

STRATEGY PAPER

migration as a driver for sustainable development



Belgium
partner in development

COLOPHON

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INTRODUCTION

Migration is a global phenomenon with a major impact on the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, but also on that of migrants themselves and on the different communities they take part in throughout the migration process. Moreover, this impact is reciprocal, as migration itself is also affected by development. This strategy paper defines how the Belgian Development Cooperation intends to address the challenges linked to migration, mobility and forced displacement¹ to ensure that the positive effects of migration for inclusive growth and sustainable development, and vice versa, are recognised and maximised.

The paper, first of all, provides a broad framework and guidance on migration for the various actors of Belgian development policy. It is a basis for political dialogue with the governments of the countries where the Belgian Development Cooperation is active, with the EU, other donors, and multilateral partners. In addition, the strategy is an invitation to other public, federal and federated services or institutions in Belgium as well as actors of civil society, including diaspora organisations, the private sector,

and civic initiatives, to use their own mandate and expertise to contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of this paper. Finally, this strategy paper has been written in the context of a global approach to migration whereby Belgian Development Cooperation wishes to make a coherent contribution towards the broad bilateral dialogue on migration with the countries of origin and transit, with a view to achieving effective and efficient Belgian action overseas.

This paper is the result of a broad and extensive consultation process with all Belgian actors that are directly or indirectly involved in migration and sustainable development. The formulated challenges and the Belgian response rely, to a large extent, on the mapping of actors, interventions, expertise and existing financial modalities prepared by the European Centre for Development Policy Management in late 2019.

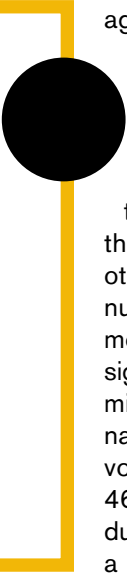
The strategy will be reviewed annually in a joint platform that combines the

¹ The term 'migration' in this strategy paper refers to both internal and international migration. See Chapter VIII for definitions of the various terms. Glossary.

input of DGD and representatives of relevant actors and the Belgian public services and institutions based on the

conclusions of results, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations for the future.

CHALLENGES



Recent estimates show that in 2020, 281 million people (or 3.6% of the world's population) left their country of usual residence either willingly or by force². 48% being girls and women, 73% of them are of working age (20-64 years)³, and 26.3 million are refugees. Figures show that the vast majority of people who cross a border do so within their own region. Despite the continuous growth in the number of refugees and other international migrants, the number of people migrating or moving within state borders is significantly higher. About 750 million people migrate internally for economic or other voluntary reasons, but almost 46 million do so under pressure due to violence or conflict, while a further 20 million are forced

out by causes related to climate or environment. Migration therefore takes different forms and patterns (voluntary, forced, within or outside borders, for economic or crisis-related reasons) leading to considerable diversity in the types of groups of migrants (migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers, stateless and internally displaced persons) and consequently bringing opportunities and challenges that can be viewed from different angles⁴.

All these dimensions of migration can have a significant influence on the economic, social, environmental, cultural and human development of migrants, their families, and communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. This influence can be positive or negative and bring opportunities or difficulties⁵. In the first instance, migration can make a positive contribution towards the per-

² <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>, <https://www.migrationdataportal.org>

³ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>

⁴ Migration can be considered from different perspectives: emigration, immigration, transfers, and integration, but also the rights and welfare of migrants, the mobility aspects of crises, migration governance, to name a few.

⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2006), *Migration and Development: Opportunities and Challenges for Policymakers*. Available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mrs_22.pdf.

sonal development of migrants and their families themselves (e.g. through better jobs, higher income, access to basic services such as education and healthcare, political participation, and intercultural exchange). In addition, migration also results in a transfer of, for example, knowledge and skills, financial resources (private money transfers, investments etc.), cultural aspects, etc., which can positively encourage the socio-economic development of the family and the wider community in the countries of origin. Migration can also encourage innovation and in this way also help countries of origin, for example, to adapt to the negative effects of climate change. Countries of transit and destination can also benefit from migration (through the economic activities of migrants, for example). At the same time, however, migration can also increase inequalities, create new ones, and hinder sustainable and inclusive development if mobility is not supported and guided with the right framework conditions⁶.

We have observed how migration can influence development, but the contrary is also true, and this relationship is, once more, not simply unequivocally positive or negative. Structural and underlying negative factors (such

as poor governance, chronic poverty, climate change) that threaten stability and sustainable development can force people to migrate or make migration impossible. A sustained and long-term approach to addressing the root causes of irregular and forced migration is therefore necessary, not based on the assumption that it will prevent such migration, but to ensure that migration can become the result of a conscious and positive choice, rather than being undertaken out of necessity. In the short and medium term, better development opportunities and possibilities can improve the financial and personal capacity of individuals, increasing their opportunities to choose migration. It is not a coincidence that the countries with the most significant migration figures (Mexico, Philippines, Morocco and Turkey, among others) are middle-income countries, and relatively poorer populations and communities generally appear to be less mobile.

