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► Coherence of labour migration, employment, education and training policies in the ECOWAS subregion



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Preface

Labour migration has been steadily increasing throughout Africa, and the importance for governance has acquired top policy priority. The countries of West Africa have been promoting stability and prosperity by supporting a policy of regional economic and cultural integration. In recognition of their common historical, socio-cultural and political heritage and solidarity, the fifteen Member States (eight French-speaking, five English-speaking and two Portuguese-speaking) established the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

As labour migration has become an ever more present reality in the ECOWAS subregion, the need for coherence among key policy areas such as labour migration, employment, and education and training has become essential to both the protection of migrant workers' rights, and addressing economic and labour market demands. The need for ensuring coordinated policy approaches in all phases of the policy cycle, from design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation requires putting in place the necessary institutional arrangements and frameworks and having the human and financial resources to guarantee effective coherence. In the present COVID-19 pandemic, ECOWAS, as the rest of Africa, has been confronted with a particularly challenging situation socially, economically and health wise, and policy coherence is more necessary than ever. In order to ensure timely and effective policy responses, at national, subregional and AU levels, coordinated approaches can address the issue of labour migration, employment and portability of social protection.

In the context of the 2017 International Labour Conference (ILC) general discussion on labour migration, the ILO report points out that efforts to improve skills identification and matching should be part of a broader strategy to strengthen coherence among employment, education/training and migration policies, with the active involvement of government institutions as well as employers' and workers' organizations (ILO, 2017, p. 23). Furthermore, the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, 2006, underlines the importance of ensuring "coherence between labour migration, employment and other national policies, in recognition of the wide social and economic implications of labour migration and in order to promote decent work for all and full, productive and freely chosen employment" (Guideline 4.2).

The Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa project (FMM), funded by the EU and ECOWAS, implemented by the ILO in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), has been providing support for migration policy

development. The present study is a contribution to this support, and is a pilot implementation of the ILO's *General practical guidance on promoting coherence among employment, education/training and labour migration policies* (Popova and Panzica, 2017) This will allow the ECOWAS Member States to have up-to-date analyses and recommendations on how policy coherence can be enhanced in the sub-region and further fine-tune the coherence guidance for implementation in other parts of Africa and geographical regions. In addition, the report will contribute to updating existing migration policies and designing new ones, ensuring a coherent approach. This study is also part of the overall ILO assistance and collaboration in promoting rights at work, encouraging decent employment opportunities, improving social protection and reinforcing social dialogue on work-related issues in Africa.

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Abbreviations

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
ANPE	Agence nationale pour l'Emploi
AUC	African Union Commission
BLMA	Bilateral labour migration agreement
CAMES	African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016–2025
CIPRES	Inter-African Conference on Social Insurance
CONABEM	Collectif national des bureaux de placement payants et des entreprises de travail temporaire
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOMIS	EOWAS Migration Information System
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ETSSIE	ECOWAS Technical and Vocational Education Training Strategy for Skills Improvement and Employability
EU	European Union
FMM	Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa project, funded by the EU and ECOWAS
GDP	Gross domestic product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GMDAC	Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (IOM)
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GSQF	The Gambia Skills Qualification Framework
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ICMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
ILMD/NELEX	International Labour Migration Desk/National Electronic Labour Exchange (Nigeria)
ILO	International Labour Office/Organization

IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITF	Industrial Training Fund (Nigeria)
JLMP	Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration
LEP	Labour and Employment Policy
LMIS	Labour market information system
LMMIS	Labour market and migration information system
MIDWAS	ECOWAS Free Movement Directorate
MIEUX	MIgration EU eXpertise
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPFA	Migration Policy Framework (African Union)
NELEX	National Electronic Labour Exchange
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
ONEF	National Observatory on Employment and Vocational Training
PEFOP	Platform of Expertise in Vocational Training
PES	Public employment services
PrEAs	Private employment agencies
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDF	ECOWAS Social Dialogue Forum
SME	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group on Migration (Nigeria)
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (West African Economic and Monetary Union)

1 Introduction

The governance of labour migration has grown in complexity. Having effective labour migration policies requires a coordinated approach with employment, education and training priorities at the national, regional and international levels. Lack of coherence can exacerbate inefficiencies in the labour market, resulting in substantial mismatches between labour supply and demand. This not only reduces business productivity, but could ultimately lead to lower wages, brain waste and deskilling. Among those most affected are foreign-born workers, a trend that may become even more pronounced for those sectors of the economy that are highly dependent on migrant labour, such as domestic work, construction and the service industry. Yet migration policies have tended to be designed from a security perspective rather than from evidence of labour market and skill needs or impacts.

In an attempt to address the above challenges, the ILO has prepared *General practical guidance on promoting coherence among employment, education and training, and labour migration policies* (Popova and Panzica, 2017). The present report summarizes the main findings and recommendations from piloting this guidance in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The ECOWAS consists of 15 Member States, with different levels of economic development, employment and labour migration dynamics, and linguistic and cultural heritage, which makes it an interesting testing ground for both further fine-tuning of the ILO policy coherence tools and helping it enhance its own policy coordination mechanisms.

The current document also contributes to the efforts of the Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa project (FMM), funded by the EU and ECOWAS, and implemented by the ILO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). The project is aimed at maximizing the development potential of free movement of persons and migration in West Africa. To this end, it supports migration data management, border management, labour migration policy development and combatting trafficking.

The preliminary findings of this report were presented and discussed with the relevant line ministries, social partners, the ECOWAS Secretariat and other relevant stakeholders, during a workshop held in Abuja on 28 January 2020. The feedback received has been incorporated into the current version. In the meantime, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has turned into an unavoidable reality in the ECOWAS subregion and Africa, and the need for effective policy measures to address the crisis has become a key priority.

The report consists of seven chapters, including this introduction. Chapter 2 provides a description of the methodological approach and includes definitions of relevant terms and

concepts. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the socio-economic context of the ECOWAS subregion. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 summarize migration, employment, and education and training policies at national, subregional and African Union (AU) levels respectively. Chapter 7 describes how policy coherence could be measured.

2 Methodology

The methodology for this report is based on the ILO's *General practical guidance on promoting coherence among employment, education and training, and labour migration policies* (Popova and Panzica, 2017). It covers coherence in the design of employment and education and training policies linked to labour migration, and their effective implementation. The assessment has been carried out according to international principles, as well as policies established by the AU and the ECOWAS. Coherence in implementation is assessed by measuring the effective use of the policies put in place and the links between them. The analyses have made it possible to formulate appropriate policy recommendations.

The ILO guidance identifies labour migration policy coherence at four levels: local, national, regional and international. The local level is represented by local authorities (provinces, municipalities, etc.) or agencies with decentralized branches (e.g. public employment services). In the current pilot, due to the limited time available to carry out the field work, this level of coherence was not covered. This is also related to the fact that the level of decentralization in policy design and implementation in the ECOWAS Member States was rather limited. Thus, the current report looks at three levels of coherence only (see figure 1).

The national level included the 15 ECOWAS Member States. The field work covered Nigeria, while for the remaining countries the work was based on desktop research.

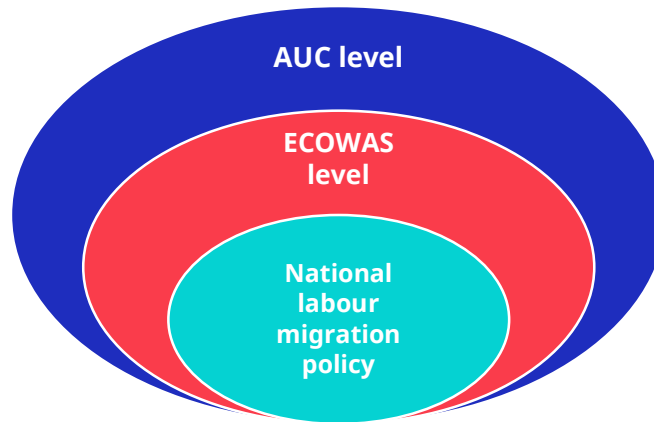
The regional level includes the ECOWAS subregion and is covered by the ECOWAS Secretariat, and during the field work extensive discussions were organized with relevant staff working on labour migration, employment and education and training issues. The field visit was combined with desktop research and analyses as well. The subregional level of coherence also included the French-speaking countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) (see Annex 9).

The international level was focused on the African Union Commission (AUC), and built on previous ILO work aimed at addressing the portability of migrant workers' skills in Africa at regional economic community and continental levels (Werquin and Panzica, 2018), and improving employment and migration policies more generally.

The present assessment has considered both the vertical dimension of policy coherence, which focuses on collaboration in a specific area between different levels of governance such as the AUC and ECOWAS Member States; and the horizontal one, which reflects coordination among the different policy fields such as labour migration, employment and

education/training policies (Popova and Panzica, 2017; Stross, 2017; Hertog and Stross, 2011).

Figure 1. Labour migration policy coherence levels



Source: Authors, based on ILO, 2017.

The labour migration policy coherence levels were analysed through desk review and analyses of relevant documentation and data, as well as field research.

2.1 Desk review and secondary data collection

Data on the relevant indicators, and other qualitative information covering both the policy design and policy implementation stages, have been collected through the sources indicated in the ILO guidance (Popova and Panzica, 2017, pp. 26–31) and other relevant sources. Where possible, policy monitoring and evaluation documentation were also reviewed.

In 2017, the ILO *Guidance on policy coherence* was partially based on mapping and analyses of documentation from the ILO Employment Policy Database. At that time, eight of the 15 Member States of ECOWAS were covered. In the present study, the above information has been updated. Ex-novo data and analyses were made for Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

The analyses also include, inter alia, relevant government policies, strategies and action plans, as well as legal and programming documents. It should be noted that an increasing number of countries are developing specific labour migration policies; this has not always been the case. In situations where such policies were not present at all, were part of broader policies on international migration in general, or were included in other policies

such as employment, social inclusion or poverty reduction, the research still tried to cover them to the extent possible.

The desk research also included review of relevant academic literature, as well as reports produced by the ILO and other international and non-governmental organizations working in the field of labour migration.

2.2 Field work

A field mission was carried out to Abuja, Nigeria in January 2020 to collect additional information and data. Qualitative research was conducted through semi-structured interviews (for the guiding questions please see Annex 1) with key stakeholders in labour migration, employment and education/training policies, and social partners, at subregional and national levels (see Annex 2 for a list of organizations consulted).

2.3 Measuring policy coherence

The ILO's *General practical guidance on promoting coherence among employment, education and training, and labour migration policies* (Popova and Panzica, 2017) indicates eight principles against which coherence can be measured and provides specific step-by-step guidelines on how assessment should be made. The guidelines are partially based on ILO, 2006 and 2016; and OECD, 2012.

3 Socio-economic background of the ECOWAS subregion

ECOWAS plays an important role in ensuring that the policies of its Member States are harmonized with overall African Union strategies. Established under the Lagos Treaty of 28 May 1975, ECOWAS is composed of 15 States at different levels of economic development, different cultural experiences that are also reflected in their several official languages,¹ and with diverse types of labour migration dynamics.

3.1 Economic and social context

The ECOWAS countries are characterized by dynamic economies, yet the socio-economic conditions remain challenging. There are currently almost 400 million inhabitants in the 15 Member States (UN, 2019) and the population growth is high (except for Cabo Verde), with percentages running from 2.19 per cent in Ghana to 3.82 per cent in Niger. This is reflected in the very low average age of the population (below 20 years) and poses challenges to governments for providing all these citizens with adequate education, employment and social services. As shown in table 1, the population under the age of 25 represents an average of 61.5 per cent of the overall population in all Member States. More than half of the young population in the ECOWAS subregion is not in school and lacks basic education as well as professional and/or vocational skills. Participation in higher education remains extremely low, ranging from 22 per cent in Cabo Verde, to 16 per cent in Ghana, 3 per cent in Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia, and 2 per cent in Niger and Sierra Leone (IOM and UNESCO, 2018, citing 2016 UNESCO statistics). The impacts of having such a high concentration of the population under the age of 25 will need to be considered carefully in policy design.

Table 1. Population aged 0–24, 2020 (percentages)

Country	0–24 years
Benin	61.8
Burkina Faso	64.6
Cabo Verde	45.1

¹ Two Portuguese-language countries: Cabo Verde and Guinea Bissau; five English-language: The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone; eight French-language: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Côte d'Ivoire	62.1
The Gambia	64.0
Ghana	56.4
Guinea	64.5
Guinea-Bissau	61.7
Liberia	60.4
Mali	66.9
Niger	69.2
Nigeria	62.9
Senegal	62.2
Sierra Leone	60.8
Togo	60.4

Source: UN, 2019.

Data show (see table 2) that significant progress has been achieved by the countries through the implementation of growth and poverty reduction strategies, except in a few cases. It is important to add that despite these improvements, a significant portion of the population remains in conditions of poverty – in roughly half of ECOWAS countries, close to half of the population live on less than US\$2 a day.

Table 2. Poverty ratio trends

Country	Starting %	Year	Comparison data %	Year
Benin	53.1	2011	49.5	2015
Burkina Faso	55.3	2009	43.7	2014
Cabo Verde	16.2	2001	8.1	2007
Cote d'Ivoire	29.1	2008	28.2	2015
Gambia, The	25.1	2010	10.1	2015
Ghana	24.5	2005	13.3	2016
Guinea	59.7	2007	35.3	2012
Guinea Bissau	53.9	2002	67.1	2010
Liberia	68.6	2007	40.9	2016
Mali	51.2	2006	49.7	2009
Niger	50.3	2011	44.5	2014
Nigeria	53.5	2003	53.5	2009
Senegal	37.4	2005	38	2011
Sierra Leone	60.6	2003	52.2	2011
Togo	54.2	2011	49.2	2015

Source: World Bank, Poverty headcount ratio at US\$1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population), Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY>.

Poverty reduction can be facilitated by GDP growth (see table 3), which in 2019 was impressive for many countries, with the exception of Nigeria due to the fluctuations in oil prices. In many countries, growth can be hampered by external shocks such as weather conditions that can affect the production of cotton in Benin or rice and cashew nuts in Guinea Bissau, and international commodity prices such as for cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire.

