



**ACP** OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION  
OBSERVATOIRE ACP SUR LES MIGRATIONS  
OBSERVATÓRIO ACP DAS MIGRAÇÕES

# ACROSS ARTIFICIAL BORDERS:

## *An assessment of labour migration in the ECOWAS region*

Mariama Awumbila, Yaw Benneh,  
Joseph Kofi Teye and George Atiim



Road sign on migration procedures in Aplahoué, Benin, 2013  
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## Research Report

ACPOBS/2014/PUB05

2014



An Initiative of the ACP Secretariat,  
Funded by the European Union,

Implemented by IOM and with the Financial Support of Switzerland,  
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Developing Capacities in  
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## **Abstract**

This study aims to improve the evidence base for programmes and policies seeking to facilitate labour mobility for development within the ECOWAS region. The study is based on secondary data collected from available administrative data sources, surveys and censuses in all 15 ECOWAS countries and is complemented by interviews with key informants, such as policymakers, immigration officials and statistical offices. The study identified data sources and compared existing data on labour migration, as well as analysed the structure of labour markets and labour migration. It also examined obstacles faced in the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment in each ECOWAS country. The study highlights the absence of comprehensive, reliable and accurate data on migration and labour markets as a major obstacle to the facilitation of labour mobility. In all ECOWAS countries, there were no functional existing labour market information systems. Although there has been gradual implementation of the Free Movement Protocol in ECOWAS countries at the national level, several obstacles remain in this process. Neither the second nor the third phases of implementation of the Protocol have led to free rights of residence or establishment in Member States, largely as a result of concerns about unauthorized migration. The study calls for building the capacity of national institutions charged with migration and labour mobility data collection and the harmonization of migration and labour market related concepts and definitions. It also advocates for conducting periodic labour market and migration surveys to ascertain labour needs and supply. There is also the need to prioritize the harmonization of travel documents and migration policies in the region.



## **Acknowledgements**

The study, which was commissioned by the ACP Observatory on Migration, was undertaken by the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS), University of Ghana, which was selected through a call for tenders to conduct the research. CMS would like to express its gratitude to all institutions and individuals who made this report possible. In particular we would like to thank the ACP Observatory on Migration, particularly Susanne Melde and Livia Manente, who were our contact persons, for the opportunity given us to undertake the research. We would like to acknowledge the support of the International Organization on Migration (IOM) for facilitating the study. CMS is also grateful to the Migration Policy Centre of the European Policy Institute, Florence for providing scientific and technical coordination for the research project. Our special thanks to Dr Thibaut Jaulin of the Migration Policy Centre for his coordination of the entire project, which involved navigating through Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone countries, and for providing useful comments on some of the country reports and an earlier version of this report. We would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their useful feedback on earlier drafts. We are grateful to officials of the various State organizations, especially the national statistical offices and immigration authorities in the various countries, for providing useful data and granting interviews to the country research teams. We are greatly indebted to our country researchers in each of the 15 ECOWAS countries, whose input provided the basis for this report and to the CMS support staff for various forms of administrative and secretarial support.

The contents of this publication and any errors of commission or omission that may be contained in this report, however, remain the sole responsibility of the authors and do not in any way reflect the views of any of the partners stated above.





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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
ANPE	Agence nationale de promotion de l'emploi (National Employment Promotion Agency)
BIN	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EUI	European University Institute
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
ICT	Information and communication technologies
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LMIS	Labour market information system
LFS	Labour force survey
LSS	Living standards survey
MDA	Ministries, departments and agencies
MPC	Migration Policy Centre
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NEP	National Employment Policy
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



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## **Executive summary**

Migration and mobility issues have dominated the global discourse in recent years. Governments and development agencies are increasingly recognizing the potential of migration in contributing to socioeconomic development and improving the livelihoods of migrants and their families. In line with this, many governments are striving to effectively integrate human mobility into their national and regional development plans and poverty reduction strategies. Attention has often been placed on South–North migration in West Africa. However, contemporary mobility patterns indicate that only a small share of West African migrants actually moves to the global North and that intra and intercountry movements within the region are and continue to be a central feature of peoples’ livelihood strategies. Much of these movements across diverse political, economic and ecological settings remain a major source of livelihood to families and communities in West Africa.

Yet little or no reliable data are available on these major labour migration patterns, nor on their linkages with development priorities. As the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) governments seek to harness the benefits of migration, there is the need for evidence-based data for policy formulation on labour migration within the region. The lack of adequate data and of concrete and reliable evidence on the inter-relationships between South–South migration and development limits the global understanding of migration opportunities and impedes efforts to address challenges faced by ECOWAS countries. This continues to represent a major obstacle to designing evidence-based policies.

This report is the outcome of regional studies funded by the ACP Observatory on Migration on the facilitation of intraregional labour migration in the ECOWAS region, and constitutes part of the efforts for improving the policy framework on intraregional migration and development in the region.