Migration has many nuances and the potential links between migration and development are complex, multi-dimensional and non-linear. Moreover, migration not only depends on the underlying local socio-economic

⁶ For example, migrants who work under poor employment conditions in countries of transit or destination or who lack access to basic services, or whose fundamental rights are not respected are more likely to have their opportunities for development limited or impeded as a result of their migration.

and political context, but is also influenced by 'global phenomena'⁷, as the COVID-19 pandemic recently demonstrated. The pandemic had a global impact on migration and development in 2020. Travel restrictions and measures designed to contain the spread of the virus greatly affected and sometimes halted mobility of people. The impact of the pandemic on migrants and refugees is disproportionately large. Migration movements slowed, and those who did migrate sought refuge on more dangerous and risky pathways that increased their vulnerability. The restriction of mobility and the global downward economic spiral that followed led to job losses among migrants, which in turn resulted in a decrease in the volume of remittances by migrants⁸. At the same time, this crisis also revealed the indispensable role played by migrants as much-needed workers in certain key sectors (e.g. healthcare, home care) and in providing essential services (retailers and tradespeople, cleaning, food production, etc.), which placed them on the front line of exposure to the virus. With respect to post-COVID-19 economic recovery too, it is becoming important to further tap and enhance

the potential of migration and migrants for development.

Governance of and policy on migration are high on the international and European political agendas and are expressly linked to development. The Sustainable Development Goals include a specific target on facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration (Target 10.7) but also integrate migration broadly into the overall framework. Therefore, it becomes clear that achieving results for most of the 2030 Agenda goals is being affected and depends on how migration is taken into account⁹. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, both non-binding under international law, provide a framework for harmonising and guiding international cooperation on migration and refugees.

At European level, the goal of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum is to set out a European strategy for an overall approach to migration, which will encompass broad and balanced partnerships with third countries of origin, transit and destination.

⁷ The impact of climate change, demographic changes, conflict and insecurity, increasing inequality, lack of socio-economic prospects, discrimination and xenophobia, increasing urbanisation, etc.

⁸ [What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrants and their children? \(oecd.org\)](https://oecd.org/); [Impact of COVID-19 on Remittances \(knomad.org\)](https://knomad.org/)

⁹ The Overseas Development Institute has developed an interactive tool that illustrates the link between migration and the Sustainable Development Goals. This tool, and the underlying briefings that have also been compiled into a handbook, allow for a better understanding of the impact of migration and of future migration movements on the SDGs, and for consideration in policy and development of programmes of actions. See: [Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: an interactive tool | Overseas Development Institute \(ODI\)](https://www.odi.org/en/publications/migration-and-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-an-interactive-tool/).

These international and European developments and commitments underline the momentum for Belgian Development Cooperation to develop a strategy that identifies to which aspects of migration governance priority should be given within the Belgian

Development Cooperation and determine which migration goals should be incorporated in the identification of the development challenges that Belgian Development Cooperation intends to address in the intervention countries where it is active¹⁰.

VISION

Belgian Development Cooperation seeks to maximise and fully utilise the opportunities offered by migration and human mobility for the development of migrants and their communities. Belgian Development Cooperation also intends to contribute towards creating conditions for safe, orderly and regular migration¹¹ that is the result of a free, deliberate and considered choice in search of opportunities for development (or further progress). In this way, migration becomes both part of a development strategy and an outcome of development¹². Belgian Development Cooperation will always take migrants themselves, their rights and their dignity as a starting point.

This requires a two-pronged approach.

Targeted and specific actions relating to the policy domain of migration should ensure that, instead of being an obstacle, migration becomes a lever or catalyst for sustainable development.

A continuous and long-term approach to structural development challenges that threaten or prevent stability and development must ensure that people are not forced to migrate but can consciously and freely choose to do so. This



¹⁰ The Occupied Palestinian Territories are not a recognised country but are included for the sake of readability of this strategy paper when it refers to intervention countries where Belgian Development Cooperation is active. For a further description of intervention countries, see the glossary in Chapter VIII.

¹¹ Safe, orderly and regular migration: Movement of persons in keeping both with the laws and regulations governing exit from, entry and return to and stay in states and with states' international law obligations, in a manner in which the human dignity and well-being of migrants are upheld, their rights are respected, protected and fulfilled and the risks associated with the movement of people are acknowledged and mitigated. Source: <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>.

¹² The vision promoted by Belgian Development Cooperation is in line with the approach promoted by the IOM in that area. See: International Organization for Migration, IOM Institution Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development, 2020. Available at: [IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development - | IOM Online Bookstore](#).

approach must also be linked to a systematic and transversal integration of migration within the policies and programmes of other sectors where Belgian Development Cooperation is active, in order to promote coherence and complementarity of different policy objectives and to enable consideration of the potential implications of migration on development outcomes within other sectors.

Belgian Development Cooperation takes into account the criteria set by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for the qualification of activities and programmes as Official Development Assistance (ODA). This means that qualification as ODA also defines the domain within which Belgian Development Cooperation can act on migration and mobility¹³. International actions relating to migration that are implemented and financed by other departments may contribute towards the objectives of this strategy paper, and are reported as ODA if they meet the criteria.

While this strategy paper is primarily intended for actors in Belgian Development Cooperation, it also seeks to promote an overall approach to migration and contribute towards overarching priorities of Belgium's action on migration overseas. In doing so, however, Development Cooperation cannot be subordinated to the migration agenda in the narrow sense and made dependent on results in reducing irregular migration and return. Belgian Development Cooperation does not have the mandate to develop a comprehensive, integrated approach towards migration, but it does encourage active efforts to coordinate actions and coherence in migration-related policies with other Belgian federal and federated agencies and institutions concerned with migration ('whole-of-government approach').