Table 3. Per capita GDP and population, 2019

Country	GDP growth, 2018 (%)*	Per capita nominal GDP, 2018 (US\$)*	Per capita GDP, PPP 2018 (US\$)*	Total population, 2019 (thousands)**	Average annual rate of population change, 2015-20 (%)**
Benin	6.9	901.5	2 424.8	11 801	2.73
Burkina Faso	6.8	715.1	1 984.9	20 321	2.87
Cabo Verde	5.1	3 635.4	7 454.1	550	1.16
Côte d'Ivoire	7.4	1 715.5	4 207.1	25 717	2.55
The Gambia	6.5	716.1	2 612.0	2 348	2.94
Ghana	6.3	2 202.3	4 746.7	30 418	2.19
Guinea	6.2	878.6	2 504.9	12 771	2.77
Guinea-Bissau	3.8	778.0	1 799.1	1 921	2.50
Liberia	1.2	677.3	1 308.6	4 937	2.46
Mali	4.9	899.7	2 316.7	19 658	2.99
Niger	6.5	414.0	1 063.4	23 311	3.82
Nigeria	1.9	2 028.2	5 990.9	200 964	2.59
Senegal	6.8	1 522.0	3 782.5	16 296	2.77
Sierra Leone	3.4	534.0	1 602.0	7 813	2.13
Togo	4.9	679.3	1 773.9	8 082	2.45
World	3.0	11 312.4	17 912.4	7 713 468	1.09

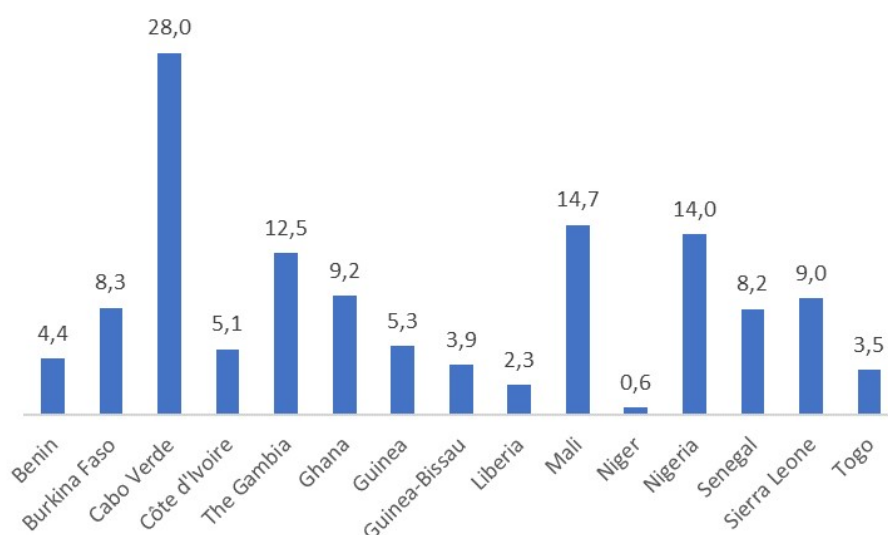
Sources: *World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>;
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>;
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD>.

** UN, 2019.

Despite positive economic growth, this has not yet led to significant improvements in the employment situation. It is estimated that the labour force in Western Africa will rise from 133 million in 2020 to almost 176 million in 2030, or almost by 33 per cent in 10 years.² Another important indicator is offered by the level of informality and youth unemployment affecting the labour market in the ECOWAS subregion. According to the ILO estimates, in 2019 the youth unemployment rate was estimated to be more than 8 per cent in eight ECOWAS countries, with the highest in Cabo Verde (28 per cent), Mali (14.7 per cent) and Nigeria (14 per cent) (see figure 2). Also, it appears clear that in both total employment and in the non-agricultural sectors, most employment is informal (table 4). The only exception is Cabo Verde, that presents high percentages but below 50 per cent. Another important aspect is that more women than men are in informal employment (except for Cabo Verde).

² ILOSTAT. *Labour force by sex and age - ILO modelled estimates, July 2019 (thousands) - Annual*. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer26/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EAP_2EAP_SEX_A_GE_NB_A.

Figure 2. Youth unemployment (15-24) in ECOWAS countries (percentages)



Source: ILOSTAT, ILO modelled estimates, Nov. 2019.

Table 4. Informal employment

Country	Share of informal employment in total employment (%)			Share of non-agricultural informal employment (%)		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Benin	94.5	91.6	97.2	90.6	83.4	95.8
Burkina Faso	94.6	91.3	97.6	88.4	82.7	93.8
Cabo Verde	46.5	49.1	43.8	46.8	48.1	45.5
Côte d'Ivoire	92.8	90.7	95.9	87.7	82.4	93.8
The Gambia	76.7	70.4	84.7	68.4	62.4	77.7
Ghana	90.1	86.0	94.0	82.6	73.7	89.9
Guinea	-	-	-	-	-	-
Guinea-Bissau	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liberia	86.8	81.5	92.0	77.5	68.6	86.5
Mali	92.7	90.8	95.0	86.4	82.8	90.7
Niger	91.3	87.4	95.9	85.1	74.7	94.2
Nigeria	92.9	90.8	95.1	89.0	83.5	93.2
Senegal	91.2	89.5	93.7	87.0	83.9	91.3
Sierra Leone	92.5	92.9	92.1	86.0	86.4	85.7
Togo	92.8	90.3	95.2	90.0	85.8	93.6

Source: ILO, 2018a.

In this situation, apprenticeship in the informal economy in West Africa is becoming a post-primary vocational training system, providing skills training for young people who have either not completed primary education, have done so but have not gone on to lower secondary school, or have started lower secondary education but later dropped out (Walther and Filipiak, 2008). Informal apprenticeship systems are considered by far the

most important source of skills training in Africa; they are believed to be responsible for the majority of all skills development in Ghana, and account for almost 90 per cent of all training for trades in Benin and Senegal. The main strengths of informal apprenticeship are its practical orientation, its self-regulation, and self-financing. Its flexible and non-formal nature accommodates individuals who lack the educational requirements for formal training. However, this type of training is often of long duration and low pay, suffers from decent work deficits and lacks formal certification (ILO, 2012; Sonnenberg, 2012).

3.2 Migration trends

The ECOWAS subregion also has the highest concentration of intra-regional migrants and, to a lesser extent, migrants moving towards Northern Africa and Europe (IOM and UNESCO, 2018). Most (84 per cent) of migration movements in the ECOWAS are towards another country in the subregion, which is seven times higher than migration flows from West African countries to other parts of the world (Devellard, Bacchi and Noack, 2015; IOM GMDAC, 2018). According to conservative estimates, there are around 7.5 million intra-regional migrants (Sahel and West Africa Club and OECD, 2006; Adaawen, 2017). Intra-regional migration is mostly work-related and can be temporary, seasonal, or permanent, as well as short-term cross-border movements (Devillard, Bacchi and Noack, 2015). In the majority of cases, migrants are engaged in low-skilled work in the informal sector, while highly-skilled migrants from ECOWAS move mostly to developed countries. Migrants in the ECOWAS countries work mostly in trade and agriculture sectors (ibid.).

Population censuses generally show a small presence of migrants within ECOWAS Member States. For example, around 16 per cent of African foreigners residing in Nigeria are not West Africans (IOM and UNESCO, 2018).

The COVID-19 crisis has had an impact on economic sectors relying on migrant workers, such as construction, agriculture and trade, and has also resulted in disruption of stock and food supply chains. At the same time, remittance flows have dropped significantly. In 2019, the World Bank estimated 33.7 billion USD in remittances to countries in the ECOWAS. Such flows represent 10.5 to 15.5 percent of the GDP in countries like Senegal and The Gambia.³

³ World Bank. *Annual Remittances Data (updated as of Apr. 2020). Inflows*. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data>.

4 Labour migration policies

The development of dedicated labour migration policies is a relatively new phenomenon among ECOWAS Member States. Until recently, migration has been seen mostly as a security issue. The current policy development process focuses almost exclusively on facilitating mobility within the ECOWAS countries. Labour migration outside the region is considered by some countries in their migration policies, e.g. Nigeria and Ghana. It should be noted that labour migration to Europe, the United States, the Middle East and other parts of Africa, notably South Africa, has been going on for decades. The social partners have been involved in a limited way in the design, implementation and monitoring of migration policies.

4.1 Labour migration policies at national level

As table 5 shows, seven countries in the subregion have general migration policies, of which three (Cabo Verde, Mali and Nigeria) cover labour migration aspects (for more details see Annex 4). With ILO support, Togo has developed a specific labour migration policy.

Table 5. ECOWAS Member States with migration policies

Country	Migration policies
Benin	No migration strategy or policy to date.
Burkina Faso	National Migration Strategy for the years 2014–25, under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finances. Adopted in February 2017.
Cabo Verde	National Emigration Strategy for Development, adopted in November 2013.
Côte d'Ivoire	No migration strategy or policy to date.
The Gambia	The National Migration Policy was adopted in June 2018.
Ghana	The National Migration Policy, prepared by the Ministry of the Interior, was adopted in April 2017.
Guinea	National migration policy is under development.
Guinea-Bissau	No migration strategy or policy to date.
Liberia	The National Policy on Migration was adopted in 2017.
Mali	The National Migration Policy was adopted in September 2014.
Niger	No migration strategy or policy to date.
Nigeria	The National Migration Policy was adopted in May 2015.
Senegal	Preparation of a National Migration Policy is in progress.
Sierra Leone	No migration strategy or policy to date
Togo	The National Migration Strategy was adopted in 2017. A Labour Migration Strategy and Action Plan is currently under development.

Source: Authors.

This variety of situations concerning migration policies can be explained by the non-binding character of the ECOWAS Common Position on Migration, adopted in 2008 by the ECOWAS (see details in section 4.2.1). In most of the countries, policy attention is focused on subregional mobility, and not on labour migration outside the ECOWAS. At the same time, some countries now have bilateral labour agreements for low-skilled workers going to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC countries), as well as sector-bilateral labour agreements for specific jobs such as nurses or doctors, among others.

It is important to mention that the EU provides support to ECOWAS Member States through specific initiatives such as the FMM and MIEUX (MIgration EU eXpertise)⁴ in labour migration policies. The MIEUX interventions are providing assistance to, among others: Ghana, strategy development for migration and development; Mali, labour migration; Sierra Leone, national migration policy; Togo, national strategy on migration and development. The FMM project also provided support to Ghana, Sierra Leone, Togo and others on the development of labour migration policies. This was done through a demand-driven facility coordinated by the ICMPD with technical inputs from the ILO and IOM.

Policies and strategies (see Annex 4), when existing, are designed and managed by different institutions (see Annexes 5 and 6). Annex 5 shows the main institutions responsible at policy level, while Annex 6 indicates the role of the implementing agencies, especially the public employment services and private employment agencies.

4.1.1 Institutional frameworks

Migration is under the responsibility of many public institutions. There is little evidence of coordination and cooperation among them, which has a clear impact on the possibility of designing and implementing coherent labour migration policies. No Coordination Committee has been found in the ECOWAS countries, except for Nigeria where an articulated management structure has been envisaged (see box 1). In the other countries, competence on migration policy is spread among many Ministries (Interior, Labour, Youth, Foreign Affairs, etc.), with limited coordination.

Box 1. Migration governance structures in Nigeria

At highest level, coordination is ensured by a Ministerial Committee composed of ministers and heads of parastatals with migration-related mandates, and chaired by the Attorney-General of the Federation and the Minister of Justice

⁴ MIEUX is a peer-to-peer experts' facility which supports partner countries and regional organizations in better managing migration and mobility through the provision of rapid, tailor-made assistance upon request. See <https://www.mieux-initiative.eu/en/where-we-work/africa>.

and co-chaired by the Supervising Minister for the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons. The Ministry of Labour is part of the Ministerial Committee.

The second level of coordination is ensured by a technical working group (TWG). It consists of representatives of State and non-State actors involved in operational activities related to migration, including the Ministry of Labour, and makes recommendations to the Ministerial Committee for approval. The TWG is articulated in five thematic groups on various areas of migration such as: Diaspora Matters; Labour Migration; Migration Data Management; Forced Migration and Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration; and Border Management. The activity of the thematic groups is periodically reported to the TWG.

Source: Nigerian Migration Policy 2015.

In general, the only defined role seems that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is normally tasked with the protection of nationals abroad. The competences for labour migration are shared between the Ministry of Interior and that of Labour. A clearly defined competence regarding labour migration has been found in Ghana with the Ministry of Employment, and in Nigeria with the Ministry of Labour and Productivity. In most countries, labour migration is not the mandate area of any specific institution.

Concerning the development of a national migration policy or strategy, the task has been committed to the Ministry of Economy and Finances in Burkina Faso and to the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning in Senegal.

4.1.2 The role of public and private employment agencies

In many countries the public employment services (PES) are tasked with assisting migrant workers; frequently, however, such assistance does not materialize due to lack of capacity or resources. As for the role of the private employment agencies (PrEAs), the situation appears varied, often presenting either a total lack of control, or partial regulation and monitoring by the government. An interesting approach, aimed at complementarity between public and private employment services, is offered by Mali. In January 2016, the *Collectif national des bureaux de placement payants et des entreprises de travail temporaires* (CONABEM) and the *Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi* (ANPE) signed a protocol of cooperation that foresees the technical support of CONABEM to ANPE. It will strengthen the capacity of ANPE members for collecting and disseminating data, providing training, awareness raising and job counselling.

Many countries (e.g. Benin, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal) have already installed an electronic job-matching database (Job Gateway, or *Accueil Emploi*) to connect jobseekers with national and international employment offers. The challenge is that this system targets

skilled users, capable of using electronic platforms, which does not represent the majority of jobseekers. In some cases, such databases have been used by PES staff to facilitate job-matching through their intermediation (e.g. Senegal), rather than individual jobseekers accessing the system on their own.