### **Key findings:**

#### ***Labour migration flows and statistics***

- There is a paucity of reliable, up-to-date and accurate data on migration in all ECOWAS countries. This is partly due to lack of harmonization of definitions, a variety of different migration contexts and a multiplicity of institutions in charge of migration data collection systems, all of which work with different interests and priorities.

- Labour migration between countries in the ECOWAS region has been and still is the dominant form of migration flows.
- Although the direction of flows has been changing over time in response to a variety of factors, in general, intraregional labour migration has been dominated by a North–South movement from countries of Sahel West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) to the mineral-rich and plantation-rich coastal countries, notably Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and the Gambia. More recently, conflict situations have made Liberia, Sierra Leone, and to some extent Côte d’Ivoire, also migrant source countries.
- Although today almost all West African countries are both migrant sending areas and immigration destinations, Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea and the Gambia are the popular destination countries, with Côte d’Ivoire having the highest number of nationals of other ECOWAS member countries in absolute terms.
- The destinations of labour migrants from ECOWAS have mainly been countries that share common political, historical and cultural ties.
- Recent political and economic developments, as well as processes of globalization and urbanization within the region are changing the configurations of West Africa’s intraregional mobility dynamics.
- The majority of West African migrants in the region are not very highly educated and tend to work in the informal sector as traders, artisans, and farmers.

### ***Labour markets and mobility***

- There are gaps between labour demand and supply, with supply outstripping demand in the region. Most labour migrants are absorbed into the informal sector of the economies of most ECOWAS countries, despite the vulnerabilities in the sector.
- Institutional frameworks on labour migration and labour markets in West Africa are complex, with a wide range of government departments, agencies and private recruitment institutions involved. There is no formal framework that guides the sharing of labour market information derived from the myriad sources that range from national statistical institutions to individual private employment organizations.
- Although many of the countries recognize the need for labour market information systems, all countries in this study did not have functional



labour market information in place and where some form of labour market information systems (LMIS) exists, it is not operational.

- The country studies also highlight the fact that, although in principle many Member States of ECOWAS have ratified the Protocol on Free Movement of People, Right of Residence and Establishment, in practice there are still restrictive policies/initiatives by Member States to protect certain sectors of their economies for their nationals.

### ***Legal and policy framework***

- The Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, along with the supplementary protocols, testifies to the expressed determination of Member States of ECOWAS to place the free intraregional movement of persons at the heart of the regional integration process.
- However, due to concerns about unauthorized migration, neither the second nor the third phases of implementation of the Protocol have led to free rights of residence or establishment in Member States.
- There are few deliberate policies or programmes at the national level geared towards meeting the objectives of the ECOWAS Common Approach to Migration. In all countries, measures such as the ECOWAS passport, abolition of visas and residence permits have preceded the adoption of the Common Approach.
- Although ECOWAS migrants and nationals are expected to have equal opportunities, many countries have provisions in their labour laws and regulations that preserve public sector jobs and other sectors for their nationals.

### ***Key gaps and challenges to intraregional labour mobility***

#### *Challenges with data collection systems*

In many ECOWAS countries, data are often of poor quality, outdated and not disaggregated. Comparability of migration data is hindered by lack of harmonized definitions, particularly with reference to the duration required to be abroad to be considered migrants. This hinders meaningful analysis.

#### *Lack of comprehensive dataset on labour markets and absence of LMIS*

Almost all countries lack comprehensive labour force data and statistics on labour migration. Closely related is the absence of LMISs in countries

participating in this study. All 15 countries covered in this study had no functional LMIS and only three countries – namely Senegal, Ghana and the Gambia – have made some efforts towards the establishment of LMIS. Thus, governments are missing out the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the structure of their labour markets for policy decisions and formulation.

#### *Absence of national labour policies*

The development and synchronization of national labour policies to guide labour markets is important and necessary to give direction to employment and labour issues in the West African region. Most countries have employment policies or some regulations governing employment issues, the challenge is that these national policies, laws on trade and immigration, for instance, do not allow ECOWAS nationals equal opportunities for employment in all sectors.

#### *Lack of harmonization of national laws and policies with ECOWAS protocols on migration*

There is little harmonization of national laws and regulations relating to migration and labour markets with ECOWAS protocols to facilitate intraregional migration.

#### *Weak institutional and coordinating mechanisms*

In the absence of LMIS, some labour market information is collected independently of other stakeholders and is not shared among relevant stakeholders. There is no coordinated strategy for data collection and dissemination and for engaging the different institutions that are key to the success or otherwise of LMIS.

#### *Tensions created by the dominance of migrants in national economies*

Free movement of people within the region raises tensions in States where migrants dominate the trade and labour sectors of economies. This creates anti-migrant sentiments that render States reluctant to implement the protocols.

### **Policy recommendations**

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are made to facilitate intraregional labour mobility in the region.