¹³ The OECD DAC has faced an increase in complexity in recent years when it comes to reporting on programmes and activities linked to migration. This stems from a significant increase in the use of development cooperation funds to address migration challenges. For a number of specific areas (addressing root causes, tackling irregular migration, return and reintegration, conditionality of funding, and diaspora engagement), it is difficult to ascertain whether the activities have 'the economic development and welfare of developing countries' as their primary objective. Therefore, in late 2020, the OECD DAC established a temporary working group to develop specific criteria that will more clearly delineate which activities can be considered as ODA and which cannot. These criteria will, of course, continue to provide a framework for the approach of Belgian Development Cooperation in implementing this strategy paper.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

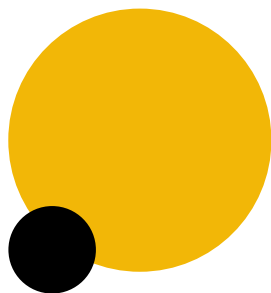
To materialize the vision of this strategy paper, Belgian Development Cooperation will work with its actors and other stakeholders on 4 strategic objectives and 18 priority result areas that all contribute towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. They are closely interconnected and contribute to the vision in a complementary way.

→ SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1

To support and promote the good governance of migration at all levels (international, national, regional, and local) and by different actors, in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation, with a view to achieving sustainable development

Key result areas:

- 1.1. Broad international and regional discussions on the governance of migration are supported and promoted, whilst international obligations and the sovereignty of states are respected.
- 1.2. The development, revision and/or implementation of migration and asylum policies at regional, national and local levels are supported, whilst the rights of migrants and asylum seekers and the autonomy of the intervention countries are respected.
- 1.3. The capacity of actors, both public and private (civil society, private sector and migrants and



diaspora themselves, whether or not organised in associations), at national and local levels, that are involved in managing migration is developed and strengthened.

If migration takes place under safe conditions, in a well-regulated manner and with respect for the rights of each individual, it will increase the positive impact on the inclusive socio-economic development of individuals and society, and reduce its financial and human 'costs'. This requires international, regional and bilateral cooperation first and foremost, but also broad partnerships with governments at all levels, local communities, civil society, the private sector, and migrants themselves.

International and regional cooperation and dialogue around the governance of migration is necessary, since cross-border migration movements and pathways make challenges and opportunities relating to migration and development into shared issues and therefore require a coordinated approach. Cooperation concerning migration routes will take priority in this. With its record of international engagement in various parts of the world, Belgium proves that it has historically been a staunch supporter of international cooperation and multilateralism, including with regard

to migration governance. In this area, Belgium promotes the development and implementation of planned and "well-managed" policies related to migration and asylum¹⁴. This is apparent from Belgium joining the IOM's Migration Governance Framework, Belgium's adoption of the 2030 Agenda, and its signing of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. In doing so, Belgium respects the normative framework relating to migration, the rights of migrants and the sovereignty of each state to determine who has access to its territory and who does not.

The development of migration and asylum policies and legislation, and appropriate institutional structures coupled with well-equipped operational systems and actors must be addressed at national and local levels in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation, while respecting the sovereignty of the countries themselves. National governments need to be assisted in improving policies where needed, e.g. with regard to better protection and support of migrants. If gaps exist, their

¹⁴ A 'well managed' migration policy refers here to the 'Migration Governance Framework' adopted by the member states of the IOM, including Belgium, in 2011: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/about-iom/migof_brochure_a4_en.pdf. Efforts to improve migration governance can also draw inspiration from the goals and guiding principles set out in the two major migration pacts adopted by the UN in 2018: the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.

development can be promoted, based on needs and challenges identified by governments. The development and use of modern, reliable, and appropriate data systems provide robust and comparable information on migration that informs policy-making. Information and communication technology intended for collecting civil status data provides migrants with access to basic documents that enable them to exercise their rights. However, strengthening the development impact must always be a priority.

Local governments play a crucial role in the application and implementation of policies because they are directly confronted with the real-world situations and conditions of migration on the ground. Broad integrated partnerships with civil society, the private sector, and migrants or diaspora themselves, enable us to take advantage of the specific competencies of these non-state actors in planning and organising development processes and service provision.

Through its various channels, Belgian Development Cooperation is already supporting specific countries in developing and implementing such 'well-managed' migration policies (such as capacity development regarding the formation of migra-

tion strategies, on 'good governance' particularly at the local level and on improving civil registry systems)¹⁵. Other Belgian state actors (CGRS, Immigration Office, etc.) have likewise provided support to countries where Belgian Development Cooperation is also active to strengthen their capacities relating to migration and asylum policy. Belgium is able to use that expertise to continue to support these countries in that sense.

→ SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2

To encourage a public debate in Belgium and in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation on the link between migration and development



¹⁵ Some examples: through multilateral cooperation (contributions to the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, strengthening of civil society systems in Mali and Senegal by the Belgian Development Agency, IOM interventions, etc.), and through governmental cooperation (Cooperation Programme with Morocco).

Key result areas:

- 2.1. In collaboration with government agencies, civil society, the private sector, the media, academia and migrants themselves, the necessary actions and tools are being developed to ensure a better understanding among the general public of the challenges surrounding migration and development.
- 2.2. The societal debate on migration and development is developed by making the link between migration and development an important core theme in actions concerning world citizenship education.
- 2.3. Research and collection of information and good practices on the link between migration and development is promoted, as is the undertaking of studies and surveys on the direct and indirect impact of migration on sustainable development.

