

CURRENT AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES 2009-2010

Organization of American States (OAS)

A. INTRODUCTION

Migration has been a structural component of the history of the Americas and has been part of the agenda of the Organization of American States (OAS) for many decades. Since the 1990s, the increase and complexity of the phenomenon in the region has led OAS member States to bring this topic to the forefront of their agenda.

During the thirty-fifth OAS General Assembly meeting held in Fort Lauderdale, United States of America, from 5 to 7 June 2005, OAS member States adopted the “Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of Migrants’ Human Rights, including migrant workers and their families” within the Committee on Judicial and Political Affairs of the OAS Permanent Council.

The Permanent Council called for a special session to discuss migratory flows and their impact on OAS member States for May 2007. To that end, the Council created the Special Committee on Migration Issues in the same year.

In order to implement the “Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of Migrants’ Human Rights, including migrant workers and their families” and the Special Committee on Migration Issues’ mandates, the Secretariat General created the Migration and Development Program (MiDE) within the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development in 2008.

The mission of MiDE is to contribute to the formulation of public policies that promote safe, orderly and humane migration processes, emphasizing the protection of human rights of all migrants. The objectives of MiDE are:

1. Develop information systems on migration issues that provide timely and up-to-date information;
2. Build human and institutional capacities of OAS member States in migration management;
3. Enhance dialogue among OAS member States on migration issues.

B. CURRENT AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

1. Information systems

a. Continuous Labour Migration Reporting System for the Americas (SICREMI)

The Continuous Labour Migration Reporting System for the Americas (SICREMI) contains up-to-date information on migration for the Americas. It is based on the model of the

Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI) which was created by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The objectives of SICREMI are to:

1. Gather information on international migration in the region from existing national sources, such as censuses, surveys and administrative records and process and disseminate the information through an annual report;
2. Provide a forum for dialogue among participating countries on generating and processing migration data and ways to improve these activities;
3. Promote human and institutional capacity-building of national organizations to improve migration data production and processing.

Following the SOPEMI methodology, the data gathering process relies on a network of national correspondents that work closely with representatives of the organizations that produce data on migration in their country. Often, these organizations include ministries of interior, the national statistics institutes, the foreign affair ministries and ministries of labour. The Migration and Development Program harbours the technical secretariat of the system, in charge of coordinating the network of the correspondents who will be responsible for producing national reports. These reports will be analyzed and used as the basis for annual regional reports.

The proposed process to produce regional reports consists of the following steps. First, a standard data request is sent to SICREMI correspondents for the preparation of a country's annual report. Second, SICREMI correspondents gather the information and prepare a country report on migration, which is sent to the technical secretariat of the system at the OAS. Third, the technical secretariat at the OAS prepares an annual report on the region's main migratory trends. Periodically, the methodology will be reviewed and adjusted to the region's needs and characteristics, with input from correspondents and national organizations.

b. Mapping temporary worker programmes

In order to map temporary worker programmes, information about existing temporary work programmes in which migrant workers from Latin America and the Caribbean participate will be compiled. The information will be mapped, providing a geographic perspective of major tendencies of migrant workers' movement. The information collected and displayed will include (a) a description of the terms and characteristics of the programmes and processes for recruitment (bilateral agreements or through independent contractors), and (b) socio-demographic characteristics of temporary workers, such as gender, age, education, country of origin, etc.

c. Legal database of migration law frameworks and public policies in the Americas

The project will compile national and international law and public policies regarding migration in OAS member States.

2. Human and institutional capacity-building initiatives

a. Improving access to local labour markets for youth at risk of emigrating

The project's objective is to generate alternatives to emigration through the promotion of entrepreneurship among low-income young people in Central America so that they can create their own businesses using local resources. The project is implemented by the Young American Business Trust in coordination with MiDE.

b. Developing models of best practice for education of migrant youth and children

The project seeks to document, systematize and disseminate the lessons learned from policies, programmes and practices aimed at providing quality educational experiences for migrant children and youth. This programme is executed by the OAS Department of Education and Culture in coordination with MiDE.

c. Developing models of best practice to assist migrant women who are victims of violence in the border region of the United States of America and Mexico

The project aims at identifying programmes, mechanisms and initiatives that support migrant women who are victims of violence in the border region of San Diego, United States, and Tijuana, Mexico, to compare and analyze their effectiveness, and to identify models of best practices. These practices will be integrated into a proposed model of assistance to migrant women who are victims of violence. The project intends to discuss and disseminate the proposed model and to help implement it.

d. Training migration agencies in Central America on detecting human trafficking

The goal of this project is to train migration agencies in selected Central American countries to identify, protect and assist victims of human trafficking. This project is implemented by the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security of the OAS in coordination with MiDE in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

3. Enhancing dialogue among OAS member States on migration issues

Forums and seminars for OAS member States will be held to enhance their knowledge about migration. It is also intended to organize workshops on diverse labour migration issues and topics related to consular protection of migrants.