A well-structured electronic system has been established by the Ministry of Labour in Nigeria through the NELEX. The limit is in the fact that the targeted users are jobseekers with a sufficient degree of technical capacity, while those less equipped need to use the services provided by the 37 employment exchanges located in all the states of the Nigerian Federation.⁵ In addition, it appears that few employers use the former tool for filling vacancies. For the latter, preference is often given to people trained by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF),⁶ since this is financed by an employers' levy and is designed according to employers' needs.

4.2 Labour migration policies at the ECOWAS level

4.2.1 Free movement of persons

The ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment (1979) sets out the right of Community citizens to enter, reside and establish themselves in the territories of Member States (Art. 2(1)). It has been implemented in three phases over the last 15 years: (i) right of entry and abolition of visas; (ii) residence; and (iii) establishment. Four Supplementary Protocols were issued to fine-tune the rules for the implementation of the three phases. In the COVID-19 pandemic, with the exceptions of authorised traders, the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol has been temporarily suspended.

In January 2008, the ECOWAS non-binding Common Approach on Migration was adopted, which focuses on six principles:

- free movement of persons within the ECOWAS zone as one of the fundamental priorities of the integration policy of ECOWAS Member States;
- regular migration towards other regions of the world viewed as contributing to ECOWAS Member States' development;
- combatting human trafficking as a moral and humanitarian imperative;
- harmonizing policies: commitment to ensure policy coherence at three levels:

⁵ See <http://labour.gov.ng/employment-and-wages/>.

⁶ See <https://www.itf.gov.ng/>.

- harmonizing bilateral agreements linking different Member States and third countries, with ECOWAS texts and protocols;
- harmonizing economic, trade and development aid policies with migratory policies of said countries; and
- harmonizing national migration management policies with sector development policies;
- protection of the rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees; and
- considering the gender dimension of migration.

The implementation of the Common Approach has met some challenges due to lack of coordination, financial resources, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Elumelu, 2014). It is in line with the African Union’s Migration Policy Framework (MPFA), adopted in Banjul, The Gambia in 2006. It might be necessary to harmonize the Common Approach with the recent AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa (2018–2030) that offers an updated strategic framework in the management of migration. For this, a new policy document has been drafted and is currently in the consultation process with the Member States, before being proposed to the ECOWAS Assembly for approval.

4.2.2 General Convention on Social Security

Migrant workers often have limited effective access, or no access at all, to social security coverage in their destination country due to their status, nationality or other reasons. At the same time, they can lose their entitlements to social security benefits while away from their country of origin. To address these issues, the ECOWAS has, since 1993, drafted a specific Convention with the support of the ILO. The Convention was finally adopted by the ECOWAS Ministers of Labour and of Social Affairs in December 2012, and by the Authority of Heads of State as a Supplementary Act to the Revised ECOWAS Treaty in 2013.

Box 2. ECOWAS General Convention on Social Security

The Convention is based on the principles of equal treatment between migrant workers and nationals and makes reference to the ILO Conventions, in particular the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102); Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118); and Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982 (No. 157).

The Convention is applicable to:

1. Workers who are nationals of ECOWAS countries and who have been working in an ECOWAS country.
2. Refugees or Stateless persons who are working and live in an ECOWAS country and who have paid contributions to a social security fund.

3. Family members and/or beneficiaries of the workers mentioned above.
4. Workers who are contributing and/or have contributed to a social security scheme in a host country.

Source: ILO, 2019.

4.3 Labour migration policies at the AU level

All 55 countries of Africa are members of the African Union (AU). The AU is a unique forum in which all African countries can not only participate but also bring their own contribution to designing the policies and implementing them. The continent is articulated in eight Regional Economic Communities (REC).⁷

The overarching objective of the AU is to create by 2063 “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena” (AU, 2013). The AU’s Agenda 2063 is a solid basis for the harmonization of relevant national policies that can transform this vision into a reality. The AU is working at policy level through treaties, conventions and protocols, and at technical level, issuing strategies and actions plans such as the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 16-25 and the Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

In the area of labour migration, the AU has adopted the following policies.

4.3.1 Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

As a concrete step toward the effective functioning of the African Economic Community, the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Johannesburg, South Africa on 14-15 June 2015 established the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Among the objectives of the Agreement are:

- the creation of a single market for goods and services, facilitated by movement of persons in order to deepen the economic integration of Africa; and

⁷ The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); The East African Community (EAC); The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); The Southern African Development Community (SADC); The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU); The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD). Some countries may be members of more than one REC; for example, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda are members of both the COMESA and the EAC.

- the contribution to the movement of capital and natural persons and facilitating investments.

4.3.2 Free movement of persons

In January 2018, the AU launched the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment.⁸ The Protocol gives guidance and provides a roadmap for a coordinated approach from the RECs and Member States, through three phases:

- implementation of the right of entry and the abolition of visa requirements;
- implementation of the right of residence (second phase); and
- implementation of the right of establishment (final phase and completion of the process).

4.3.3 Migration policy

There are two main policy documents endorsed by the African Union:

- **African Common Position on Migration and Development** (AU, 2006). To ensure that the challenges posed by migration are effectively addressed, this policy on the management of migration associates countries of origin, transit and destination in order to find appropriate solutions.
- **Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) and Plan of Action (2018–2030)** (AU, 2018). This policy replaces the Migration Policy Framework adopted in Banjul, The Gambia in 2006. The revision was necessary further to an assessment conducted in 2016 (AU, 2016), ten years after the Banjul 2006 MPFA. The assessment found that while a number of countries have used the MPFA as a guiding document for the development of their national migration policies, in general, there was a lack of awareness among Member States about the MPFA. This suggested that the AU should enhance monitoring and provide appropriate knowledge-sharing platforms. In addition, there was a need to consider new migration dynamics, and the new development frameworks such as Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The revised MPFA of 2018 offers an updated strategic framework to guide Member States and RECs in the management of migration.⁹ It also contains a

⁸ Signed so far by 33 out of 55 Member States.

⁹ The document provides guidelines in nine thematic areas: Migration Governance; Labour Migration and Education; Diaspora Engagement; Border Governance; Irregular Migration; Forced Displacement; Internal Migration; Migration and Trade; and other cross-cutting issues.

plan of action, which seeks to forge synergies with institutions that are already working on migration issues.

To support RECs and Member States in the implementation of labour migration policies, the African Union Commission (AUC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) launched a Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration (JLMP), as described in box 3.

Box 3. The Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration (JLMP)

The Programme is a response to the labour market and skills challenges identified in many African countries. Its stated aims are to: 1) Strengthen Effective Governance and Regulation of Labour Migration and Mobility; and 2) Support Implementation of Labour Migration Standards and Policy.

The eight primary focus areas include: the ratification and domestication of key international standards on labour migration; the implementation of harmonized free circulation regimes and coherent labour migration policy; enabling labour institutions to conduct labour migration governance, policy and administration; effective regional mechanisms for tripartite consultation and coordination; decent work for migrant workers; extending social security to migrants; resolving skills shortages and mismatches; and enhancing collection of labour migration data.

Source: <https://au.int/en/jlmp>.

Concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, the AUC issued a Statement of the African Union (AU) Labour Migration Advisory Committee (LMAC) on the novel Coronavirus Disease COVID-19 and the condition of African Migrant Workers.¹⁰ The document draws attention to the vulnerable situation of many migrant workers due to the confinement measures, and the risks some groups could be exposed to, in particular migrant domestic workers. In addition, the statement indicates the lack of social protection coverage and difficulties to return home.

¹⁰ See: <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20200414/statement-lmac-condition-african-migrant-workers-covid-19>.

5 Employment policies

Job creation and employment for youth are the two main policy priorities, shared by all Member States in the ECOWAS subregion. Given the high levels of informality and limited public-private partnerships, employment policy implementation remains challenging. To address this situation, there is a need for active engagement of the social partners at all stages of the employment policy cycle. Reducing informality along the lines indicated in ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), and regulating and supporting the development of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) can contribute to enhancing the opportunities for decent jobs in the subregion.

5.1 Employment policies at national level

Demographic and economic pressures pose great challenges to the governments of all countries in the subregion. In this context, employment is seen as one of the possible instruments for poverty alleviation, the key priority for ECOWAS Member States. Yet few countries have a specific national employment programme, especially targeting the youth population. As indicated in table 6 and elaborated in Annex 7, some countries need to update their Employment Action Plans, and these need to become part of the regular policy planning process. Plans are often developed on a project basis, and there is a need to strengthen ownership through enhanced capacity and dedicated resources. This approach could contribute to addressing informality and could link labour migration to employment policy concerns in a concrete way.

Table 6. Employment policies and strategies in ECOWAS Member States (summary)

Country	Policy
Benin	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Burkina Faso	A National Employment Programme (NEP) was adopted in May 2008. It was accompanied by an Employment Action Plan (EAP) for the period 2008–11.
Cabo Verde	<i>Proposta do Plano Nacional de Emprego em Cabo Verde (PNE-CV) 2018–2023.</i>
Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Politique nationale de l'emploi (PNE) 2016–2020.</i> <i>Stratégie nationale pour l'insertion et l'emploi des jeunes 2016–2020.</i>
The Gambia	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Ghana	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Guinea	National Employment Policy, in progress.
Guinea-Bissau	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Liberia	Employment Policy, 2009.

Mali	<i>Politique Nationale de l'Emploi (PNE) and Plan d'Action Opérationnel (PAO) 2015–2017.</i>
Niger	<i>Plan de Développement Economique et Social (PDES) 2012–2015.</i>
Nigeria	The National Employment Policy (2017). National Youth Policy 2019-2023.
Senegal	<i>Politique nationale de l'Emploi (NPNE) 2010–2015.</i> <i>Programme Pays de Promotion du Travail décent (PPTD) 2012–2015.</i>
Sierra Leone	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Togo	<i>Politique nationale de l'emploi (2013-2017).</i> <i>Plan stratégique national pour l'emploi des jeunes: orientations stratégiques (2013–2022).</i>

As in almost all African countries, the great challenge confronting the ECOWAS Member States is job creation. In countries such as Nigeria, where the pressure from the young generation is very strong, the Ministry of Youth has launched, in collaboration with social partners, an ambitious plan¹¹ to create at least 18 million employment opportunities, mainly through self-employment. This is a positive initiative but its feasibility in terms of implementation should be carefully considered. Since the majority of new jobs are planned to be created through self-employment, the limited amount of specific incentives together with the lack of a credit guarantee fund and other necessary services could become important constraints for the achievement of the objectives.

For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, the National Employment Policy 2016–2020 has clearly identified the main challenges to be addressed, such as the significant youth unemployment and the lack of reliable information on the labour market demand. The main strategic goals are: (i) improvement of the working conditions of workers; (ii) enhancing local employment through decentralization of the policy implementation; (iii) strengthening the employability and entrepreneurship development system for young people; (iv) promoting decent jobs for vulnerable people; and (v) improving the information and communication system on the labour market.

Another example of job creation worth mentioning is the EU-supported Gambia Youth Empowerment Project¹² aimed at providing support for job creation and entrepreneurship for Gambian youth, and the Guinea Support Programme for the socio-economic integration of young people and return migrants (INTEGRA).

¹¹ National Youth Policy 2019-2023. An Action Plan for the policy implementation is currently in the process of finalisation.

¹² See https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/sahel-lake-chad/gambia/youth-empowerment-project_en.

5.2 Employment policies at the ECOWAS level

In June 2009, the ECOWAS Council of Ministers adopted the Labour and Employment Policy (LEP) and its Strategic Action. The overall objective was to develop, harmonize, coordinate and implement common policies to promote growth and development through decent work. The policy covers five areas of intervention: labour standards, employment, social protection, social dialogue and subregional integration.

Even though significant effort has been made in implementing the Policy and its Strategic Action, the ECOWAS Secretariat has identified several challenges impeding a full implementation, including:

- inadequate resources;
- lack of a monitoring mechanism to track the policy implementation;
- lack of policy coherence and coordination challenges;
- absence of labour market and migration information systems;
- limited implementation of international labour standards in ECOWAS Member States;
- limited national and subregional social dialogue; and
- limited protection of the rights of migrant workers.

To address these issues, the ECOWAS is undertaking a review of the LEP, with the scope of formulating a new policy and plan of action based on African Union frameworks and international standards.

5.3 Employment policies at the AU level

In September 2004, the AU Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation, held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, adopted a Declaration, a Plan of Action and a Follow up Mechanism for Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. According to the monitoring report of 2014 (see AU, 2015), there were still many challenges in implementation, such as the lack of financial resources at all levels, weakness of labour market institutions and a persistent lack of political will. The report also emphasizes poor coordination among labour market institutions, as well as the fact that RECs lack human resources to implement these initiatives.

Based upon the 2014 report, the AU Assembly¹³ held in January 2015 in Addis Ababa endorsed the Ouagadougou +10 Declaration, together with a new Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development. The plan focuses upon three key priority areas: a follow-up mechanism; a programme on labour migration and regional integration; and a public-private partnership framework on job creation and inclusive development (AU, 2015).

To support the AU's efforts in the area of employment, the EU Commission announced in 2018 a new Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs,¹⁴ aiming at: (i) boosting strategic investment and strengthening the role of the private sector to create jobs; (ii) investing in people by investing in education and skills; (iii) strengthening the business environment and investment climate; and (iv) tapping into the full potential of economic integration and trade. The outcomes of this Alliance are still a work in progress.

In the COVID-19 context, the AU has recommended to pay particular attention, when negotiating new or revising existing bilateral labour migration agreements, to enhancing the protection of migrant workers' rights, portability of social protection and ensuring occupational safety and health.¹⁵ Further, it has indicated the need for strategic interventions by joining forces with RECs, member states, social partners and the international community to design and implement measures to address the economic challenges, linked to the crisis.

¹³ It was the Ordinary meeting; the Summit had been planned to be held in Ouagadougou but was cancelled due to the Ebola virus.

¹⁴ See <https://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/stay-informed/publications/communication-new-africa-europe-alliance-sustainable-investment-and-jobs>.

¹⁵ See: <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20200414/statement-lmac-condition-african-migrant-workers-covid-19>.