The migration situation in Europe and Belgium in 2015 brought about a change in communication around migration. Migration was generally viewed by politicians and the media as a problem to be addressed or as an obstacle to the development and well-being of the populations of destination countries. The initial spread of the COVID-19 virus resulting from cross-border travel recently contributed towards this negative perception of migration and migrants (and this despite the fact that their employment in essential services during the pandemic highlighted their contribution to social and economic development). The lack of knowledge about the scale and realities of migration in destination countries leads to mistrust, fear and tension, which in turn influences policy and culminates in instrumentalization.¹⁶ This brings about negative consequences for both migrants and host communities in terms of social cohesion, support for diversity, economic growth and innovation, and so forth.

Government agencies, together with policymakers, development actors, the media and the public, can play a crucial and supportive role in collecting complete and accurate data, conducting studies and research on the link between migration and development that are consistent with international



¹⁶ See in particular the research work and publications of the Migration Policy Centre and of the Observatory of Public Attitudes to Migration (OPAM): <http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/opam/>

policy instruments and conventions, and disseminating as well as publishing their results. Transparency about the link between migration and development, based on evidence, should improve negative public perceptions, eliminate prejudice, and dispel misinformation, both in Belgium and in the countries where Belgian Development Cooperation is active.

Belgian Development Cooperation can contribute towards a better understanding of how migration and development are interrelated through a correct and informed discourse that highlights both the positive effects of safe, orderly and regular migration and the challenges and vulnerabilities of irregular migration and forced displacement. It will be necessary to collaborate with many different partners and actors (government agencies, civil society, the media, the private sector, academia, and migrants and diaspora) and use the most appropriate communication channels depending on the context and message (e.g. diplomatic action, political dialogue, public awareness campaigns, educational materials and tools for schools, short videos, films and documentaries and social networks), in order to provide the general public, and in particular young people, with meaningful information at the right time, in order to encourage a balanced narrative regarding migration.

→ SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3

To promote the protection and respect of human rights (including access to basic services and common goods), as well as the well-being and resilience of migrants (including internally displaced persons and stateless persons), refugees and host communities in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation

Key result areas:

- 3.1. The basic fundamental rights of migrants and refugees are protected and supported, regardless of the status of migrants and refugees and at all stages of their migration journey, with a particular focus on women, children, unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable persons.
- 3.2. Reception and access to basic services and facilities, as well as common goods, for host communities, migrants and refugees and their families is promoted and strengthened, regardless of the status of migrants and refugees and at all stages of their migration journey.
- 3.3. The self-reliance and resilience of migrants, refugees and host

communities are built, supported and strengthened in a balanced and inclusive manner, also and especially to cope with crisis situations and shocks, both natural and man-made.

- 3.4. The capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors at national and local levels is strengthened so that they can safeguard and secure the rights of migrants, refugees and host communities. These rights include the right to emergency assistance, basic protection, shelter, and access to basic services and facilities.
- 3.5. The capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors at national and local levels is strengthened to enable them to inform migrants and refugees of their rights and obligations regarding mobility, including opportunities for regular migration, and inform and protect them from the dangers and risks of irregular migration.
- 3.6. The capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors is strengthened to prevent, combat and eliminate human trafficking and smuggling in the context of international migration and to protect migrants or victims of trafficking and smuggling and to safeguard their rights.

Human rights cover a wide range of rights, from 'basic civil rights' such as the right to life and liberty, to a large number of cultural, political, social and economic rights, such as the right to education, (mental and physical) healthcare, decent work, social protection, and so forth. The protection of human rights forms an integral part of Belgian foreign policy and an absolute prerequisite and goal of development. Migrants and refugees are entitled to the same universal human rights and fundamental freedoms that must always be respected, protected and fulfilled. However, refugees are a separate group and are subject to a separate legislative framework. Refugees are entitled to a specific protection regime under international law. Regardless of any legal distinction between regular migrants, irregular migrants and refugees, it is important to remember that the human rights of every person, regardless of nationality or migration status, are protected. And this is the case throughout their migration journey.

However, migrants, and particularly women and children (including unaccompanied minors), are at increased risk of human rights violations (deprivation of liberty and/or of their property and resources, exposure to various forms of exploitation, impairment



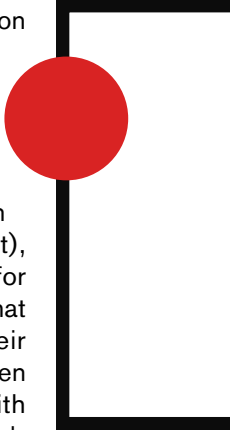
of physical and moral integrity, discrimination, racism and xenophobia, human trafficking, etc.). Respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants is nevertheless essential to allow them to contribute positively towards the development of the countries of origin, transit and destination.¹⁷

At the same time, attention must be paid to balancing the needs and requirements of migrants and refugees on the one hand and the host communities on the other, in order to generate a broad support base, to ensure the social inclusion and integration of migrants and refugees in host communities.

In its foreign policy, Belgium pays special attention to respect for and protection of human rights, including the human rights of migrants, refugees, and host communities. In the countries where it is active, Belgian Development Cooperation is able to provide specific expertise in emergency aid, assistance, protection of rights and access to basic services for host communities and migrants, particularly by organising a universal system of social protection (which also covers refugees)¹⁸. Strengthening the resilience of migrants additionally requires that they be given access to resources such as land, water, energy, and so

forth (known as commons). These are also necessary to enable them to exercise their fundamental rights and to personal development. Belgian Development Cooperation aims to improve the reception and protection of refugees in and around regions of protracted conflict. By providing prospective shelter in the region itself (e.g. through investment in education and employment), the possibilities increase for them to build a new life in that region or to return to their country of origin if and when the situation permits. With this approach, Belgian Development Cooperation aligns with the broader framework provided by the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).