### *Enhance the capacity of institutions charged with migration data collection*

Governments of various ECOWAS member countries must strengthen the capacity of national statistical institution/bureaus, immigration departments and labour institutions at local, district and regional levels, and migration research and training institutions and other institutions charged with migration data collection for informed decision making.

### *Harmonize migration definitions and methodologies to reflect ECOWAS realities*

Lack of harmonized definitions for terms used in migration data collection makes comparing migration statistics among member countries very difficult. The adoption of common migration data collection methods –reflecting the realities and experiences of West Africa with regards to specific movements such as seasonal, pastoral and cross border movements and internal migration – by ECOWAS national statistical offices, is urgently required.

### *Develop mechanisms for exchange of information*

Mechanisms for exchange of information should be evolved to enhance data sharing among various State institutions, civil society groups and training institutions.

### *Develop a comprehensive dataset on Labour Markets and a framework for LMIS*

Towards this goal, ECOWAS governments must:

- Harmonize all existing labour market and migration data sources, labour concepts and definitions at the national level, to allow for easy analysis of labour migration in the region.
- Conduct periodic labour market and migration surveys to ascertain labour needs and supply to ensure regular updates of migration and labour market information at national levels.
- Develop and implement a framework for LMIS.

### *Strengthen coordination among users of labour market information*

Promote effective collaboration among ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and other important stakeholders, such as the private sector. Establish mechanisms for the exchange and sharing of labour market and migration information among MDAs, civil society groups as well as research and training institutions.

### *Develop national migration policies*

ECOWAS States must support the development of national migration policies and ensure the integration of labour migration and migration issues in general into national development planning agendas and regional frameworks to harness labour migration potentials.

### *Harness the potential of internal labour migration for development*

Although internal migration is almost four times greater than international migration, little focus is given by ECOWAS to these movements of people. Given its magnitude and importance to livelihoods and poverty reduction, there is a need for ECOWAS to focus not only on intraregional migration but internal migration as well.

### *Promote broader social, political and economic policies*

National governments must promote broader social, political and economic policies aimed at transforming their economies and creating opportunities for sustained job creation for young people in their countries.

### *With regard to legal and institutional mechanisms:*

- Promote periodic studies on intraregional migration and the implementation of ECOWAS protocols, including an examination of the practical challenges in the implementation of the protocols.
- Establish structures to address migration issues and, in particular, mechanisms for the registration and settlement of complaints of harassment and abuses of human rights of Community citizens.
- Prioritize the harmonization of travel documents and migration policies in the region.
- Promote the adoption of legislative, regulatory and practical measures at the national level to implement the strategic priorities and action plans of the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration.
- Build capacity of officials, including customs and immigration officers, police and security, to deal with and manage the movement of persons and goods. Institutionalize the training of officials, exchange of information and networks to replace ongoing ad hoc arrangements.

## Résumé analytique

Les questions de migration et de mobilité ont occupé une place prépondérante dans le discours mondial ces dernières années. Les gouvernements et les agences de développement reconnaissent de plus en plus le potentiel qu'a la migration de contribuer au développement socioéconomique et à l'amélioration des moyens de subsistance des migrants et de leurs familles. Fort de ce qui précède, de nombreux gouvernements s'efforcent d'intégrer efficacement la mobilité humaine dans leurs plans nationaux et régionaux de développement et leurs stratégies de réduction de la pauvreté. L'accent a trop souvent été mis sur la migration Sud-Nord en Afrique de l'Ouest. Toutefois, les flux contemporains de mobilité indiquent que seule une petite frange des migrants d'Afrique de l'Ouest migre en réalité vers l'hémisphère Nord et que les mouvements intra et inter-pays au sein de la région sont et continuent d'être un élément central des stratégies de subsistance des populations. Ces mouvements entre divers environnements politiques, économiques et écologiques demeurent une source majeure de moyens de subsistance pour de nombreuses familles et communautés en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Or, aucune donnée fiable n'est disponible ni sur ces grands flux de migration de la main-d'œuvre, ni sur leurs liens avec les priorités de développement. Vu que les gouvernements de la Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) s'attèlent à exploiter les avantages de la migration, il s'avère nécessaire de disposer de données fondées sur des preuves aux fins de la formulation de politiques sur la migration de la main-d'œuvre dans la région. Le manque de données suffisantes et de preuves concrètes et fiables sur les interrelations entre la migration Sud-Sud et le développement limite la compréhension globale des opportunités qu'offre la migration. Elle entrave également les efforts visant à relever les défis auxquels sont confrontés les pays de la CEDEAO et continue de représenter un obstacle majeur à la conception de politiques fondées sur des données factuelles.

Le présent rapport est l'aboutissement d'études régionales financées par l'Observatoire ACP sur les migrations portant sur la facilitation de la migration intra-régionale de la main-d'œuvre dans la région de la CEDEAO dans le cadre des efforts destinés à améliorer le cadre de politique sur la migration intra-régionale et le développement dans la région de la CEDEAO.