6 Education and training policies

The structure of national education systems is similar in all 15 ECOWAS Member States: pre-primary (2-4 years), primary (6 years), lower secondary (2-3 years), upper secondary (2-3 years) and tertiary levels (4 years). As illustrated in table 7, participation in these cycles presents declining percentages from the primary up to the tertiary levels. Except for a few countries (Cabo Verde, The Gambia and, partially, Senegal) female students have lower enrolment rates. In many countries, enrolment in higher education is low. Vocational training is present in many countries but is often confronted with lack of technical and financial resources. Learning through informal apprenticeship is one of the most important sources of skills development.

Table 7. Educational participation in ECOWAS countries, by sex, 2016 or most recently available data

	Primary (%)*			Lower Secondary (%)*			Upper Secondary (%)*			Tertiary (%)**		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Benin	96	100	88	45	49	41	18	23	13	15	22	8
Burkina Faso	69	71	67	26	27	26	4	5	3	6	7	4
Cabo Verde	97	97	97	70	66	75	37	30	43	22	18	25
Côte D'ivoire	79	84	75	34	39	28	12	14	10	9	11	7
The Gambia	75	71	78	38	35	41	-	-	-	3	4	3
Ghana	87	87	88	50	50	50	28	27	28	16	19	13
Guinea	76	81	70	30	35	24	16	20	13	11	15	7
Guinea-Bissau	68	70	67	6	7	4	1	1	1	3	-	-
Liberia	38	39	36	7	7	6	6	6	6	12	14	9
Mali	56	59	52	31	33	28	16	19	13	7	10	4
Niger	62	67	57	20	23	16	4	6	3	2	3	1
Nigeria	64	69	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	12	8
Senegal	71	68	75	41	39	42	14	15	13	10	13	8
Sierra Leone	99	99	99	30	31	29	16	18	15	2	3	1
Togo	95	94	88	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	15	6

T - Total; M - Male; F - Female.

Notes: *Net Enrolment Rate (NER). **Gross Enrolment Rate (GER).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2016, in IOM and UNESCO, 2018, pp. 34-35.

The majority of ECOWAS countries are still investing resources in the improvement of literacy levels. At the same time, there is a need to place a policy priority on improving the

overall quality of education and training systems. National education and TVET policies are very heterogeneous (see Annex 8). It is important that the ECOWAS Member States design and implement policies and strategies that can result in effective skills portability both within and outside the region.

To enhance the development of the education systems, especially for basic education, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)¹⁶ has provided technical and financial support to many ECOWAS countries, such as Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and The Gambia,

6.1 Education and TVET policies at national level

One possible tool to promote skills transferability is offered by the adoption of a National Qualification System. While all Member States of ECOWAS, according to the Global Mapping of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), are in the process of designing a National Qualification Framework, scarce information is available on their structure and quality assurance. Only four countries in the ECOWAS currently have a fully established NQF (Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria). The adoption of a Regional Qualification Framework could be a reference point for all ECOWAS countries to align their qualifications and allow an effective mobility of skills within the region.

In the perspective of finding a systemic solution to skills portability, the ECOWAS Member States can undertake bilateral negotiations for the assessment of the equivalence of qualifications in specific economic sectors. Using the instrument of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), two countries (as currently between Nigeria and Ghana, and Nigeria and Togo)¹⁷ (see box 4) can establish joint working groups, tasked with comparing qualifications and finding equivalents. The MoU should also indicate the modality for making assessed equivalences operational.

Box 4. Harmonization of certifications and standards among Nigeria, Ghana, and Togo

The SKILLS-UP project, funded by Norway and implemented by the ILO, is working to create skills partnership among Central and Western African countries that can facilitate labour migration among the countries involved through better skills identification, matching, or skills recognition.

¹⁶ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/>.

¹⁷ See the ILO Skill-UP Programme at <https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/skill-up/lang--en/index.htm>.

As part of the project, Nigeria, Ghana and Togo, within the ECOWAS subregion, have agreed to collaborate on harmonization of certifications and occupational standards to improve the portability of skills among the three countries.

The result will be achieved through the following steps:

1. Tripartite consultations on harmonization of certificates;
2. Creation of a tripartite technical working group on equivalence and harmonization of skills standards in each country;
3. Needs assessment / baseline studies on specific occupations of interest;
4. Develop multilateral policies / Potentially negotiate MoUs among the countries concerned for the harmonization of certificates;
5. Curriculum review / harmonization, following the MoUs.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/skills/events/WCMS_729444/lang-en/index.htm.

6.2 Education and training policies at the ECOWAS level

The ECOWAS's "pillars" in education and training policies include:

- The implementation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy through the ECOWAS Technical and Vocational Education Training Strategy for Skills Improvement and Employability (ETSSIE) 2017–2026. The strategy is aligned with the AU TVET Strategy to Foster Youth Employment (2018). The ECOWAS Education Directorate is currently working on the preparation of an ETSSIE Action Plan.
- A Regional Qualification Framework is under development, with the support of UNESCO.
- Important education and training initiatives, which could contribute to facilitating skills and qualification portability, include the platform of Expertise in Vocational

Training (PEFOP),¹⁸ and the UEMOA Directives¹⁹ for the mobility of certain professional categories such as veterinary surgeons,²⁰ architects,²¹ lawyers,²² etc.

6.3 Education and vocational training policies at the AU level

The AU considers the development of human resources to be a key factor for the economic and social development of the entire continent. At least three initiatives confirm the centrality of education in the political agenda of the AU, as described below.

6.3.1 Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016 – 2025²³

The scope of the Strategy is to enhance the quality of education and training systems and provide African citizens with the knowledge, competencies, skills, innovation and creativity necessary for sustainable development in the national, regional and continental communities.

6.3.2 Continental strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to Foster Youth Employment, October 2018

The strategy aims at offering clear indications for the design and development of national policies and strategies to address the challenges of education, and technical and vocational

¹⁸ The Platform of Expertise in Vocational Training (PEFOP) is a portal launched by the International Institute for Educational Planning's (IIEP-UNESCO) Pôle de Dakar. For more information see <https://pefop.iiep.unesco.org/en>.

¹⁹

http://www.uemoa.int/sites/default/files/bibliotheque/uemoa_2011_2016_nouvelle_dynamique_de_lintegration.pdf.

²⁰ La Directive N°01/2012/CM/UEMOA relative à la libre circulation et à l'établissement des Docteurs-Vétérinaires ressortissants des Etats membres de l'UEMOA au sein de l'Union.

²¹ La Directive N°01/2013/CM/UEMOA relative à l'harmonisation des règles régissant la profession d'architecte au sein de l'UEMOA.

²² Le Règlement N°05/2014/CM/UEMOA relatif à l'harmonisation des règles régissant la profession d'avocat dans l'espace UEMOA.

²³ <https://edu-au.org/strategies/tvet-strategy>.

training. It also considers issues such as employability, labour market relevance, collaboration between training institutions and employers, the accreditation of training structures (formal, non-formal and informal training), evaluation and certification, quality assurance, and portability of TVET qualifications.

6.3.3 2014 Revised Arusha Convention

The Convention, launched in 1981, aims at promoting academic mobility through the mutual recognition of higher education qualifications within the African Continent. It has been modified many times, without reaching the necessary level of ratifications for an effective implementation. Three main obstacles have been identified to full harmonization: (i) different regulatory frameworks; (ii) the lack of appropriate institutions; and (iii) the lack of expert support enabling the Member States to transform policy inputs into concrete actions. In December 2014, a further revision of the Arusha Convention resulted in the adoption, in Addis Ababa, of the Addis Convention.²⁴ The revised Convention brings the provisions relating to Africa in line with those of the 1997 Lisbon Convention, thereby opening the door to close transcontinental cooperation in the field of higher education.

²⁴ As at 15 December 2019, 20 States had signed the Convention: Benin, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, the Holy See, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo and Uganda.

7 Measuring policy coherence

The analyses conducted at national, regional and continental levels are organized in this section according to the eight principles indicated in the ILO policy coherence guidance (Popova and Panzica, 2017) in order to assess the level of vertical and horizontal coherence.

Principle 1

The labour migration policy design process is clearly and timely organized by the designated institution/line ministry, in close consultation with other relevant institutions such as ministries of labour and other stakeholders, including employers' and workers' organizations.

Country level

The analyses of the ECOWAS Member States indicate differential approaches to labour migration, employment and education/training policies. The free circulation of persons within the ECOWAS subregion, stipulated by the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, is considered by most Member States sufficient for governing labour migration at the national level – which is why only very few countries have a national migration policy. At the same time, several ECOWAS countries continue to have national migration laws and regulations that are not aligned with the free movement protocols.

It would be helpful to dedicate more attention by the ECOWAS Member States to labour migration outside the subregion, which could translate into enhanced policies dealing with the rights of those migrant workers who go to other African regions or other continents. Their protection is often the competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but there is no evidence that the embassies in main destination countries have a labour attaché for this function.

Policy design is frequently done by the leading Ministry (e.g. Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Justice or Interior) in consultation with other public institutions. The social partners are not always involved at country level, and this is an issue which should receive urgent policy attention, especially where support from ILO is present, with social partners.

Recommendations:

- There is a need to put in place concrete modalities for the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol, such as MoUs among the Member States, to delineate the concrete actions to be undertaken to ensure that ECOWAS citizens enjoy the effective

right to free movement and establishment on the basis of equal treatment throughout the subregion. Otherwise, the implementation of the Protocol will remain limited.

- In addition, in order to ensure effective implementation of the provisions included in the policies, it is advisable to include a detailed action plan and a budget allocation.
- The design and updating of labour migration-related policies require the involvement, not only of all Ministries concerned, but also of the social partners, civil society and international organizations. In particular, the involvement of the social partners is of critical importance to ensure the effectiveness of the policies in the context of labour migration. The establishment of specific working groups can ensure an effective coordination of associated partners and ensure their contribution to the implementation of these policies.

Subregional level

Increasing population, combined with limited employment opportunities, remain the main “push” factors for regional labour mobility. The situation is further aggravated by the high levels of informal employment, in some ECOWAS countries reaching over 94 per cent in total employment, and particularly affecting women workers (ILO, 2018a). Lack of reliable statistical and labour market data means that monitoring employment and labour migration trends, and designing policies, accordingly, is difficult. This is compounded by scarce financial and human resources to implement the principles and commitments agreed at the ECOWAS level. All the above challenges are stumbling blocks to policy coherence, and the COVID-19 crisis has further shown the need for coordinated approaches since solutions go beyond the single member states.

Recommendation:

- The ECOWAS is currently working on developing a regional migration policy which will include a chapter on labour migration. This will replace the non-binding Common Position on Migration, 2008. There is a need to build a link between this new regional policy and the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, as well as links with national migration policies, and a need to ensure appropriate stakeholder involvement including social partners. It would be most useful if the subregional policies could consider measures for addressing extraordinary situations, like the one caused by COVID-19.

AU level

There is a gap between policy design at the AU level and its implementation. The assessment conducted by the AU ten years after the Ouagadougou Declaration 2004 and the Banjul 2006 MPFA (AU, 2016) found that this is due to a set of factors: lack of appropriate knowledge, financial and human resources, and changing priorities. One of the indicators for measuring the implementation gap is offered by the limited number of ratifications of the main relevant AU treaties such as the Treaty on the African Continental Free Trade Area, and the Roadmap for the Free Movement of Persons,²⁵ and by the lack of effective transposition at the level of RECs and Member States of the policies agreed at AU level.

The current COVID-19 context is calling for the design and implementation of rapid measures on labour migration, employment and education/training. The AUC has provided indications on enhanced governance of labour migration, with a focus on migrant workers' rights, portability of social protection and occupational safety and health.²⁶

Principle 2

Labour migration policies are evidence-based and gender-sensitive, and reflect real labour market needs.

Country level

As illustrated by the analysis of the existing LMMIS in the Member States (see Annex 11), data collection and analysis on labour market and labour migration are not homogeneous in terms of methodology, governance and data availability, especially for labour migration data.

Recommendations:

²⁵ The Treaty on the African Continental Free Trade Area was signed by all AU Member States. The number of ratifications has already reached 28 (countries), which is encouraging given the complexity of the ratification procedures. For other treaties the situation is more complex. The Protocol establishing a roadmap for the free movement of persons has been signed only by 32 Member States, while the modest number of ratifications (4) can be considered as normal due to the short time since the Protocol was issued (January 2018).

²⁶ See: <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20200414/statement-lmac-condition-african-migrant-workers-covid-19>.

- Based upon the directives that the ECOWAS will issue on the regional LMMIS, each Member State will periodically provide the REC with data related to the series of indicators, currently under discussion.
- As for data analysis, in ECOWAS francophone countries there is an observatory tasked with analysing labour market and training data. This function could be strengthened and integrated with the function of collecting labour migration statistics in all countries of the region. Anglophone countries have these functions integrated into a Bureau of Statistics or a Ministry. The experience of the UEMOA countries with their observatories for labour market and training could be examples (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire, Niger) for all ECOWAS Member States, since these are functioning services which have already been evaluated several times.
- Since there is no systematic data collection on labour migration, this could be achieved through adding a specific module in household surveys or relevant questions in population censuses. There is also a need to ensure that all data collection is disaggregated by gender, conducting sector-specific studies to better understand supply and demand dynamics and working conditions in female-dominated sectors.

Subregional level

Despite the fact that ECOWAS has recently created a platform on migration (ECOMIS), managed by the ECOWAS Directorate on Statistics, the existing policies are rarely based on up-to-date evidence. There is no consistent approach to identifying and analysing national and regional levels of skill gaps and needs. This situation is also caused by the high levels of informality and the limited involvement of the social partners in education and training policies. No specific measures are envisaged for vulnerable groups on the labour market, and insufficient attention is paid to the multiple disadvantages often faced by female migrant workers in particular.