Other Belgian state actors have built up focused expertise in preventing and combating human trafficking and smuggling in Belgium, basing their activities on a general approach. Through partnerships with Belgian Development Cooperation, this knowledge can be used for the benefit of countries that indicate a need. The existence of safe pathways for regular migration also offers an effective strat-



¹⁷However, fulfilment and protection of fundamental rights must not exist at the expense of host communities, which can lead to tensions and new conflicts.

¹⁸ In particular, non-state actors, the Belgian development agency Enabel, and multilateral and/or humanitarian organisations such as UNHCR.

egy in combating human trafficking. Moreover, migrants who have returned to their countries of origin can play an important role in informing and raising awareness in relation to the dangers and risks of irregular migration. In addition, efforts should be made to inform host communities on aspects of return in order to support the reintegration of returned migrants and make it more sustainable.

→ SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4

To harness and promote the potential of migration for sustainable development

Key result areas:

- 4.1. The systematic and transversal integration of migration into the policies, strategies, and programmes and interventions of Belgian Development Cooperation is strengthened and promoted.
- 4.2. National governments and local authorities in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation are supported in transversally integrating migration into the preparation, planning and implementation of policies in other public sectors (health, education, social protection, work, climate, and environment, etc.) that are closely linked to migration.
- 4.3. The formal framework and conditions under which the (temporary) mobility of students, academics and workers takes place are strengthened and supported.
- 4.4. The capacity of and cooperation with the diaspora and their networks and organisations are strengthened, both in Belgium



and in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation.

- 4.5. The simplification of remittances by migrants is encouraged, as is the reduction of transfer costs, in close cooperation with the private sector, both in international policy processes, in Belgium and in the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation.
- 4.6. The sustainable return and reintegration of migrants is more effectively defined, strengthened and supported so that it contributes towards the personal development, well-being and socio-economic inclusion of migrants, as well as that of the host communities that receive them.

Migration can drive development in countries of origin, transit and destination. It can play a key role in the personal, cultural and socio-economic development of migrants as well as of the family they left behind, the local community and the broader society that they form part of, while increasing the impact of development policies geared towards reducing poverty¹⁹. Moreover, safe migration also plays an important role as an adaptation strategy in the context of climate change.

In defining and implementing public policies and development strategies, it is important and relevant to integrate migration in its various facets transversally. Neither the political decision-makers of the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation nor the development actors themselves are currently applying it sufficiently. Sectoral public policies are often determined 'in isolation' and no consideration is given to the possible impact of one sectoral policy on another. This is true for migration, but the opposite is also true. The possible interactions are highly dependent on the context within a country and on the conditions in which the various programmes are implemented. Context determines how migration in its various facets influences and contributes towards development,²⁰ while conversely, public policies in other domains can affect different facets of migration, depending on how they are planned and implemented. There is no single (one-size-fits-all) solution to integrate migration transversally. On the one hand, Belgian Development Cooperation itself must become more effective at transversally integrating the various facets of migration in development strategies, policies and programmes. On the other hand, Belgian Development Cooperation must also support and encourage national

¹⁹ The OECD study (the project *Interrelations between Public Policies, Migration and Development*, 2017) covered Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Haiti, Morocco, and the Philippines.

²⁰ *Interrelations between Public Policies, Migration and Development* (IPPM), OCDE, 2017.

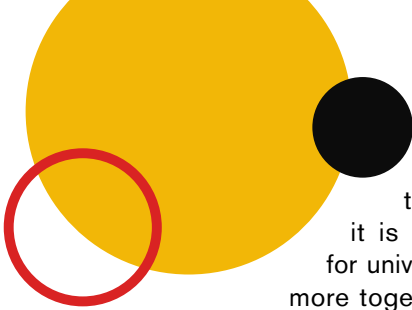
governments and local authorities in the countries where it is active to take into account the interrelationships that exist between the migration policy area and other relevant policy areas. The transversal integration of migration in the planning and implementation of policies concerning health, education, agriculture and food security, work and social protection, culture, environment and climate, etc. will not only promote policy coherence; taking into account migration as an asset but also as a potential threat to outcomes in other sectors will enhance the contribution of migration towards sustainable development.

In Africa, labour migration is largely intra-regional (80%) and is characterised mainly by migration of low-skilled workers. It is therefore very important for the African continent to strengthen the major 'South-South' corridors to neighbouring labour markets for migrants seeking jobs and better wages²¹. It is also important to consider the conditions under which migrant workers are recruited

and employed must also be improved (decent work, fair recruitment). African countries are also pushing to enable and promote legal migration channels between Africa and Europe (including for labour migration). This can contribute towards safe, orderly and regular migration with a mutual benefit for both continents. To maximise the leverage of this labour migration for development, Belgian Development Cooperation can benefit from the expertise offered by a number of (public or private) operational partners (ILO, IOM, EU, Enabel, NGOs, trade unions, private sector, etc.²²). To ensure the sustainability of the various pilot projects organised by Enabel, for example, on labour migration and circular migration, and to consolidate their positive results, the methods and approaches used (e.g. the Global Skills Partnerships) should be reflected in broader and wider actions (such as in the EU Talent Partnerships), with sufficient attention being paid to the possible perverse effects of such actions (e.g. a brain drain). The different actors of Belgian

²¹ ILO, https://www.ilo.org/africa/areas-of-work/labour-migration/WCMS_679832/lang--fr/index.htm; Important drivers for the continent are economic sectors such as agriculture, fishing, mining, construction, and services such as domestic work, healthcare, cleaning, restaurants and hotels, and retail. African migrants, asylum seekers and forcibly internally displaced persons often use the same migration channels. The increasing numbers of interregional corridors to the Middle East and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, as well as the more traditional routes to Europe and North America, are worth highlighting.