## Principales constatations :

### *Flux migratoires de la main-d'œuvre et statistiques afférentes*

- Rares sont les données fiables, actualisées et précises sur la migration dans l'ensemble des pays de la CEDEAO, situation due en partie au manque d'harmonisation des définitions, à une variété de contextes différents de migration et à une multiplicité des institutions en charge des systèmes de collecte de données sur la migration, qui travaillent tous sur la base d'intérêts et de priorités différents.
- La migration de la main-d'œuvre entre les pays de la région de la CEDEAO a été et demeure la forme dominante des flux migratoires.
- Bien que la direction des flux change au fil du temps en réponse à une variété de facteurs, en général, la migration intra-régionale de la main-d'œuvre a été dominée par un mouvement Nord-Sud, des pays sahéliens de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Mali, Burkina Faso et Niger) vers les pays côtiers riches en ressources minérales et comptant de nombreuses plantations, notamment la Côte d'Ivoire, le Ghana, le Nigeria, le Liberia, le Sénégal et la Gambie. Plus récemment, les situations de conflit ont transformé le Liberia, la Sierra Leone et, dans une certaine mesure, la Côte d'Ivoire, également en pays d'origine de migrants.
- Bien que la quasi-totalité des pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest constituent actuellement tant des zones d'origine de migrants que des destinations d'immigration, la Côte d'Ivoire, le Nigeria, le Ghana, la Guinée et la Gambie constituent les pays de destination prisés des migrants, la Côte d'Ivoire enregistrant le nombre le plus élevé de ressortissants d'autres pays membres de la CEDEAO en termes absolus.
- Les lieux de destination des travailleurs migrants de la CEDEAO ont été principalement des pays qui ont des liens politiques, historiques et culturels en commun.
- L'évolution politique et économique récente, de même que les processus de mondialisation et d'urbanisation au sein de la région sont en train de changer les configurations de la mobilité intra-régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest.
- La majorité des migrants d'Afrique de l'Ouest dans la région n'ont pas un très haut niveau d'instruction et tendent à travailler dans le secteur informel en tant que commerçants, artisans ou exploitants agricoles.

### ***Marchés du travail et mobilité de la main-d'œuvre***

- Il existe des fossés entre la demande et l'offre de main-d'œuvre, l'offre excédant largement la demande dans la région. La plupart des travailleurs migrants sont impliqués dans le secteur informel des économies de la plupart des pays de la CEDEAO, en dépit des vulnérabilités que ce secteur présente.
- Les cadres institutionnels régissant les migrations de la main-d'œuvre et les marchés du travail en Afrique de l'Ouest sont complexes, avec un large éventail de départements gouvernementaux, d'agences et de structures privées de recrutement qui sont tous impliqués. Il n'existe aucun cadre formel qui guide le partage des informations sur le marché du travail tirées de la multitude de sources existantes, sources allant des institutions nationales de statistique aux structures d'emplois appartenant à des particuliers.
- Bien qu'un grand nombre de pays reconnaissent la nécessité des systèmes d'information sur le marché du travail, tous les pays couverts par la présente étude ne disposaient pas d'informations fonctionnelles sur le marché du travail en place et, là où il existe une certaine forme de système d'information sur le marché du travail (SIMT), ce n'est pas opérationnelle.
- Les pays couverts par l'étude montrent également qu'en dépit de la ratification en principe par de nombreux Etats membres de la CEDEAO du Protocole sur la libre circulation des personnes et des biens, les Etats membres continuent dans la pratique à observer des politiques/initiatives restrictives visant à protéger certains secteurs de leurs économies au profit de leurs nationaux.

### ***Cadre juridique et politique***

- Le Protocole relatif à la libre circulation des personnes, au droit de résidence et d'établissement, conjointement avec les Protocoles additionnels attestent de la détermination affichée des Etats membres de la CEDEAO à mettre la libre circulation intra-régionale des personnes au cœur du processus d'intégration régionale.
- Toutefois, en raison des préoccupations liées à la migration non-autorisée, ni la seconde ni la troisième phase de la mise en œuvre du Protocole n'ont abouti aux libres droits de résidence ou d'établissement dans les Etats membres.
- Quelques politiques ou programmes volontaristes au niveau national, visant à réaliser les objectifs de l'approche commune de la CEDEAO en matière

de migration, ont été dénombrés. Dans l'ensemble des pays, des mesures telles que le passeport de la CEDEAO, la suppression des visas ou les permis de séjour ont précédé l'adoption de l'approche commune.

- Bien que les migrants de la CEDEAO soient censés jouir de l'égalité des chances au même titre que les nationaux, de nombreux pays ont des dispositions dans leurs législations et règlements du travail qui préservent les emplois du secteur public et d'autres secteurs au profit de leurs propres ressortissants.