Recommendations:

- Establish a regional LMMIS and provide instructions to the Member States for a homogeneous data collection. The creation of the regional information system is currently in progress with the support of the FMM project. A Directive needs to be issued by the ECOWAS.
- In order to address the above challenges, the ILO has developed *Guidelines concerning statistics of international labour migration* (ILO, 2018b). The guidelines are intended to address the absence of international standards regarding concepts, definitions and methodologies for the measurement of labour migration data, which continues to be a major obstacle to the production of harmonized statistics. The use of these guidelines could assist both origin and destination countries to have more

effective and coherent labour migration, employment and training policies. In this regard, providing capacity building for data collection and analyses will be important.

AU level

Policy design and decision-making processes require reliable data on labour market in all Member States, which are still not available. To ensure that all countries provide the appropriate information based upon unified indicators and comparable methodology, there is need to have a specific ECOWAS Directive. The resulting continental LMMIS could be supported by the RECs, such as ECOWAS, through the establishment of a regional LMMIS. The regional LMMIS would not be a duplication of the AU system since each region needs to analyse the information related to its own Member States.

Recommendation:

- The AU, with the support of the Pan-African Institute for Statistics (STATAFRIC) should issue the necessary Directives for a uniform data collection, based on international guidelines such as the ICLS guidelines concerning labour migration statistics (ILO, 2018b) and standards. Specific indicators can be designed on labour migration, labour market and vocational training.

Principle 3

Labour migration policy contains clear commitments, is budgeted and time-bound.

Country level

With regard to policy design at the continental and regional levels, there is a clear framework for actions and time schedules, but implementation remains limited. This is even more evident at country level, where the lack of resources and competencies delay the transposition of norms and regional level policies into domestic legislation, and their budgeting and implementation, as appropriate.

Recommendation:

- There is an urgent need to build capacity on the design and management of coherent labour migration policies, including poverty alleviation and employment policies. There is a need to focus on how local development approaches could facilitate job creation.

Subregional level

The lack of political prioritization also plays a role in the lack of domestication. Also at regional level, a certain delay in the harmonization of policies with the African Union was found, especially in relation to the Ouagadougou Declaration and its Action Plan on Poverty Alleviation and Employment, due to lack of human and financial resources, including building necessary capacity.

Recommendation:

- The Action Plan of Ouagadougou Declaration on Poverty Alleviation and Employment should be urgently updated and aligned to the AU Action Plan on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development (2015).

Principle 4

Labour migration, employment and education/training policy interlinkages (synergies and trade-offs) should be carefully considered during the policy drafting process. Other national policies, where relevant (security, trade, etc.) and gender-related aspects should also be taken into account, as appropriate.

Country level

Since priorities change according to the national context, there is no uniform approach across countries in the region to labour migration, employment, and education and training policies. For instance, primary education for all or poverty alleviation measures might take precedence over labour migration concerns, when it comes to policy prioritization. When an employment strategy is present, the importance of training is underlined, but effective collaboration between the labour market and the education systems often remains weak, due to the large informal sector. Further, poor coordination among sector ministries, and between the private and public sector, plays an important role, as well as insufficient financial and human resources. Social dialogue should also be strengthened to ensure education with greater relevance to labour market needs. Given the heterogeneous nature of the policy landscape at the national level, harmonization at ECOWAS level becomes even more difficult.

Recommendations:

- There is a need for strong public-private partnership through an enhanced social dialogue in all policy areas in order to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the proposed policy actions.

- To address the lack of coordination among public institutions, which can result in duplications and overall inefficiency, it is suggested to establish an Inter-ministerial Committee chaired by the Ministry in charge of labour migration, and with the participation of the Ministry of Labour. The Committee can facilitate the design of policies, monitor their implementation and propose necessary adaptations, as appropriate.

Subregional level

The ECOWAS, with support from UNESCO, the ILO and other agencies, is in the process of developing a Regional Qualification Framework (UNESCO, 2013). Recognition of tertiary level diplomas is carried out through the ECOWAS Protocol on Education and Training, and the Convention on Equivalence of Certificates.

One concrete step toward coherence in the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol and employment policies is the harmonization of labour legislation, conducted in all Member States. Further to a comparative analysis of labour laws in the 15 countries supported by the ILO, the ECOWAS Secretariat has prepared a Directive on the Minimum Standards for Harmonization of Labour Legislation, based upon common principles; the Directive has now been approved.

The COVID-19 has posed new challenges to the governance of mobility and labour migration. It could be useful to design measures to address the situation of stranded migrant workers or ECOWAS citizens, working in another member state, who have lost their jobs, and are unable to travel back home.

Recommendations:

- It is important to consider the different levels of socio-economic development of the Member States and adopt a flexible roadmap for the implementation of the agreed ECOWAS commitments. As in the implementation of South Africa's national qualification framework, a two-speed approach could be used where the countries fulfilling the necessary conditions start immediately, while the others follow as soon as they are ready.
- The timely establishment of a regional qualification framework could facilitate skills mobility within the region, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning; it could also enhance the quality of national education and training systems, and prepare the conditions for future inter-regional skills comparability.
- With regard to higher education, ECOWAS might invite the Member States to ratify the Arusha Convention (as modified by the Addis Convention of 2014), allowing for the recognition of higher education certificates among the signatory parties. The

experience of the CAMES²⁷ in establishing common principles for the recognition and equivalence of diplomas among its Member States is a good practice that could be extended to other countries.

- To ensure effective recognition and comparability of qualifications, it is necessary that the ECOWAS Secretariat coordinate the Member States in adopting common principles on quality assurance for education and TVET.
- There is a need to align the ECOWAS Employment Policy to the AU Ouagadougou + 10 Declaration by quickly updating the ECOWAS Action Plan on the Employment Policy (expired in 2014).
- Labour market opportunities should be increased by facilitating the involvement of the private sector, financial institutions and the donor community. In particular, the development of SMEs should be among the objectives, following ILO Recommendation No. 204. The Recommendation could be used as a reference for policy actions directed at reducing the current levels of informal employment, especially among women.
- Technical assistance to Member States should be addressed. It is suggested that the REC appoints expert teams that can provide remote assistance via email, dedicated phone numbers and intranet links to the Member States. In this regard, there is a need to invest in human resources and build the necessary expertise in the ECOWAS Secretariat. Peer learning among the Member States is also a resource that might be activated.

AU level

The African Union has established a framework of migration-related policies, especially employment and education, yet implementation could be further strengthened, taking on board the different levels of preparedness of the AU Member States.

Recommendations:

- There is a significant scope to enhance skills development, mobility and recognition. The AUC should continue working towards the establishment of a Continental Qualifications Framework to facilitate skills portability within the continent. The tool would allow the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, and foster improvement in the quality of enhancement of national education and vocational training systems.

²⁷ Nine countries of ECOWAS are also members of CAMES.

- To ensure effective comparability of qualifications, they should respond to defined quality assurance principles. As quality assurance is mainly developed at national level, the AU Commission could coordinate the actions of Member States by adopting a set of common principles as framework guidelines.
- Quality assurance is also necessary for TVET. The diversity of TVET approaches across Africa could be addressed by the AU Commission by establishing a technical working group composed of experts from quality assurance agencies for TVET already existing in African countries, supported by national and international practitioners.

Principle 5

Labour migration policy reflects a country's international obligations such as international labour standards, fundamental principles and rights at work, and other ratified treaties and Conventions as well as signed bilateral and multi-lateral labour migration arrangements.

As indicated in Annex 3, all ECOWAS Member States are participating in the international efforts to enhance the protection of migrant workers. They have ratified the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and that on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (both of 1966), the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979).

The majority of ECOWAS Member States (10) have ratified the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990), while three countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo) have signed it but not yet ratified it. It is important to note that some countries have also ratified the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) and Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143). Two countries (Côte d'Ivoire and The Gambia) have ratified neither the UN Convention nor these ILO Conventions.

The French-speaking countries of ECOWAS are members of the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES) that allows for mutual recognition of higher education, thereby enhancing opportunities for successful mobility and labour market integration. In the same area, it is necessary to underline that so far only five countries have ratified the Arusha Convention, as modified in Addis Ababa in 2014 (Benin, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo).

The French-speaking countries are also members of the CIPRES (Inter-African Conference on Social Insurance) and have signed the Multilateral Convention on Social Security (Dakar, 2006).²⁸

Recommendations:

- It is suggested that the ILO migrant-related Conventions and other international labour standards should be ratified and implemented.
- It is important that the countries that have already signed, but not ratified, the 1990 UN Convention provide for the ratification to strengthen the protection of migrant workers' rights.
- In the perspective of a continental mobility, the ratification of the Arusha Convention (2014) should be promoted.

Principle 6

Labour migration policy encompasses cooperation efforts at all levels (bilateral, regional and multilateral).

With regard to bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs), there is a variety of initiatives with an important package of agreements between the French-speaking countries and France, focusing on migration management and development. Other BLMAs have been concluded with Spain and Italy but implementation has been very limited, focusing mostly on addressing irregular flows (see details in Annex 10).

Many ECOWAS countries have signed BLMAs with Spain either to facilitate seasonal migration (e.g. Senegal) or to prevent irregular migration (e.g. The Gambia). In 2008 Cabo Verde signed a Mobility Partnership Agreement with the EU targeting facilitation of the movement of persons, as well as regular migration, in particular temporary migration, among others.²⁹

Some countries (e.g. The Gambia with Qatar) have bilateral labour agreements for low-skilled workers going to the Gulf countries (GCC), others are currently negotiating BLMAs with the Gulf and Arab States.

²⁸ <http://www.lacipres.org/>.

²⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/global-approach-to-migration/specific-tools/docs/mobility_partnership_cape_verde_en.pdf.

The experience with the COVID-19 should be taken on board in the revision of existing BLMAs or future ones to extend sufficient protection to migrant workers in the presence of extraordinary events.

Recommendation:

- The capacity of ECOWAS Member States in negotiating bilateral labour migration agreements could be enhanced. The ILO can provide technical assistance and appropriate tools, such as its *Tool for the assessment of bilateral labour migration agreements* (ILO and IOM, 2019).
- The involvement of social partners in the negotiating process for BLMAs is necessary to promote decent working conditions for migrant workers.

Principle 7

There are formal mechanisms to guarantee effective feedback between different levels of government involved in the implementation of the labour migration policy.

Country level

There is a plurality of governance institutions in charge of the different aspects of labour migration, but little evidence on mechanisms that can facilitate their coordination. The management of labour migration-related policies requires the strong involvement of public and private actors, including the social partners. A good example is offered by Nigeria, which as part of the implementation of its migration policy has created a coordination body through a Ministerial Committee, supported by a technical working group that ensures a continuous monitoring of the different aspects of the migration policy and provides suggestions to the Ministerial Committee for the adoption of necessary modifications.

Recommendation:

- To address the lack of coordination among the different institutions dealing with labour migration, an inter-ministerial coordination bodies could be created. The involvement of the social partners should also be envisaged. The creation of a Ministerial Committee supported by a technical working group, as in the case of Nigeria, could be an appropriate solution.

Subregional level

Competence on labour migration in the ECOWAS subregion is currently scattered within many Directorates (Gender and Social Affairs, Research and Statistics, Free Circulation, Youth Employment). Coordination is delegated to two committees or forums. The ECOWAS Directorate for Gender and Social Affairs has a Forum for Social Dialogue (SDF), created in 2011. The tripartite forum meets annually. The SDF has been involved in the initiation of several policy issues at the ECOWAS level such as the harmonisation of labour laws within ECOWAS. The Forum has also initiated the process of developing Regional Decent Work Programme for ECOWAS. Within this Forum, a labour migration working group was established in 2017 to deal with migration outside the region, but it has met only twice. The working group lacks financial and human resources. The ECOWAS Free Movement Directorate (MIDWAS) has a working group, dealing with mobility within the region.

The lack of coordination is also evident in the field of information management (Sorensen and Mas, 2016). The ECOWAS Directorate of Research and Statistics has established an information system on migration (ECOMIS), without any linkage with the Gender and Social Affairs Directorate. Such linkages could have been positive in terms of analyses of labour migration data, gender-disaggregated (Bisong, 2019), and of preventing duplications and overlapping with the Labour Market and Migration Information System (LMMIS). The LMMIS is being currently developed by the FMM project, however there is a need to have a sustainability strategy since there is no formal ECOWAS Directive establishing the system in a formal way (see Annex 11).

Recommendation:

- To enhance the capacity of ECOWAS in addressing the challenges of the implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes, the Directorate on Gender and Social Affairs should receive the necessary human and financial resources.
- In order to establish a unique and coherent management of labour migration policies, it would be most effective that the Directorate on Gender and Social Affairs assume a leading role in this field. To ensure effective coordination, the Working Group on Labour Migration within the Forum for Social Dialogue should be provided with a clear mandate and appropriate resources.

Principle 8

There are monitoring mechanisms and tools in place to assess labour migration policy implementation.

Country level

No evidence has been found of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on labour migration. On education and training, there are monitoring and evaluation systems in place, of varying quality, coverage and effectiveness. The establishment of an effective Labour Market Information System will enhance countries' monitoring capacity of employment and training policies. Such analyses are currently being carried out in some countries (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire and Niger) by a National Observatory on Employment and Vocational Training (ONEF).

Subregional level

The ECOWAS carries out monitoring and evaluation of the directives, protocols and policies in Member States, and when a gap is identified it intervenes with measures either directly or through peer support from other Member States. There is no evidence of the impact of such interventions (Urso and Hakami, 2018). The implementation of AU and ECOWAS policies is monitored through periodic meetings of Ministries dealing with the specific policy, and data collection by the Directorates in charge of each sector. In addition, there are forums that provide information and analysis on relevant policies: (i) the Social Dialogue Forum, created in 2011, which includes a Labour Migration Working Group, established in 2017, which has met only once due to lack of financial and technical resources; (ii) the Migration Forum, established under the coordination of the ECOWAS Free Movement Directorate (MIDWAS), which deals with the implementation of the Protocol of Free Circulation of Persons.

Recommendations:

- It would be advisable that Member States annually report progress in the implementation of the ECOWAS policies at national level, detailing the achievements, challenges met and the plan for the following year.
- The ECOWAS Secretariat should continuously monitor the implementation of the regional policies agreed. This will allow for the timely identification of bottlenecks and help countries to address them.
- The creation of an effective LMMIS could also include (in addition to regular data collection for measuring labour migration) information on the various aspects of policy implementation, to allow for effective monitoring and evaluation.