²² In this area, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has developed a specific strategy and expertise, particularly to help achieve SDG 8 (and its sub-goal 8.8). Working in cooperation with the IOM, the EU and ECOWAS, it has developed programmes to strengthen the legal framework and policies for smoother labour migration in Africa and to establish new mobility schemes between African countries and between Europe and Africa. The IOM has also set up several initiatives (for example, the MATCH project). Enabel has also launched two pilot projects in North Africa (funded by the EU), the PALIM and THAMM projects, which can serve as inspiration to support labour mobility between Africa and Europe or between African countries. Finally, other non-governmental organisations (NGOs, trade unions, consortia) have specialised in decent work for migrants and reinforced rights for migrant workers, with a particular focus on young people and women.



Development Cooperation (BIO, Enabel, Fedasil, universities, NGAs, etc.), together with other public and private actors, need to be mobilised and encouraged to build partnerships ('whole-of-society approach') in order to integrate migrants (in particular women, young people, and people with disabilities) more smoothly into the labour market and encourage them to contribute towards local development as fully-fledged economic actors. The federated entities play a crucial role in labour migration, particularly with regard to language education and recognition of qualifications. Belgium must also be able to rely on a flexible labour market, in order to integrate new arrivals.

With regard to student/academic migration, Belgium grants over 1,500 scholarships each year (mainly to nationals of African countries) through Belgian scientific and academic institutions (universities, the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, the Egmont Institute, etc.). This allows students and scientists/academics to train in Belgium, and help develop their country of origin with better skills when they return²³. These types of exchanges should be expanded and supported, including among African countries. To avoid

the brain drain, it is also important for universities to work more together. They also need to offer more joint programmes to upgrade local academic degrees or to actually encourage academic migration for the countries of origin.

Migrants, diaspora, and the networks or organisations that they may form to present a shared voice, play an important role in the development of both their country or region of origin and the country that welcomes them. Migrant remittances are three times as great as the amounts of ODA and have considerable importance primarily as a decisive factor in changing the living conditions of migrants and their families in their home country. Secondly, they can also drive or support local and national economic development in the countries of origin. To reinforce the positive implications of these changes, Belgian Development Cooperation, together with other government agencies and in cooperation with the private sector, will encourage greater transparency and an expansion of the means to send remittances. It will also encourage a reduction of transfer fees. By strengthening technical support for migrants, diaspora, and their organisations, the aim is to maximise the contributions they make to the financial, economic, human, political, cultural, and other develop-

²³ Since 2014, the Belgian Egmont Institute has also been providing training to foreign diplomats and executives.

ment of both their home countries and where they reside. Particular attention is being paid to promoting and creating their opportunities for investment and entrepreneurship.

Finally, it must be possible to offer support to migrants returning to their country of origin. This will enable them to reintegrate with dignity and on the long term their country of origin, as well as to actively contribute towards its development, in cooperation with local governmental and non-governmental actors. Belgian Development Cooperation already supports a number of international organisations that have launched initiatives in this area

(e.g. EU, IOM, UNCHR), and the Belgian development agency Enabel has also already integrated this element into some cooperation programmes. At the Belgian level, Fedasil in particular has expertise in providing guidance and support for voluntary return.



STRATEGIC APPROACH AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This section describes the means and instruments through which Belgian Development Cooperation will contribute towards the strategic objectives and results. The specific activities that the different actors and partners of Belgian Development Cooperation will develop to contribute towards these objectives will be elaborated on and included in action plans for every actor. These contributions will depend on their resources, expertise and added value.

For other Belgian governmental institutions and agencies, the private sector, citizens' initiatives, and organisations of diaspora and of migrants themselves, it will furthermore depend on how their mandate and their own priorities fit with this strategy paper. From a 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-society' approach, Belgian Development Cooperation encourages willingness and commitment to do this, while respecting their independence.

Providing technical expertise, education and training

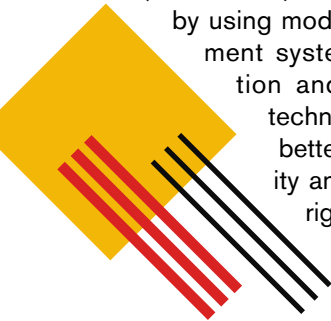
To increase the opportunities offered by migration for sustainable development, it is critical to strengthen the capacity of a wide variety of institutions, systems and actors within the intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation through technical support, education and training. This will also improve the sustainability and local ownership of the efforts made. Institutional capacity-building and policy support will contribute towards opportunities for safe, orderly and regular migration.

Investing in sustainable services

Building and strengthening a service delivery system that simultaneously addresses the needs of refugees and migrants for legal protection, reception and integration on the one hand (e.g. health, education, training, jobs and entrepreneurship) and host communities on the other, to promote inclusive growth, development and resilience.