### ***Principales lacunes et entraves majeures à la mobilité intra-régionale de la main-d'œuvre***

#### *Ecueils liés aux systèmes de collecte de données*

Les données sont souvent de piètre qualité, caduques et non désagrégées, dans de nombreux pays de la CEDEAO. La comparabilité des données sur la migration est entravée par le manque de définitions harmonisées, en particulier en ce qui concerne la période à l'étrangère requise pour être considéré comme migrant, ne permettant pas ainsi une analyse significative.

#### *Manque d'ensembles de données exhaustives sur les marchés du travail et absence de SIMT*

La quasi-totalité des pays manquent de données exhaustives sur la main-d'œuvre et disposent de peu de statistiques sur la migration de la main-d'œuvre. L'absence de SIMT dans les pays participant à cette étude entretient un lien étroit avec les facteurs susmentionnés. La totalité des 15 pays couverts par la présente étude ne disposait d'aucun SIMT fonctionnel et seulement trois pays, à savoir le Sénégal, le Ghana et la Gambie, ont déployé des efforts pour mettre en place le SIMT. Ainsi les gouvernements ratent-ils l'opportunité d'assurer le suivi-évaluation de la structure de leurs marchés du travail aux fins des décisions politiques et de la formulation de politiques.

#### *Absence de politiques nationales du travail*

L'élaboration et la synchronisation des politiques nationales du travail en vue de guider les marchés du travail sont importantes et nécessaires pour donner des orientations par rapport aux problèmes d'emploi et de travail dans la région de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. La plupart des pays disposaient de politiques de l'emploi ou des règlements régissant les questions de l'emploi. Le problème



qui se posait, cependant, était que ces politiques et législations nationales sur le commerce et l'immigration, par exemple, ne prévoient pas l'égalité des chances en matière d'emploi dans tous les secteurs pour les ressortissants de la CEDEAO.

#### *Manque d'harmonisation des législations et des politiques nationales avec les protocoles de la CEDEAO sur la migration*

Il existe peu d'harmonisation des législations et règlements nationaux relatifs à la migration et au marché du travail avec les Protocoles de la CEDEAO visant à faciliter la migration intra-régionale.

#### *Mécanisme institutionnel et de coordination défaillant*

En l'absence de SIMT, diverses informations sur le marché du travail sont recueillies de façon indépendante auprès d'autres parties prenantes des marchés du travail et ne sont pas partagées entre les parties prenantes pertinentes. Il n'existe aucune stratégie coordonnée pour la collecte et la diffusion des données et pour impliquer les différentes institutions qui sont essentielles au succès du SIMT.

#### *Tensions créées par la prédominance des migrants dans les économies nationales*

La libre circulation des personnes au sein de la région suscite des tensions dans les Etats où les migrants dominent les secteurs du commerce et de l'emploi des économies. Ceci crée des sentiments anti-migrants qui rendent les Etats hésitants à mettre en œuvre les Protocoles.

### **Recommandations stratégiques**

Au regard des constatations de l'étude, les recommandations ci-après sont faites dans le but de faciliter la mobilité intra-régionale de la main-d'œuvre dans la région.

#### *Renforcer les capacités des institutions chargées de la collecte des données sur la migration*

Les gouvernements des différents Etats membres de la CEDEAO doivent renforcer les capacités des institutions/bureaux nationaux des statistiques, les services d'immigration et les institutions en charge de la main-d'œuvre aux

niveaux local, des districts et régional, ainsi que des institutions de recherche et de formation sur la migration et d'autres institutions chargées de la collecte de données sur la migration pour une prise de décision éclairée.

*Harmoniser les définitions de la migration et les méthodologies pour tenir compte des réalités de la CEDEAO*

Le manque de définitions harmonisées pour la collecte de données sur la migration rend très difficile la comparaison des statistiques sur la migration entre les Etats membres. L'adoption de méthodes communes de collecte de données sur la migration, tenant compte des réalités et des expériences de l'Afrique de l'Ouest par rapport à des mouvements spécifiques tels que les mouvements saisonniers, pastoraux et transfrontaliers et la migration interne, par les Bureaux nationaux des statistiques de la CEDEAO, s'impose de façon impérieuse.

*Elaborer des mécanismes pour l'échange d'informations*

Des mécanismes d'échange d'informations devraient être élaborés pour renforcer le partage de données entre les différentes institutions étatiques, les groupes de la société civile et les institutions de formation.

*Elaborer un ensemble de données exhaustives sur les marchés du travail et un cadre pour SIMT*

Pour y parvenir, les gouvernements de la CEDEAO doivent :

- Harmoniser toutes les sources existantes de données sur les marchés du travail et de la migration, les concepts et définitions de la main-d'œuvre au niveau national pour faciliter l'analyse de la migration de la main-d'œuvre dans la région ;
- Entreprendre des enquêtes périodiques sur le marché du travail et la migration pour déterminer les besoins et l'offre de main-d'œuvre, afin de garantir des actualisations régulières de l'information sur la migration et le marché du travail au niveau national ;
- Elaborer et mettre en œuvre un cadre pour SIMT.