- The ECOWAS should assess the capacity of the Member States to establish a national LMMIS, in line with the international standards, harmonized with a future regional system. To collect this information, a self-assessment questionnaire could be used (see Annex 12).

AU level

The AU Commission monitors the implementation of its Directives through periodic or ad-hoc reports. An example is the report on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Declaration (2004), conducted ten years later (2014) that was the basis for the new Declaration and Action Plan Ouagadougou + 10, approved in 2015 (see AU, 2015).

The Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right to Establishment and its implementation roadmap indicates in Articles 28 and 29 the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Article 28 defines the RECs as the “focal points for promoting, monitoring and evaluating implementation of this Protocol and reporting the progress towards free movement of persons in their respective regions”. Article 29 defines the role of the AU Commission in the follow-up and evaluation of the Protocol, through data collection and analysis at national and regional levels. In the assessment process the AUC will be supported by the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons

Recommendation:

- Despite the fact that some level of vertical coherence exists among AU, ECOWAS and national labour migration policies, it would be advisable for the AU to continuously monitor and ask all the Member States to report periodically, on a yearly basis, on the status of the implementation of the policies agreed at continental level, specifying achievements and challenges. Based upon the results of the monitoring activity, the AU can put in place specific support initiatives to address issues identified.

The way forward

The policies linked to labour migration present a certain degree of coherence in terms of design, even if some delays are evident in the transposition of general directives at national level. Particularly important is the adoption of dedicated labour migration strategies at country level that could be prepared through a thorough coordination of public institutions and the involvement of social partners. Many challenges are evident in the implementation of the policies, which appear highly conditioned by the lack of appropriate financial and human resources. The COVID-19 crisis has shown the need for coordinated policy approaches, more than ever, to govern labour migration and mobility, in the context of multiple challenges.

As for labour migration outside the subregion, the capacity of the ECOWAS countries should be enhanced in negotiating, implementing and monitoring BLMAs. The involvement of the social partners in the entire process would be vital for promoting the protection of migrant workers' rights.

The existing employment policies at national level could be further coordinated with the support of the ECOWAS. The implementation plans should be prepared in consultation with the social partners, and adequate financial and human resources should be dedicated. There would also be helpful to share clear allocation of responsibility among the institutions involved. Permanent monitoring of employment policy can provide decision-makers with timely indications on constraints and needs for interventions.

An area in which countries should invest more is job creation, activating a strong public-private partnership. Reduction of informality, as well as support for SME development and self-employment initiatives, can increase the job opportunities in all the ECOWAS Member States.

The education field, which is usually a specific competence of national governments, would require the adoption of common principles that can inspire and guide the actions of the ECOWAS Member States.

Recognition of qualifications for higher education would require either the adoption of the Arusha Convention or the extension of the CAMES model to the non-French speaking countries of the ECOWAS. As for other qualifications, a good solution can be found at bilateral level through MoUs negotiated between two countries of the ECOWAS, or through a subregional coordinated approach. In that case, skills mobility can be enhanced through the adoption of the ECOWAS Qualifications Framework. The ECOWAS Member States could

focus on enhancement of their education and training systems and should align them to the ECOWAS Qualification Framework.

The coordination and monitoring function of labour migration policies by the ECOWAS could be strengthened by clear demarcation of competences among the different Directorates, dedicated human resources in the Department of Social Affairs, and reliable labour market information. The ECOWAS can play an important role in attracting private investment and international support that could be oriented toward coordinated support for country-level employment promotion strategies. This could be done in parallel with implementing measures for effective increased mobility within the region in order to respond to labour market demands.

Annex 1. Guiding questions for the semi-structured interviews

Topics

- Is there any migration policy/strategy in the country? If yes, does it also include labour migration?
- Are the national policies/strategies on labour migration aligned with the regional policies? If not, what are the differences and why?
- Is the labour migration strategy of the country in line with the international standards, including the ratified UN and ILO Conventions?
- Which national institution(s) is/are responsible for the implementation of labour migration policy and what are their roles?
- To what extent are employers' and workers' organizations involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of the labour migration policies/strategies?
- Are there any other stakeholders, e.g. representatives of civil society, involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of the labour migration policies/strategies?
- Is there a national policy/strategy on employment?
- Are the provisions of the national policy/strategy on employment coherent with the labour migration policies? If not, why?
- Is there a national policy/strategy on education and training?
- Are the provisions of the national policy/strategy on education and training coherent with the labour migration policies? If not, why?
- Are there any mechanisms/tools/fora that ensure that labour migration policy objectives take on board national employment and education/training priorities?
- Is there any coordinating body that supervises labour migration policy implementation in conjunction with other national policies, and ensures coordination?
- Reasons for lack of coherence: human and financial resources, capacity, others?
- Which kind of support would be necessary from the international community, especially from the ILO, to ensure coherence among labour migration, employment and education and training policies?

Annex 2. Organizations consulted during the field mission to Abuja, Nigeria, 22–29 January 2020

Organization	Bilateral meetings with stakeholders	Participation in stakeholders' workshop to discuss the reports' preliminary findings and receive feedback
Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC)	✓	✓
National Employers Consultative Association (NECA)	✓	✓
Federal Ministry of Labour and productivity	✓	✓
IOM	✓	✓
ICMPD	✓	✓
EU Delegation in Nigeria	✓	✓
Federal Ministry of Education	✓	✓
National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)	✓	✓
Federal Ministry of Youth and Sport Development	✓	✓
ECOWAS Directorate of Gender, Humanitarian and Social Affairs	✓	✓
ECOWAS Research & Statistics Division	✓	✓
ECOWAS Free Movement Directorate (MIDWAS)	✓	-
ECOWAS Directorate of Education, Science and Culture	✓	-
Nigerians in Diaspora Commission	✓	✓
Organization of Trade Unions of West Africa (OTUWA)	✓	✓
ILO	✓	✓

Annex 3. Ratification of international multilateral agreements by the ECOWAS Member States

Country	ILO Convention No. 97, 1949	ILO Convention No. 143, 1975	UN Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMW), 1990	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966	UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979
Benin		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burkina Faso	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cabo Verde			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Côte d'Ivoire				✓	✓	✓	✓
The Gambia				✓	✓	✓	✓
Ghana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guinea		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guinea-Bissau			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Liberia			✓ *	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mali			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Niger			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nigeria	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Senegal			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sierra Leone			✓ *	✓	✓	✓	✓
Togo		✓	✓ *	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Signed, but not ratified

Annex 4. Labour migration policies in ECOWAS Member States

Country	Labour migration policies
Benin	No comprehensive migration strategy. Lack of a labour migration policy.
Burkina Faso	A National Migration Strategy for the years 2014–25, drafted under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finances, was adopted in February 2017.
Cabo Verde	The National Emigration Strategy for Development, adopted in November 2013, includes measures related to labour migration aiming at opening new legal channels for labour migration and to consolidating existing ones.
Côte d'Ivoire	Lack of a comprehensive national migration policy.
The Gambia	The Gambia included migration as part of its National Development Agenda. The National Migration Policy, validated in June 2018, is aimed at providing guidance for managing effectively the migration challenges in line with the AU and ECOWAS approach to migration.
Ghana	A National Migration Policy for Ghana, prepared by the Ministry of the Interior, was endorsed in April 2017.
Guinea	The Government of Guinea has commenced the process of developing its national migration policy. The document aims to set the broad policy objectives and migration management strategies as well as enhance the formulation of sectoral policies to address issues related to migration. The policy development process is led by the Guinean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad. Capacity-building training was organized by FMM in May 2018 in Conakry.
Guinea-Bissau	Guinea-Bissau lacks a labour migration policy.
Liberia	The National Policy on Migration was adopted in 2017. ³⁰ The document is based on human rights concerns and relies on the ECOWAS framework on migration, and the Common Approach on Migration. It focuses more on immigration-related issues rather than on emigration management.
Mali	The National Migration Policy was adopted in the Council of Ministers on 3 September 2014. Mali's vision is to make migration a real "asset for the development of the country", a factor of economic growth and social promotion in order to reduce poverty in the long term.

³⁰ <https://www.rabat-process.org/en/countries/69-liberia>.

Niger	<p>Despite the establishment of a special inter-ministerial committee on migration policy development in 2007 and the elaboration of a first draft policy document in 2014, a national migration policy has yet to be adopted.</p> <p>Niger lacks a labour emigration policy. No activities have been undertaken for the development of legal labour migration opportunities.</p>
Nigeria	<p>The National Migration Policy was adopted on 13 May 2015.</p> <p>It is based on the AU Strategic Framework on Migration and Development, the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the AU and ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration.</p>
Senegal	<p>With the support of the IOM, the preparation of a National Migration Policy is in progress.</p>
Sierra Leone	<p>Sierra Leone lacks a comprehensive migration and labour migration policy.</p>
Togo	<p>A National Migration Policy and Action Plan was adopted in 2016.³¹</p> <p>Development of the Professional Migration Strategy in 2017, focusing on labour migration.</p>

³¹ <https://www.rabat-process.org/en/countries/75-togo>.

Annex 5. Main responsible institutions for labour migration

Country	Ministries
Benin	Ministry of Labour and Public Service: work permits to foreign workers. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration, Francophonie, and Beninese Abroad and National Agency for Beninese Abroad.
Burkina Faso	Migration is under the responsibility of many ministries and public institutions, with little cooperation among them. The Ministry of Economy and Finances is the leading institution in the development of the National Migration Strategy.
Cabo Verde	Ministry of Employment, Youth and Human Resources Development: issue of work permits to foreign workers.
Côte d'Ivoire	Migration is under the responsibility of many ministries and public institutions, with scarce cooperation among them. Ministry of Interior of Security: immigration management. Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Vocational Training: issue of work permits. Ministry of Foreign Affairs: protection of nationals abroad.
The Gambia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad. Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration, and Employment. Ministry of Interior, through the Immigration Department.
Ghana	Ministry of Employment Labour Department: responsible for job matching on the international labour market; licensing and monitoring of private employment agencies. Ministry of Foreign Affairs: relations with nationals abroad and their protection. Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection: fight against trafficking in persons.
Guinea	Migration is under the responsibility of many ministries and public institutions, with little cooperation among them. Ministry of Security and Civil Protection: border police; immigration management. Ministry of Employment, Vocational and Technical Education. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad: relations with the diaspora and protection of nationals abroad.
Guinea-Bissau	Ministry of Internal Administration: immigration management.

	<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs: relations with the diaspora and protection of nationals abroad.</p> <p>Ministry of Women, Family and Social Solidarity: fight against trafficking in persons.</p> <p>Ministry of the Civil Service, State Reform, Labour and Social Security: data on immigrant workers.</p> <p>Ministry of Economy and Regional Integration: coordination of the National Migration and Migration Policy Development Platform.</p>
Liberia	<p>Ministry of Justice Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization: immigration management.</p> <p>Ministry of Labour Division of Alien Registration and Liberalization: issue of work permits to foreign workers.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs for protection of nationals abroad.</p>
Mali	<p>Ministry of Interiors: immigration and border management.</p> <p>Ministry of Labour, Public Service, and institutional Relations.</p> <p>Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training.</p>
Niger	<p>Ministry of Interior: entry, stay and removal of foreigners.</p> <p>Ministry of Employment.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs: relations with nationals abroad.</p>
Nigeria	<p>Ministry of Interior, Nigeria Immigration Service: entry, stay and removal of foreigners; issue of work permits.</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Productivity, State Labour Offices: job matching in the international labour market; licensing and monitoring of private employment agencies and review of foreign contracts.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs: assistance to nationals abroad.</p> <p>Ministry of Justice: fight against human trafficking.</p>
Senegal	<p>Ministry of Interior: immigration management.</p> <p>Ministry of Youth, Employment and Promotion of Civic Value.</p> <p>Ministry of Public Service, Labour, Social Dialogue and Professional Organisations: authorizes work contracts signed by foreigners.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad: relations with Senegalese migrants, and their assistance abroad.</p> <p>Ministry of Women, Family and Childhood: measures against trafficking in persons.</p> <p>Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning: development of a national migration policy.</p>
Sierra Leone	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Security.</p> <p>Ministry of Internal Affairs.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation.</p>

Togo ³²	<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration.</p> <p>Ministry of Security and Civil Protection: in charge of immigration management and the fight against trafficking in human beings.</p> <p>Ministry of Social Action, Women's Empowerment and Literacy.</p> <p>Ministry of Development Planning.</p> <p>Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Administrative Reform.</p> <p>Ministry of Trade and Private Sector Promotion.</p> <p>Ministry of Higher Education and Research.</p> <p>Ministry of Economy and Finance.</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Local Authorities.</p> <p>Ministry of Human Rights and the Consolidation of Democracy.</p>
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³² <https://www.rabat-process.org/en/countries/75-togo>.

Annex 6. Implementing agencies for labour migration

Country	Public employment agencies	Private employment agencies
Benin	<p>The National Employment Agency (ANPE) is charged with assisting jobseekers in both the national and the international labour market and providing assistance for the reinsertion of returning migrants.</p> <p>As for the assistance to labour migration, the capacity of the agency might be further developed.</p> <p>The Agency holds a platform for electronic job matching.</p>	The legislation does not include any provisions on the activities of private employment agencies.
Burkina Faso	The National Employment Agency is responsible for the placement of Burkinabe workers abroad, but the capacity of the Agency might be further developed.	The Labour Code of 2008 foresees a licensing system.
Cabo Verde	<p>Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional - Institut de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle (IEFP).</p> <p>It has an electronic platform for job matching. No evidence of specific activities for migrant workers.</p>	No available information.
Côte d'Ivoire	<p>The Youth Employment Agency was created by Ordinance No. 215-228 of 8 April 2015. Placed under the supervision of the Ministry in charge of the Promotion of Youth and Youth Employment, it is also responsible for labour migrants' placement abroad.</p> <p>With the Decree of 13 July 2016, the Council of Ministers, the function of the Observatory of Employment and Labour Market was committed to the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. The Ministry also manages the <i>Carte Emploi</i>,³³ a platform specially developed for all the actors involved in the National Employment Policy and in training.</p>	<p>The Labour Code foresees the possibility for private employment agencies to operate.</p> <p>In practice, the role of private employment agencies is mostly limited to the national labour market.</p>
The Gambia	No information available.	The 2007 Labour Act regulates labour-only subcontracting which

³³ <https://carte-emploi.net/>.