Promoting research, technology, innovation, communications and information

Studies and research on the impact of the different dimensions of migration on sustainable development, complemented by good practices, support the effectiveness of Belgian Development Cooperation's policies and actions. This provides a basis for developing educational materials and communication campaigns that can be used to facilitate the general public's understanding of the link between migration and sustainable development. Specific research, for example in relation to the interaction between climate change and migration and forced displacement or on the importance and potential of remittances by migrants, will also be encouraged. By collecting reliable and comparable data on migration (movements) and civil status, and by using modern data management systems and information and communication technology, policies are better aligned with reality and the established rights of migrants are strengthened.



Diplomatic commitment and dialogue

Belgian Development Cooperation will contribute to the international and European debate on migration and development through multilateral cooperation, regional forums, and the network of Belgian embassies. It will highlight the positive effects and potential of migration for sustainable development and call for good governance of migration based on an approach that respects human rights. Belgian Development Cooperation will also urge other donors to coordinate and harmonise their actions and make them more coherent, as well as to share good practices and lessons learned in order to maximise impact. Our embassies in the intervention countries can also help to support and guide the achievement of the objectives and results of this strategy paper at the diplomatic level through political and policy dialogue.

Ensuring monitoring and evaluation and capitalising on lessons learned

Belgian Development Cooperation will monitor the implementation of this strategy paper on a regular basis. This will be in the form of close collaboration and consultation with the various partners and actors who contribute towards the goals and outcomes of this strategy paper. Monitoring will be based on the action plans in which the actors involved state exactly what actions they are taking and how, and how they are contributing towards the

strategy by doing so. This monitoring aims to provide a general overview of the different actions undertaken by the actors involved, the results achieved and lessons learned from these actions, as well as the challenges and opportunities for the future. It should lead to conclusions about the relevance of the strategy paper in relation to global or local trends and, if appropriate, make recommendations to adapt or revise the objectives and results.

The human rights approach, gender equality, sustainability, cooperation with local governments and partners, and the 'whole-of-government' approach will serve as the underlying principles for the objectives, outcomes, and available tools. Development programmes and activities should support intervention countries to create conditions in which migrants and refugees can exercise their rights. For all objectives, the starting point must be gender-specific needs, with adequate attention to the specific challenges faced by migrant women and girls. A firm and genuine commitment from the authorities themselves must be complemented by inclusive and coordinated cooperation with local governments and private partners to ensure long-term results from those programmes and activities. Partnering between public and private actors and organisations makes it possible to build on their expertise and experience. This collaboration focusses on their role and on strengthening the

networks and systems they have built to address the challenges of migration for long-term development. Finally, both national and local governments from different sectors will need to work together to increase and reinforce the impact of their efforts and respond to the local context and realities.

Also from the Belgian perspective, consultation and coordination with different levels of government and non-state actors directly involved in certain aspects of migration or indirectly linked to it in other policy domains will promote the implementation of this strategy paper and ensure the coherence of Belgian overseas action on migration and development (for example, through regular discussions at the COORAM (Asylum and Migration Coordination meetings)). The Inter-ministerial Conference on Migration and Integration will also help to ensure that Federal Government policies are better aligned with those of the sub-states and are more coherent.



GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Within the framework of broader Belgian foreign policy and international action, Belgian Development Cooperation focuses on the most fragile and least developed countries in the Sahel region, the Great Lakes region and North Africa. This important concentration is reflected in the various partnerships of Belgian Development Cooperation: 12 of the 14 partner countries²⁴ of governmental cooperation are among the least developed countries in Africa, many of which have a fragile context; 22 of the 31 intervention countries of non-governmental cooperation are also among the least developed countries, 20 of which are in Africa²⁵; the humanitarian partnerships also focus on the Sahel, the Great Lakes region, the Syrian region, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The geographical focus of this strategy paper will be on all countries where Belgian Development Cooperation is active through these various partnerships, with a particular focus on the

Sahel and West Africa, the Great Lakes region, North Africa, and the Middle East. However, while these countries receive ODA through Belgian Development Cooperation, based on their level of human development and irrespective of the origin of migratory movements, many countries where Belgium is already active face challenges and opportunities related to migration (both international and internal).

Partner countries of governmental cooperation will receive more attention with regard to state building²⁶.

²⁴ Benin - Burkina Faso - Burundi - (Dem. Rep.) Congo - Guinea - Mali - Morocco - Mozambique - Niger - Uganda - Rwanda - Senegal - Tanzania - Occupied Palestinian Territories.

²⁵ List of non-governmental cooperation partner countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Dem. Rep. Congo, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Uganda, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, South Africa, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cuba, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Vietnam, Zimbabwe.

²⁶ State building is broadly defined here according to the example given by the OECD: "an endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state driven by state-society relations." Source: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264097049-5-fr.pdf?expires=1588243232&id=id&accname=quest&checksum=C-785496C2A7756E46DA73BFA5C09B3AB>

WHO WILL DO WHAT?

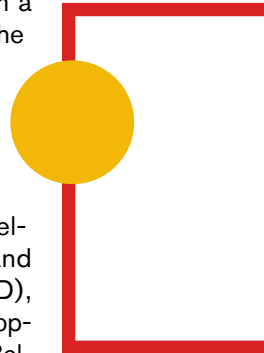
To achieve the objectives and results of this strategy paper, Belgian Development Cooperation relies primarily on its actors²⁷ and on the Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid within Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation.

