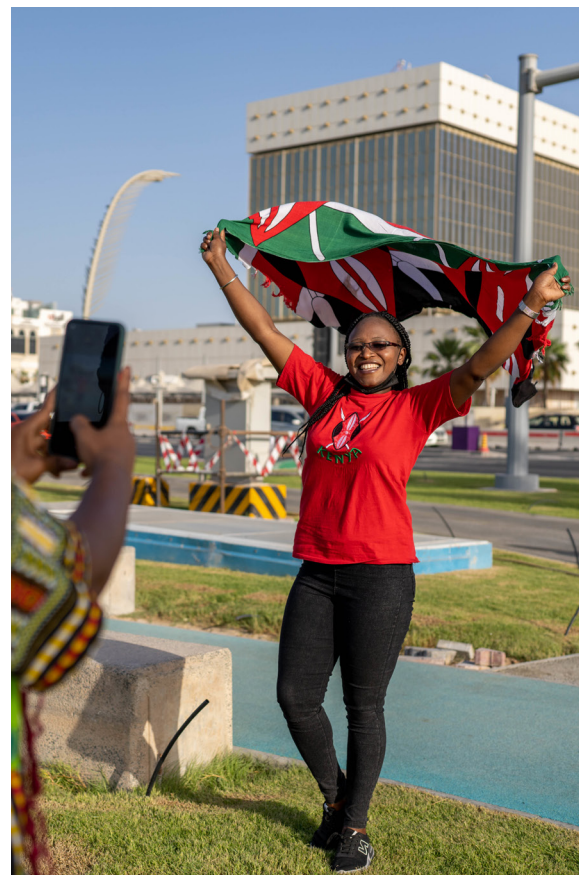
Background

In 2022, migrant workers in the Arab States comprised 37.2 per cent of the labour force, with a labour force participation rate of 73.9 per cent, and representing 13.5 per cent of all migrant workers worldwide (ILO 2024). The majority of migrant workers in the Arab States come from Asia, though numbers from African countries are on the rise.

On the African continent, demographic, economic and environmental pressures are some of the key drivers for young African migrants seeking work abroad. African migrant workers continue to be exposed to decent work deficits along the Africa–Arab States corridor.

The projected growth of labour migration from Africa to the Arab States creates an imperative to continue to tackle some of the major risks and decent work deficits for migrant workers.

The key to leveraging socio-economic opportunities through low and medium-skilled labour migration from Africa to the Arab States is to establish fair and regular migration pathways with increased access to decent work opportunities.



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Programme Overview

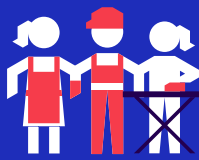
The FAIRWAY Programme Phase II is a four-year interregional development cooperation initiative, supported by SDC, that aims to improve conditions for migrant workers by strengthening labour migration governance in the labour migration corridor between Africa and the Arab States.

Building on the lessons learned and achievements from FAIRWAY Phase I and other ILO projects in the Africa and Arab States regions, the focus of the current phase of the Programme remains on employment sectors where migrant workers are most vulnerable – namely domestic and care work, and construction work.

Geographically, this phase of the Programme will focus at a regional and inter-regional level on East Africa, West Africa and the Arab States, with a focus on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, with three main outcomes to enhance labour migration governance:



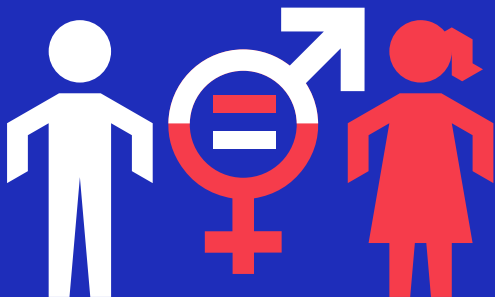
Improved intra and interregional dialogue
and cooperation for effective labour migration interventions



Improved decent work outcomes for women migrant workers in accordance with a **gender-transformative agenda** (including in the specific context of care work)



Increased **protection and empowerment of migrant workers** through provision of services, protection of rights and representation (workers' voice)



The Programme will adopt a gender transformative approach across all outcomes aiming to support attitude and social changes and to reshape gender dynamics, by addressing the causes of gender-based inequalities. **This approach will be guided by a feminist political economy analysis** undertaken at the inception of the second phase.



Some of the issues the Programme aims to tackle



1

Restrictive labour market mobility policies, exploitative labour and recruitment practices, and limited access to legal rights and justice.



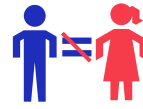
2

Lack of migrant workers' voice, including enjoyment of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining.



3

Limited access of migrant workers to social services, including legal aid.



4

Gender inequality and power imbalances.



5

Gaps in the capacity of African countries of origin to effectively protect their nationals in the labour migration corridor.

Way Forward



In Africa



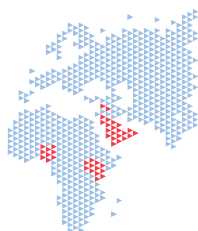
The Programme will focus on fostering cooperation and consensus building on labour migration governance and the protection of migrant workers, including through the development of common positions among countries of origin and in collaboration with the East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).



In the Arab States



The Programme will expand on existing cooperation with the Ministries of Labour of the GCC countries, the GCC Executive Bureau, as well as with trade unions and employer organizations to focus on bringing about reforms in the GCC countries, with more limited strategic interventions in Lebanon and Jordan.



At the interregional level



The Programme will aim to build political momentum towards stronger, more inclusive and more gender-sensitive multilateral dialogue to strengthen labour migration governance frameworks through a coordinated and collaborative approach.

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In partnership and collaboration with:



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**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**