		<p>would also apply to foreign private recruitment agencies.</p> <p>There are many private agencies operating in The Gambia at present.</p>
Ghana	<p>Public Employment Centres currently do not play a significant role in the recruitment of Ghanaian workers for employment abroad.</p>	<p>Agencies' activities are foreseen in the Labour Act of 2003 (Act 651) and its subsequent Labour Regulations of 2007 (LI 1833).</p> <p>The Labour Act limits the recruitment activities of private employment agencies to countries with which Ghana has concluded labour migration agreements.</p>
Guinea	<p>The Guinean Agency for the Promotion of Employment (AGUIPE), has as its mission the implementation of the national Youth Employment Policy.</p> <p>It has an electronic platform for job matching. No evidence of specific activities for migrant workers.</p>	<p>There are some private employment agencies such as Trust Africa, but they seem to operate for the domestic market only.</p>
Guinea-Bissau	<p>Department of Employment Service and Employment Centre have been established within the Ministry of Labour.</p>	<p>There is no legislation regulating the activities of private employment agencies.</p>
Liberia	<p>National Bureau of Employment (NBE). No details available.</p>	<p>No information available.</p>
Mali	<p>National Employment Agency (ANPE): profiling of immigrant workers (fixed-term contracts); qualitative and quantitative data on labour immigration, Malian return migrants (profile and working sector and number) seeking a job opportunity.</p> <p>The Centre for Migration Management and Information (CIGEM): its main objectives are the definition and implementation of a Malian migration policy adapted to national, regional and international dynamics in constant evolution, with particular emphasis on the link between migration and development.</p>	<p>In January 2016, the Collectif National des Bureaux de Placement Payants et des Entreprises de Travail Temporaires (CONABEM) and the Agence nationale de promotion de l'emploi (ANPE) signed a protocol of cooperation that foresees technical support from CONABEM for the institutional activity of the ANPE.</p>
Niger	<p>The National Agency for Promotion of Employment (ANPE) is responsible for the placement of Nigerien workers abroad, but the capacity of the agency might be further</p>	<p>There are no regulations on the activities of private employment agencies on the international labour market.</p>

	<p>developed. The Agency issues the work permits for foreigner workers.</p> <p>The National Observatory on Employment and Vocational Training (ONEF) has the objective of contributing to the improvement of employment policies and professional training.</p>	
Nigeria	<p>In 2006, the International Labour Migration Desk/National Electronic Labour Exchange (ILMD/NELEX) was established within the Department of Employment and Wages of the Ministry of Labour. The platform implements the national policy on labour migration, provides information on jobs and conditions of service abroad, gives pre-departure counselling, and ensures overseas placement and the implementation of bilateral employment agreements.</p> <p>Support to migrant workers can be also provided by the 37 employment exchanges located in all the states of the Federation.</p>	The activities of PrEAs in Nigeria are primarily regulated by the Labour Act, 1990 (Chapter 198), which provides for a licensing system, monitored by the Ministry of Labour.
Senegal	<p>The Youth Employment Agency (ANPEJ). It is also in charge of labour placement abroad.</p> <p>http://www.anpej.sn.</p>	No information available.
Sierra Leone	No information available.	No information available.
Togo	The National Employment Agency (ANPE) is charged with the placement of workers within the national and international labour markets.	The Labour Code recognizes the possibility for private employment agencies to operate, although it does not specify whether their role shall be limited to the national labour market or may include placement abroad.

Annex 7. Employment policies or strategies

Country	Policy
Benin	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Burkina Faso	The National Employment Programme (NEP) was adopted as part of poverty reduction efforts by the Government in May 2008. It was accompanied by an Employment Action Plan (EAP) which first covered the period 2008–11.
Cabo Verde	Labour Code 2007. <i>Proposta do Plano Nacional de Emprego em Cabo Verde (PNE-CV) 2018–2023.</i>
Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Politique nationale de l'emploi (PNE) 2016–2020.</i> <i>Stratégie nationale pour l'insertion et l'emploi des jeunes 2016–2020.</i>
The Gambia	Labour Act, 2007. Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Ghana	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015. Employment Framework for Poverty Reduction in Ghana, 2004. A national employment policy was launched in 2015, with limited implementation
Guinea	Document on the National Employment Policy prepared in collaboration with the ILO, in progress.
Guinea-Bissau	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015.
Liberia	Decent Work Act, 2015. Employment Policy, 2009.
Mali	<i>Politique Nationale de l'Emploi (PNE) and Plan d'Action Opérationnel (PAO) 2015–2017 (Conseil des Ministres du 18 mars 2015).</i>
Niger	<i>Plan de Développement Economique et Social (PDES) 2012–2015.</i>
Nigeria	National Policy on Labour Migration 2014. The National Employment Policy (2017), issued in collaboration with the ILO.
Senegal	<i>Politique nationale de l'Emploi (NPNE) 2010–2015.</i> Programme Pays de Promotion du Travail décent (PPTD) 2012–2015, with ILO support.
Sierra Leone	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2011–2015. A national employment policy was adopted for the period 2015–2018, with limited implementation. The review of the policy is currently in process.

Togo	<p><i>Décret n° 2014-089/PR du 31 mars 2014 portant approbation de la Politique nationale de l'emploi et du Plan stratégique national pour l'emploi des jeunes.</i></p> <p><i>Plan stratégique national pour l'emploi des jeunes: orientations stratégiques (2013-2022).</i></p> <p><i>Politique nationale de l'emploi (2013-2017).</i></p> <p><i>Décret n° 2008-069/PR du 21 juillet 2008 portant attributions, organisation et fonctionnement de l'Agence nationale pour l'emploi.</i></p>
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Annex 8. Education and TVET policies in the ECOWAS Member States

Country	Policy
Benin	<i>Plan Sectoriel de l'Education 2018–2030.</i>
Burkina Faso	<i>Programme Sectoriel de L'éducation et de la Formation (PSEF) 2012–2021.</i>
Cabo Verde	Education sector strategic plan 2017–2021 (<i>Plano Estratégico da Educação</i>). <i>Service National de Qualifications de Cabo Verde (SNQ).</i>
Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Plan sectoriel de l'éducation 2016–2025.</i> <i>Plan d'action pour la période 2017–2020.</i>
The Gambia	The Gambia Skills Qualification Framework (GSQF) was established in 2006 and it is under the responsibility of the National Training Authority (NTA). The GSQF has five levels and focuses on four sectors: agriculture, health, construction and mechanics.
Ghana	Ghana's National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Qualifications Framework ((NTVETQF) was established in 2012. It is a nine-level framework and is governed by the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET), which is responsible for coordinating TVET programmes in both public and private TVET institutions.
Guinea	<i>Programme sectoriel pour l'éducation (2015–2017).</i> A new programme is currently under preparation.
Guinea-Bissau	<i>Programme sectoriel de l'éducation de la Guinée Bissau pour 2017–2025.</i>
Liberia	The education sector in Liberia faces a complex set of challenges related to the recovery process after the civil war, shrinking national finances, poor infrastructure and the epidemic of Ebola. These challenges also include poor learning outcomes, schooling large numbers of older children, large numbers of out-of-school children, and many unqualified teachers. In order to meet these challenges, Liberia has developed a strategic response in its sector plan called Getting to Best Education Sector Plan 2017–2021.
Mali	<i>Programme décennal de développement de la formation professionnelle pour l'emploi (PRODEFPE). 1ère phase : Programme triennal 2015–2017</i> <i>Décret n° 2017-0466/P-RM du 12 juin 2017 fixant les modalités d'application de la loi n° 2016-026 du 14 juin 2016 relative à la formation professionnelle.</i> <i>Adoption : 2017-06-12.</i> <i>Loi n° 2016-026/ du 14 juin 2016 relative à la Formation professionnelle.</i> <i>Adoption : 2016-06-14.</i>
Niger	<i>Programme sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation (2014–2024).</i> Strategic document.

Nigeria	Education for change: a ministerial strategic plan (2018–2022). There is an NQF for technical education (NSQF).
Senegal	<i>Programme de développement de l'éducation et de la formation (éducation pour tous): PDEF/EPT, 2003.</i>
Sierra Leone	ESP 2018–2020 implementation plan. Education sector plan 2018–2020: getting it right, service delivery, integrity and learning in Sierra Leone.
Togo	<i>Plan sectoriel de l'éducation 2014–2025.</i> <i>Décret n° 2018-110/PR du 30 mai 2018 portant création, attributions, organisation et fonctionnement de l'Agence Education-Développement (AED). Adoption : 2018-05-30.</i> <i>Loi n° 2017-005 du 19 juin 2017 d'orientation de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche. Adoption : 2017-06-19.</i>

Annex 9. The role of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA)³⁴

Established on 10 January 1994 in Dakar, the UEMOA associates eight countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) using a common currency, the West African CFA Franc (FCFA), and benefiting from common cultural traditions and language.

Its objective is the construction of a harmonized and integrated economic space, with total freedom of movement of people, capital, goods, services and factors of production, as well as the effective enjoyment of the right of exercise and establishment for the free and independent professions and of residence for the citizens throughout the Community territory.

UEOMA countries are active in the implementation of the Declaration on Employment and the Fight against Poverty issued at the summit of the African Heads of State and Government, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in September 2004. The Declaration recommended the establishment and maintenance of systems aimed at collection, analysis of data and dissemination of information on poverty, employment and vocational training. To implement this recommendation, the Ministers in charge of Employment and Vocational Training asked UEMOA Member States to set up in each country an independent National Observatory of Employment and Training, to be responsible for carrying out studies and research on employment and training.

The UEMOA started several years ago to work towards the establishment of a common tool for labour market information within its space. This can offer a notable opportunity for the development of the regional LMMIS at ECOWAS. In fact, the creation of a subregional observatory on the labour market covering a vast area with a common language and cultural environment can be:

- highly synergic with the regional system;
- a source of inspiration for countries that can adopt the UEMOA approach by establishing an Employment and Training Observatory to be responsible for the LMMIS;
- an enabling factor for the regional system through the experience gained in past years; and
- a facilitator of the establishment process of the regional LMMIS through testing methodologies.

³⁴ The UEMOA covers an area of 3,506,126 square kilometres and has 120.2 million inhabitants.

Annex 10. Main migration-related bilateral agreements signed by ECOWAS Member States

Country	Bilateral agreements
Benin	<p>Agreement on Concerted Management of Migratory Flows and Co-Development concluded with France, 2009.</p> <p>Agreement with Nigeria on the prevention, repression and suppression of human trafficking, 2005.</p> <p>On 20 September 2011, an agreement was signed with the Republic of Congo to prevent transnational child trafficking.</p> <p>Social security conventions have been concluded with France, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Senegal and Togo.</p>
Burkina Faso	<p>Agreement on Concerted Management of Migratory Flows and Co-Development with France, 2009.</p>
Cabo Verde	<p>Protocol on Temporary Migration of Cabo Verdean Workers in Portugal, 1997.</p> <p>Cooperation Agreement on Immigration Matters between Spain and Cabo Verde, 2007.</p> <p>Agreement on Concerted Management of Migratory Flows and Mutually Supportive Development between France and Cabo Verde, 2008.</p> <p>Social security arrangements with: Brazil, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Senegal, Spain and Sweden. It is not part of the inter-African Social Security Convention (CIPRES Convention).</p> <p>A Special Partnership was created in 2007 between the EU and Cabo Verde targeting the following priority areas of action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good governance • security/stability • regional integration • technical and regulatory convergence • knowledge-based society • The fight against poverty, and development. <p>In the framework of this partnership, an Action Plan for Security and Stability was launched in 2014 and adopted at the Ministerial Meeting in Luxembourg in 2015.</p> <p>A Mobility Partnership was launched in 2008 for increasing dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Cabo Verde in the area of migration and including facilitating issuing of visas and readmission of persons. The participating Member States of the European Union include France, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain.</p>

Côte d'Ivoire	<p>The main bilateral agreement was concluded with France in 1992. The agreement included some derogations to common French immigration legislation.</p> <p>A social security convention was concluded with France in 1985.</p>
The Gambia	<p>In 2006, Spain and The Gambia signed a Framework Cooperation Agreement in order to address irregular immigration. A similar agreement was signed in 2010 with Italy.</p> <p>An agreement signed with Qatar focuses on “regulating the Employment of Gambian Workers in the State of Qatar”. It includes the provision of job-related information to potential migrants in advance, visa and travel facilitation, remittances, etc.</p> <p>A bilateral agreement with the Republic of China (Taiwan) deals with cooperation in immigration affairs and the prevention of human trafficking.</p> <p>A Memorandum of Understanding with Senegal to combat cross-border trafficking crimes between the two countries has been signed.</p>
Ghana	<p>The only bilateral agreement concerning migration that seems to be in force is that concluded with Italy in 2010 which focuses on border management.</p> <p>The bilateral labour agreements signed in the 1990s with Jamaica and the United Kingdom are no longer active.</p>
Guinea	<p>In 2006, Guinea concluded a bilateral labour agreement with Spain. The agreement envisages the promotion of labour migration through the communication by the Spanish authorities of job vacancies to their Guinean counterparts.</p> <p>Another bilateral agreement was signed in 2011 with Switzerland. It includes a number of mechanisms to facilitate the reintegration of voluntary returnees in Guinea, including the payment of travel costs by Switzerland, a financial reinstallation grant, and assistance to the development of individual economic projects in Guinea.</p>
Guinea-Bissau	<p>Guinea-Bissau signed a bilateral labour agreement with Spain in 2008, similar to that signed by Guinea in 2006. It outlines cooperation and assistance regarding labour migration, the integration of Bissau-Guineans in Spain, assistance in the field of trafficking in persons, and also readmission of nationals in an irregular situation.</p>
Liberia	<p>No information available.</p>
Mali	<p>A bilateral agreement was concluded in 2007 with Spain which included several provisions regarding protection, such as pre-departure training for migrants and further training upon arrival in Spain, with a view to facilitating their integration in the country of destination.</p> <p>An Agreement on Circulation and Stay of Persons was concluded with France in 1994. It includes some derogations to the French immigration legislation.</p> <p>Mali has not concluded any readmission agreements.</p>
Niger	<p>Conventions with France:</p>