*Renforcer la coordination efficace entre les utilisateurs des informations sur le marché du travail*

Promouvoir une collaboration efficace entre les ministères, départements, agences et autres parties prenantes importantes telles que le secteur privé.

Mettre en place des mécanismes pour l'échange et le partage d'informations sur le marché du travail et la migration entre les Ministères, Départements et Agences (MDA), les groupes de la société civile, ainsi que les institutions de recherche et de formation.

### *Elaborer des politiques nationales sur la migration*

Les Etats membres de la CEDEAO doivent soutenir l'élaboration de Politiques nationales sur la migration et veiller à l'intégration des questions de migration de la main-d'œuvre et de migration dans les agendas de planification nationale de développement, ainsi que dans les cadres régionaux pour exploiter les potentialités qu'offre la migration de la main-d'œuvre.

### *Exploiter le potentiel de la migration interne de la main-d'œuvre aux fins du développement*

Bien que la migration interne soit quasiment quatre fois plus importante que la migration internationale, la CEDEAO accorde peu d'attention à ces mouvements de personnes. Vu son ampleur et son importance pour les moyens de subsistance et la réduction de la pauvreté, il s'avère donc nécessaire que la CEDEAO se concentre non seulement sur la migration interrégionale, mais également sur la intra régionale.

### *Promouvoir des politiques sociales, politiques et économiques plus générales*

Les gouvernements nationaux doivent promouvoir des politiques sociales, politiques et économiques plus générales visant à transformer leurs économies et à créer des opportunités de création soutenue d'emplois pour les jeunes de leurs pays.

Concernant les mécanismes juridiques et institutionnels :

- Promouvoir des études périodiques sur la migration intra-régionale et l'application de ses Protocoles, ainsi que l'identification des écueils pratiques rencontrés dans la mise en œuvre des Protocoles ;
- Mettre en place des structures pour prendre en charge les questions de migration et, en particulier, mettre en place des mécanismes pour l'enregistrement et le règlement des plaintes pour harcèlement et violation des droits humains des ressortissants de la Communauté ;
- Accorder la priorité à l'harmonisation des documents de voyage et des politiques de migration dans la région ;

- Promouvoir l'adoption de mesures législatives, réglementaires et pratiques au niveau national pour mettre en œuvre les priorités stratégiques et les plans d'action de l'approche commune adoptée par la CEDEAO ;
- Renforcer les capacités des responsables (les agents des douanes et de l'immigration, des services de police et de sécurité) pour faire face à la circulation des biens et des personnes et la gérer. Institutionnaliser la formation des agents, l'échange d'informations et les réseaux pour remplacer les arrangements ad hoc actuels.

## **Resumo executivo**

As questões relacionadas com a migração e a mobilidade têm dominado o discurso mundial nos últimos anos. Os governos e as agências de desenvolvimento reconhecem cada vez mais o potencial da migração para o desenvolvimento socioeconómico e apostam cada vez mais na melhoria dos meios de subsistência dos migrantes e das respectivas famílias. Neste âmbito, muitos governos estão a envidar esforços para integrar eficazmente a mobilidade humana nos planos de desenvolvimento nacionais e regionais, bem como nas estratégias de redução da pobreza. A atenção tem-se centrado na migração Sul-Norte na África Ocidental. Contudo, os actuais padrões de mobilidade indicam que apenas uma pequena parte dos migrantes da África Ocidental se desloca efectivamente para o Norte e que as deslocações intranacionais e internacionais na região são um elemento fulcral das estratégias de subsistência dos povos. Muitas destas deslocações através de diversos cenários políticos, económicos e ecológicos constituem a principal fonte de subsistência para várias famílias e comunidades na África Ocidental.

No entanto, os dados fiáveis sobre estes padrões de migração laboral são poucos ou nenhuns, tal como as respectivas ligações às prioridades em matéria de desenvolvimento. Enquanto os governos da Comunidade Económica dos Estados da África Ocidental (CEDEAO) procuram tirar proveito dos benefícios da migração, verifica-se a necessidade de dados baseados em provas para a formulação de políticas em matéria de migração laboral na sub-região. A falta de dados adequados e de provas concretas e fiáveis relativamente às inter-relações entre a migração Sul-Sul e o desenvolvimento limita a compreensão global das oportunidades da migração e dificulta os esforços envidados para enfrentar os desafios com que os países da CEDEAO se deparam, continuando a representar um grave obstáculo à elaboração de políticas baseadas em provas.