In addition, a number of other federal and federated public institutions and agencies²⁸ and non-state actors²⁹ are active in relation to migration and/or sustainable development at international, regional, national or local levels. They each have their own expertise and added value, and some also have their own priorities and a vision within their mandate. In some cases, their activities focus on very specific aspects related to migration and/or development such as return, reintegration and resettlement, migration awareness, scientific research, labour migration, etc. In other cases, they can contribute positively towards the objectives and outcomes

of this paper through their own policies and activities.

Finally, migrants and host communities themselves play a role, not only as beneficiaries, but also as actors. Engaging with them and actively involving them in the various instruments to be deployed will make the most of their potential and make them a driving force to achieve the goals and results of this paper.

The table below summarises where the Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD), Belgian Development Cooperation actors and other Belgian federal departments or institutions are expected to make contributions towards the specific goals and outcomes.



²⁷ Actors of Belgian Development Cooperation refers to those actors whose activities are financed in whole or in part by Belgian Development Cooperation.

²⁸ At the federal level, the actors concerned are the FPS Interior, the Immigration Office, the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS), Fedasil, the Federal Migration Centre Myria, the Equal Opportunities Unit within the FPS Justice, the Federal Police, and the Ministry of Defence; at the federated level, the actors are the communities and the regions, and at the local level, the city authorities and municipalities.

²⁹ Other non-state actors are understood to mean the non-governmental actors (NGOs, trade unions, academic institutions, diaspora organisations, refugee and migrant organisations, etc.) and the private sector (companies, banks, etc.).

Approaches	Specific goals (SGs)			
	SG1: To promote and improve migration governance	SG2: To promote understanding of the relationship between migration and development	SG3: Protection and respect of human rights, well-being and resilience	SG4: To harness and promote the potential of migration for development
Technical expertise, education and training	DGD, Enabel	DGD, Enabel	DGD, Enabel	DGD, Enabel
Sustainable services			Enabel	Enabel
Research, technology, innovation, communications and information		DGD	DGD	DGD
Diplomatic engagement and dialogue	Diplomatic posts/DGD	Diplomatic posts/DGD	Diplomatic posts/DGD	Diplomatic posts/DGD
Monitoring, evaluation and capitalisation	DGD, Enabel	DGD, Enabel	DGD, Enabel	DGD, Enabel

GLOSSARY

Actors of Belgian development policy: the operational actors whose development cooperation interventions are financed in whole or in part by the budget of Belgian Development Cooperation.

Belgian Development Cooperation: the federal policy and actions on development cooperation through governmental, multilateral and non-governmental channels and through the other instruments that the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) deems or has deemed as official development assistance (see definition in article 2, 1° of the Law of 19 March 2013 on Belgian Development Cooperation).

Broad approach: the use of this term in the strategy paper builds on the understanding of the same term in the EU context, namely: 'combining in a coherent and consistent way policies and instruments ranging from diplomacy, security and defence to finance, trade, development and human rights, as well as justice and migration' [...].

Forced displacement: the movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters³⁰.

Internally displaced persons: Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border³¹.

Intervention countries of Belgian Development Cooperation: the developing countries and/or territories where the actions of Belgian Development Cooperation are implemented. Belgium does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a state, but they are included here in the strategy paper under the term 'intervention

³⁰ International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019), International Migration Law N°34, *Glossary on Migration*. Available at: [https://Key Migration Terms | International Organization for Migration \(iom.int\)](https://Key Migration Terms | International Organization for Migration (iom.int))

³¹ International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019), International Migration Law N°34, *Glossary on Migration*. Available at: [https://Key Migration Terms | International Organization for Migration \(iom.int\)](https://Key Migration Terms | International Organization for Migration (iom.int))

countries of Belgian Development Cooperation' for ease of reading.

Irregular migration: is defined by the International Organization for Migration as movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements [...] of the state of origin, transit or destination. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration; the definition varies depending on the perspective from which migration is viewed.

Human mobility: the capability of an individual to decide to move, with migration (or moving itself) as an expression of that mobility; more or fewer opportunities to move indicate more or less freedom and fewer choices for the individual to move³².

Migration: in this strategy paper, this term includes both internal and international migration and refers to: the forced or voluntary movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either within a state (internal) or across an international border to another country of which they are not nationals, with the intention of establishing a new temporary or permanent residence there³³.

Migrant: there is no universally accepted definition of the term 'migrant' at the international level. The definition used here is the one developed by the IOM for its own purposes. Rather, it is a generic term, "reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally-defined, such as illegal migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students".

International migrant: any person who is outside a state of citizenship or nationality or, in the case of a stateless person, who is outside his/her state of birth or habitual residence. The term includes migrants who intend to move permanently or temporarily, as well as those who move on a regular or documented basis and irregular migrants.

³² de Haas, H. and Rodriguez, F. (2010), *Mobility and Human Development*, *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, Vol. 11, N°2, May 2010. Available at: [https://de Haas and Rodriguez 2010 Mobility and Human Development - Introduction.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](https://de Haas and Rodriguez 2010 Mobility and Human Development - Introduction.pdf (wordpress.com)).

³³ International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019), *International Migration Law N°34, Glossary on Migration*. Available at: [https://Key Migration Terms | International Organization for Migration \(iom.int\)](https://Key Migration Terms | International Organization for Migration (iom.int)).