	<p>Social security, 1973; and agreement on circulation and stay of persons, 1994. Agreement with Italy, 2010. This agreement focuses on security and most notably foresees cooperation activities in the area of trafficking in persons and irregular migration.</p>
Nigeria	<p>Over the past decade, Nigeria has concluded four readmission agreements: with Ireland, Italy, Spain and Switzerland. All four agreements include facilitation of the repatriation process, coordination between the parties through the Nigerian consular services and payment of transportation by the requesting party.</p> <p>In 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding was concluded with the United Kingdom on trafficking issues, which included provisions regarding the protection of victims, notably through counselling and social rehabilitation.</p>
Senegal	<p>Several agreements have been concluded with Spain for seasonal migration. The system includes the dissemination of job offers to Senegalese authorities through the Spanish Embassy in Dakar, the pre-selection of candidates by the Youth Employment Agency (ANEJ), and the final selection and recruitment by Spanish employers.</p> <p>Three Agreements have been signed with France:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convention on Circulation and Stay of Persons (1995) which included some derogations to common French immigration legislation. 2. The Agreement on Exchange of Young Professionals in 2001 that allowed young graduates, aged 18 to 35 to supplement their professional experience in the other country. 3. The Agreement on Concerted Management of Migratory Flows in 2006 (amended in 2008) that focused on readmission of nationals in an irregular situation, reintegration of Senegalese migrants in their country, and development projects.
Sierra Leone	<p>Readmission agreements have been concluded with the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.</p> <p>The Multipartite Agreement for the Local Integration of Liberian and Sierra Leonean Refugees in Nigeria was signed in 2007 between Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, ECOWAS and UNHCR. This Agreement can be considered a practical implementation of the ECOWAS Protocols on free movement of persons, freedom of residence, and establishment</p>
Togo	<p>Two Agreements have been established with France:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement on circulation and stay of person (1996) that included derogations to the common French immigration legislation. 2. 1996 Convention of establishment which protected investments and property rights of French and Togolese migrants. It also included cooperation measures for the return of migrants in an irregular situation and their reinsertion in the country of origin.

Annex 11. Indicative situation of the LMMIS and LMIS in ECOWAS Member States

Country	Description
Benin	<p>Main producers of labour market information are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique (INSAE)</i> • <i>Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (ANPE)</i>. The Agency holds a platform for electronic job matching. • <i>Observatoire de l'emploi et de la formation (OEF)</i> • <i>Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale (CNSS)</i> <p>In April 2017, training was conducted for the staff of the Employment and Training Observatory (OEF) and the members of the LMIS, to use quantitative techniques for assessing the impact of employment policies.</p>
Burkina Faso	<p>The LMIS is part of the National Statistical System (SNN), which is coordinated by the <i>Conseil Supérieur de la Statistique (CSS)</i>. At operational level, the main actors of the LMIS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The INSD (<i>Institut de la Statistique et de la Démographie</i>), which carries out surveys, such as the Survey on Employment and Informal Sector in 2016. It also publishes "<i>Tableaux de bord Sociaux</i>", but the last one was issued in 2014. • National Observatory on Employment and Vocational Training (ONEF). As stated in the National Employment Policy adopted by Decree N°2004-258/PR/ MTRA of 21 September 2014, the ONEF is the Central Office of the LMIS. In collaboration with the producers of statistical information on the labour market, it is in charge of the collection, processing, storage, exploitation and dissemination of statistical information on employment and professional qualifications.
Cabo Verde	<p>A National Statistical Service has been established by the law n°35/VII/2009 of 2 March 2009. The organs of the SSN are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conseil National de la Statistique (CNEST)</i> • <i>Institut National de la Statistique (INE)</i> • The Bank of Cabo Verde • Institutions delegated and technically coordinated by the INE to produce sector statistics <p>The INE has carried out in 2015 an LFS, providing information on both employment and vocational training. The other actors of the LMIS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Institut de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle (IEFP)</i> • <i>Observatoire de l'emploi et de la Formation (OEF)</i>. This body seems not fully operational. <p>It is worth noting the project PAENCE, launched in 2014 with the support of the ILO and UNDP, aimed at fostering the creation of an effective and integrated labour and employment information system by optimizing the statistical use of administrative data sources. Therefore, it is planned to</p>

	improve the understanding of the labour market and facilitate access to information, based on real data collected and managed by national public employment services.
Côte d'Ivoire	<p>The main actors of the LMMIS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Institute of Statistics (<i>Institut national de la statistique - INS</i>) • National Observatory (ONEF) • Agency of Youth Employment (<i>Agence Emploi Jeunes</i>) <p>The INS produces an employment survey (LFS) every two years, alternating with the informal sector survey.</p> <p>The ONEF is a Directorate of the DG Employment and is looking for autonomy and human and financial support.</p> <p>A strategy for the development of the LMMIS has been prepared, in collaboration with the ILO.</p> <p>A quarterly report is published on LM data collected through the Social Security Services.</p>
The Gambia	<p>There is no employment observatory, but a Gambia Labour Market Information System (GLMIS) has been created and is managed by the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE), in collaboration with the Labour Department and the Gambia Bureau of Statistics.</p> <p>A committee composed of main stakeholders in the field is in charge of ensuring that migration information is integrated into the system.</p>
Ghana	<p>The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) is the institution entrusted with the creation and maintenance of the LMMIS. The Employment Information Branch (EIB) operates under the MELR and is responsible for the Ghana Labour Market Information System (GLMIS) and for integrating migration information into it. Thanks to its role as coordinating point of all organs of the national employment services, the EIB is together with the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) the main producer of data for a LMMIS system.</p>
Guinea	<p>An electronic platform "Guidaxion", a tool aimed at helping to assess trends in the job market as well as its strengths and weaknesses, serves as a reference in terms of employment promotion actions. Its exploitation is free and open to all (population, ministerial departments, economic operators, investors, partners and development partners). The Guidaxion was developed and implemented as part of the RMT (Reorganise the Labour Market) project, whose main operational objectives were short, medium and long-term actions for problem solving and improvement of labour market indicators. A document on employment in the modern sector is published on an annual basis. The country does not carry out targeted employment surveys.</p>
Guinea Bissau	<p>No employment surveys have been conducted. The only available data has been collected through the 2009 Census held by the <i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística</i> (INE).</p> <p>The Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform (MFPPRA) is responsible for formulating, proposing, coordinating and executing</p>

	<p>government policies on public administration reform, modernization and management, employment, vocational training, industrial relations and social security. An Employment and Vocational Qualification Observatory (OEF) has been established by a decree of the Council of Ministers and put under the Ministry's supervision but is not yet fully functional.</p> <p>The Observatory will have the responsibility of collecting and processing of data on employment and professional qualification, including child labour, data on employment in the formal and informal sectors, and in rural areas, and the dissemination and accessibility of these information.</p>
Liberia	<p>The main actors of the LMIS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) • The Ministry of Labour • The Ministry of Youth and Sports • The Ministry of Public Service <p>The LFS has been carried out in 2010 and in 2016, but the latter is not available online. Employment and Unemployment Rates are also included in the 2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES).</p> <p>According to UNESCO's 2015 statistics, the adult literacy rate for Liberia stands at 47.7% and the youth (15-24) literacy rate is 54.4%. There are migrant workers throughout Liberia, particularly in the services and mining sectors.</p>
Mali	<p>The main actors of the LMIS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) • The National Agency of Employment (ANPE) • National Observatory of Employment and Training (ONEF) • The National Institute of Social Welfare (INPS) <p>The ONEF was created by Law N°2014-012 of 26 May 2014. It is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the public, as well as the public and private decision-makers with understanding and guidance on job creation and improving the adequacy of training to present and future labour market opportunities. • Conducting any research or study in the field of employment and training. • Collecting, centralizing, processing, analyzing and disseminating information on the labour market. • Regularly determining promising sectors with potential for job creation. • Analysing the impact of decisions and legislative and regulatory measures on employment and training. • Analysing the impact of investments on employment and training. • Creating a database on employment and training. <p>Since 2016, ONEF has been publishing bulletins on LM on a quarterly basis. An LFS has been carried out in 2014 and a National Household Employment Survey was held in 2015 and 2016.</p>

Niger	<p>The main actors of the LMMIS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Institute of Statistics (<i>Institut national de la statistique - INS</i>) • Observatoire National de l'Emploi et de la Formation (ONEF) • National Agency of Employment (<i>Agence Nationale Promotion Emploi - ANPE</i>) <p>The ONEF has been established in 2012 as an independent body.</p> <p>Since 2014, the Observatory has produced about thirty surveys/studies on LM and Professional and Technical Training. Dissemination of the information is to be improved.</p> <p>In 2015 the second report on decent work was published, in cooperation with the ILO along the specific 18 indicators.</p>
Nigeria	<p>There is no systemic LMMIS established in the country.</p> <p>The main producers of labour market information are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Population Commission (NPopC) • National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) • Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) • Ministry of Youth and Sport <p>Based upon an advanced methodology designed in 2015, in collaboration with the ILO, and aligned with international statistical standards, the NBS regularly conducts the LFS – on a quarterly basis. Data are further analysed, allowing focusing on specific LM features. In 2017, the NBS produced two reports: the first report provides information on employment sectors, gender and education (Q3/2017) and the second report analyses unemployment and underemployment over the year (Q1-Q3/2017).</p>
Senegal	<p>Various institutions are responsible for labour market data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Agency of Statistics and Demography (NASD) • The Directorate for Employment, Management of Statistics and Labour Studies • The Youth Employment Agency (ANPEJ) • The Social Security Fund • The Pension Institution of Senegal <p>A National Observatory on Rural Employment (ONER) has been developed by ANPEJ in collaboration with FAO. It is a platform dedicated to the cross-cutting theme of decent rural employment. ONER operates in a context marked by a predominant role of agriculture, which is the main provider of employment in Senegal with more than 70% of the workforce.</p> <p>The <i>Agence Nationale de Statistique et de la Démographie</i> (ANSD) has issued the first Employment Survey in January 2017.</p>
Sierra Leone	<p>The main data producers on labour market are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Statistical Service (Statistics) • The Ministry of Labour <p>The country does not have a labour market information system.</p>

	<p>For decades, data on labour and employment has been collected from the Integrated Household Surveys and the Population and Housing Census, conducted by Statistics Sierra Leone.</p> <p>The first LFS was carried out in 2014 with the support of the World Bank and the ILO and was published in 2015. The last Population and Housing Census was held in 2015.</p>
Togo	<p>The main data producers on labour market are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques et Démographiques</i> (INSEED) • National Employment Agency (ANPE), through its <i>Département de l'Observatoire de l'Emploi</i> (DOE) – ONEF <p>The ONEF has as a mission to collect and process employment and labour force statistics with a view to developing relevant indicators and establishing a periodic employment and labour force situation and publish periodically the results of research or studies. Reports on LM are published every six months.</p>

Annex 12. Self-assessment checklist

Institutional setting		
No.	Question	Answer
1	Is there a National Statistical System (NSS)?	
2	What is the leading body of the NSS?	
3	Is the above body operational?	
4	What is the name of the implementing agency of the NSS (statistical institute)?	
5	What are the main products of the statistical institute related to labour market (including year of issue: e.g. LFS 2016)?	
6	Which institution is in charge of managing the LMIS in your country? a. Ministry of Labour, or b. National Employment Observatory c. Other agency (please specify)	
7	If the LMIS is managed by the Ministry of Labour, which department is tasked with it?	
8	What kind of products are issued by the department in charge of the LMIS (e.g. quarterly bulletins, yearly reports, etc.)?	
9	If the country has an Employment Observatory, when was it established and what is its legal status (autonomous agency, department of the Ministry or Agency)?	
10	What are the products of the Employment Observatory?	
11	Has any diagnostic assessment of the LMMIS has been carried out so far? If yes, by whom (e.g. ILO, IOM)?	
12	Is there a strategy for the development of the LMMIS in the country? If yes, when was it published?	
13	Are the data producers linked to the institution in charge of the LMMIS by a formal network?	
14	Is the LMMIS oriented to meet the needs of users? If yes, please explain which needs are met and how they have been identified.	
Collecting, analysing and disseminating LM information		
No.	Question	Answer
1	Is there a shared methodology for data collection with the other data producers?	
2	If not, how can data from different sources be compared and analysed?	

3	Are you collecting data based upon the indicators set by the AUC?	
4	If not, which LM indicators are you applying?	
5	Is your country ready to comply with the minimum set of indicators proposed by ECOWAS?	
6	Do you collect data on vocational training?	
7	If yes, how many indicators you apply: a. The AUC ones (20), or b. The UEMOA ones (17)	
8	Is there reliable information on labour migration?	
9	From which sources?	
10	Who analyses data and prepares specific dissemination flyers? a. Statistical Office b. Data producers c. Ministry of Labour d. Observatory	
11	How is the LM information disseminated? a. In hard copies b. Electronically	

Support needed to align the country to the requirements of the regional LMMIS

No.	Question	Answer
1	If a strategy for the development and implementation of the LMMIS is not there, do you need technical assistance for it?	
2	Is there a need for training of the staff in charge of the LMMIS, and other data producers on methodology for data collection and analysis?	
3	Any training needed on data analysis techniques?	
4	If there is not an electronic platform, do you need technical assistance for establishing it?	
5	If an electronic platform already exists, do you need any assistance for enhancing it?	
6	Do you need other ITC hardware and software (please specify)?	

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