O presente relatório resulta de estudos regionais sobre a facilitação da migração laboral intra-regional na região da CEDEAO financiados pelo Observatório ACP das Migrações, integrando os esforços para melhorar as políticas em matéria de migração intra-regional e desenvolvimento na região da CEDEAO.

### **Principais conclusões:**

#### ***Fluxos migratórios laborais e estatísticas***

- Verifica-se uma escassez de dados fiáveis, actualizados e exactos sobre migração em todos os países da CEDEAO, em parte devido a uma falta de

harmonização das definições, vários contextos migratórios diferentes e uma multiplicidade de instituições responsáveis pelos sistemas de recolha de dados sobre a migração com prioridades e interesses diversos.

- A migração laboral entre países na sub-região da CEDEAO foi, e continua a ser, o principal modelo dos fluxos migratórios.
- Embora a direcção dos fluxos tenha mudado ao longo do tempo em resposta a diversos factores, de um modo geral a migração laboral intra-regional tem sido dominada por um movimento Norte-Sul dos países do Sahel, na África Ocidental (Mali, Burkina Faso e Níger), para os países costeiros ricos em minerais e em plantações, nomeadamente a Costa do Marfim, o Gana, a Nigéria, a Libéria, o Senegal e a Gâmbia. Recentemente, as situações de conflito também tornaram a Libéria, a Serra Leoa e, até certo ponto, a Costa do Marfim países de origem de migrantes.
- Embora quase todos os países da África Ocidental sejam, actualmente, tanto zonas de origem de migrantes como destinos de imigração, a Costa do Marfim, a Nigéria, o Gana, a Guiné e a Gâmbia são os mais populares países de destino para os migrantes, tendo a Costa do Marfim o maior número de nacionais de outros países da CEDEAO em termos absolutos.
- Os locais de destino dos migrantes laborais da CEDEAO têm sido, sobretudo, países com laços culturais, históricos e políticos comuns.
- Os recentes desenvolvimentos políticos e económicos, bem como os processos de globalização e urbanização na sub-região, estão a mudar as configurações das dinâmicas de mobilidade intra-regional da África Ocidental.
- A maioria dos migrantes da África Ocidental na sub-região não tem um elevado nível de instrução e costuma trabalhar no sector informal (comerciantes, artesãos e agricultores).

### ***Mercados de trabalho e mobilidade***

- Verifica-se uma diferença entre a oferta e a procura de trabalho, sendo a oferta superior à procura na região. A maior parte dos migrantes laborais é absorvida pelo sector informal das economias da maioria dos países da CEDEAO, apesar das vulnerabilidades no sector.
- As estruturas institucionais em matéria de migração laboral e mercados de trabalho na África Ocidental são complexas e com um vasto leque

de departamentos governamentais, agências e instituições privadas de recrutamento envolvidos. Não existe nenhum enquadramento formal para orientar a partilha de informações sobre o mercado de trabalho devido à miríade de fontes, desde institutos nacionais de estatística a organizações de emprego privadas.

- Embora muitos dos países reconheçam a necessidade de sistemas de informação sobre o mercado de trabalho, nenhum dos países do estudo tinha implementado um sistema de informação funcional sobre o mercado de trabalho e, quando existe algum, não está operacional.
- Os estudos sobre os países também destacam o facto de que, embora muitos Estados-Membros da CEDEAO tenham ratificado o Protocolo sobre a livre circulação de pessoas e bens, na prática ainda há iniciativas/políticas restritivas por parte dos Estados-Membros para proteger determinados sectores das suas economias favorecendo, deste modo, os cidadãos nacionais.

### ***Enquadramento jurídico e político***

- O protocolo relativo à livre circulação de pessoas e ao direito de residência e estabelecimento e os protocolos adicionais revelam a determinação expressa dos Estados-Membros da CEDEAO de colocar a livre circulação intra-regional de pessoas no centro do processo de integração regional.
- Contudo, devido a preocupações com a migração não autorizada, nem a segunda nem a terceira fases da implementação do Protocolo conduziram aos direitos de residência ou estabelecimento nos Estados-Membros.
- Houve poucos programas ou políticas nacionais para cumprir os objectivos da Abordagem comum da migração da CEDEAO. Medidas como o passaporte da CEDEAO, a abolição de vistos e as autorizações de residência antecederam a adopção da Abordagem comum em todos os países.
- Embora se espere que os migrantes da CEDEAO tenham as mesmas oportunidades que os cidadãos nacionais, muitos países têm disposições nas suas legislações que salvaguardam os empregos na função pública e noutros sectores em benefício dos cidadãos nacionais.

## **Principais lacunas e desafios em matéria de mobilidade laboral intra-regional**

### *Desafios com os sistemas de recolha de dados*

Em muitos países da CEDEAO, os dados são frequentemente de fraca qualidade, estando desactualizados e por classificar. A comparabilidade dos dados sobre migração é dificultada pela falta de definições harmonizadas, especialmente no que respeita ao período de tempo no estrangeiro exigido para ser considerado como migrante, não sendo possível uma análise profunda.

