

Abu Dhabi Dialogue

Submission to the International Migration Review Forum

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Background to the Abu Dhabi Dialogue

About the Abu Dhabi Dialogue

The Abu Dhabi Dialogue was established in 2008 as a means of building trust and increasing

The migration of temporary workers to the GCC also has a beneficial impact on the socio-economic development of the countries of origin. According to World Bank comprehensive figures (2020), approximately \$118 billion was remitted from GCC countries, representing over one sixth of worldwide remittances. Remittances by migrant workers in Gulf markets consequently represent a significant source of foreign earnings, ranging from 3%-31% of the GDP of sending countries in Asia. Moreover, the workers return home with enhanced social capital, including skills and knowledge, networks and entrepreneurial ideas.

Three Pillars of Effective Governance

Three pillars of effective governance guide the identification of the thematic priorities and the design of programmes that are initiated by the Abu Dhabi Dialogue:

Ensuring the protection of migrant workers, empowering migrant workers to fulfil their goals and aspirations and affording migrant workers the opportunity to benefit from the outcomes of temporary labour migration;

Responding to the changing needs of both businesses and workers, with particular attention to the requirements of women migrant workers;

Supporting labour market institutions in the enhancement of the efficacy of their labour migration policies, including those relating to fair recruitment, skills development and recognition, the provision of information and orientation, and access to justice

These principles are at the heart of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue's commitment to facilitating safe, orderly and regular temporary labour migration.

Meetings of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue

Chairmanship of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue rotates between sending and receiving Member States, typically on a biennial basis. To date, Kuwait, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and the UAE have Chaired the ADD, with Ministerial Consultations held as follows:

First Ministerial Consultation, Abu Dhabi, 2008

Second Ministerial Consultation, Manila, 2012

Third Ministerial Consultation, Kuwait City, 2014

Fourth Ministerial Consultation, Colombo, 2017

Fifth Ministerial Consultation, Dubai, 2019

Sixth Ministerial Consultation, Dubai, 2021

The Chair-in-Office is assisted by the Troika and a representative group of Member States (one country of origin and one country

provide leadership to, and oversight over, the process between Ministerial Consultations. The Advisory Group currently consists of Pakistan, the UAE and Sri Lanka (the Troika) alongside the Philippines and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Meetings of Senior Officials and various workshops and discussions are held between Ministerial Consultations.

Addressing mutual recognition and certification of skills

Mutual recognition and certification of skills has long been identified as a critical factor in promoting the development outcomes of labour mobility in labour sending countries, as well as increasing productivity in labour receiving countries. Barriers to recognition and certification, including in-work certification, often stem from a failure to align and harmonise incentives among all stakeholders. The ADD has addressed these issues through numerous programmes, including the development of cooperation frameworks involving a wide range of relevant actors.

Providing information and orientation programming

The ADD has played a critical role in developing an innovative approach to information and orientation programming for migrant workers. The ADD's CIOP programme, which has been developed in coordination with IOM and the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, approaches the issue from a holistic perspective, aligning information provision at the pre-employment, pre-departure and post-arrival stage along individual migration corridors. To date, corridors addressed by the programme include Bangladesh >> Saudi Arabia; Philippines >> UAE; and Sri Lanka >> UAE.

Enhancing the role of technology in the governance of migration

Technology plays an increasingly important role in the governance of labour migration, with applications relating to recruitment, information flow and data cooperation, and government oversight over the migration cycle. Challenges faced by Member States in implementing effective technological solutions include issues relating to data sovereignty, hosting and security, as well as burden sharing on costs and fees. The ADD has also recently looked at how technology can be effectively used in order to lower barriers for migrant workers to access justice and dispute resolution mechanisms. The ADD has frequently addressed these issues, and allowed Member States to explore and discuss potential solutions.

Improving standards for domestic workers

Labour migration corridors in the Asia-Gulf region are notable for the opportunities afforded to labour migrants working in domestic positions. To

played a key role in highlighting the need for deeper understanding on the benefits and

improving access to justice for temporary contractual workers; 2) facilitating and enhancing skills mobility between and among countries of origin and destination in response to changing employment landscapes; 3) addressing COVID-19 challenges; 4) integrating gender into employment promotion policies; 5) fostering international, intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation on migration governance. These priorities will form the basis for cooperation among ADD Member States through the next two-year cycle.

Conclusions

In meeting Objective 23 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Member States will continue to rely on state-led and voluntary fora like the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. Regional Consultative Processes play a critical role in the global migration architecture, particularly in helping to establish trust between Member States, a necessary pre-condition for stronger international cooperation and the development of global partnerships. Their thematic priorities are diverse, but their functions often include:

- a) Acting as a space for the identification of financial and technical assistance and aligning that assistance with national priorities, policies, action plans and strategies
- b) Enabling international and regional cooperation through the development of cooperation frameworks, innovative partnerships and the involvement of relevant stakeholders, while upholding national ownership and shared responsibility
- c) Ensuring the involvement of local authorities in the identification of needs and opportunities for international cooperation, to maximise the effectiveness and impact of international development cooperation
- d) Assisting States, as well as international financial institutions, the private sector and international organisations in mobilising technical, financial and human resources to strengthen their capacities to realise their commitments under the Global Compact
- e) Convening bilateral, regional or multilateral, mutually beneficial, tailored and transparent partnerships that address the challenges and opportunities presented by international migration

As underlined by the ADD's thematic and research priorities, the role of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue to date has principally been focused on points b), d) and e) of the above. However, as highlighted in the introduction of the 2014 (a) and 2015 (a) Additions, the role of the ADD is to