### *Falta de dados abrangentes e ausência de sistemas de informação sobre os mercados de trabalho*

Quase nenhum dos países tem dados abrangentes sobre a população activa e as estatísticas sobre a migração laboral são limitadas. Intimamente relacionada está a falta de sistemas de informação sobre os mercados de trabalho nos países que participam neste estudo. Os quinze países abrangidos pelo presente estudo não tinham sistemas de informação operacionais sobre os mercados de trabalho e apenas três países – nomeadamente o Senegal, o Gana e a Gâmbia – tinham envidado alguns esforços para a implementação de tais sistemas. Assim, os governos perdem a oportunidade de monitorizar e avaliar a estrutura dos seus mercados de trabalho para a formulação e decisão de políticas.

### *Ausência de políticas de trabalho nacionais*

O desenvolvimento e a sincronização de políticas de trabalho nacionais, para orientar os mercados de trabalho, são importantes e necessários para a obtenção de respostas para as questões de emprego na região da África Ocidental. Embora a maior parte dos países tenha políticas ou regulamentação no âmbito do emprego, essas leis e políticas nacionais relativas ao comércio e à imigração, por exemplo, não permitem aos cidadãos nacionais da CEDEAO igualdade de oportunidades em matéria de emprego em todos os sectores.

### *Falta de harmonização das políticas e legislações nacionais com os protocolos da CEDEAO em matéria de migração*

Verifica-se pouca harmonização entre as legislações e as regulamentações nacionais relativas à migração e aos mercados de trabalho e os protocolos da CEDEAO no sentido de facilitar a migração intra-regional.



### *Mecanismo institucional e de coordenação deficiente*

À falta de sistemas de informação sobre os mercados de trabalho, diversas informações sobre os mesmos são obtidas à margem de outros intervenientes nesses mercados, não sendo partilhadas entre os interessados. Não existe nenhuma estratégia coordenada para a recolha e disseminação de dados, nem para envolver as várias instituições essenciais para o sucesso ou insucesso dos sistemas de informação sobre os mercados de trabalho.

### *Tensões criadas pelo predomínio de migrantes nas economias nacionais*

A livre circulação de pessoas na sub-região intensifica as tensões nos Estados em que os migrantes dominam os sectores do comércio e do trabalho das economias. Este facto origina atitudes contra os migrantes, deixando os Estados relutantes em relação à implementação dos protocolos.

### **Recomendações**

Baseadas nas conclusões do estudo, as recomendações que se seguem têm por objectivo promover a mobilidade laboral intra-regional na sub-região.

#### *Melhorar as capacidades das instituições responsáveis pela recolha de dados sobre a migração*

Os governos dos vários Estados-Membros da CEDEAO têm de incrementar a capacidade dos institutos nacionais de estatística, dos departamentos de imigração e das instituições de trabalho, a nível local, distrital e regional, e da investigação sobre a migração e das entidades formadoras e de outras entidades responsáveis pela recolha de dados sobre a migração para tomadas de decisões informadas.

#### *Harmonizar as metodologias e as definições de migração de modo a reflectir as realidades da CEDEAO*

A falta de definições harmonizadas para a recolha de dados sobre migração faz com que seja muito difícil comparar as estatísticas sobre migração entre os Estados-Membros. É urgente a adopção de métodos comuns de recolha de dados sobre migração, que reflectam as realidades e as experiências da África Ocidental no tocante a deslocações específicas, como as sazonais, pastoris e transfronteiriças, e a migração interna, por parte dos institutos nacionais de estatística da CEDEAO.

### *Desenvolver mecanismos para o intercâmbio de informações*

Devem ser desenvolvidos mecanismos para o intercâmbio de informações, com vista a melhorar a partilha de dados entre os vários grupos da sociedade civil, entidades estatais e entidades formadoras.

### *Desenvolver um conjunto de dados abrangente sobre os mercados de trabalho e um enquadramento para o sistema de informação sobre os mercados de trabalho*

Nesse sentido, os governos da CEDEAO têm de:

- Harmonizar todas as fontes de informação sobre migração e mercados de trabalho e as definições e os conceitos de trabalho a nível nacional, de modo a possibilitar uma análise sem dificuldades da migração laboral na sub-região.
- Realizar inquéritos periódicos sobre o mercado de trabalho e a migração para verificar a oferta e as necessidades laborais, com vista a assegurar atualizações regulares das informações sobre a migração e o mercado de trabalho a nível nacional.
- Desenvolver e implementar um enquadramento para o sistema de informação sobre os mercados de trabalho.

### *Potenciar uma coordenação eficaz entre os utilizadores das informações sobre o mercado de trabalho e respectiva recolha*

Promover uma colaboração eficaz entre ministérios, departamentos e agências e outros intervenientes importantes, tais como o sector privado. Estabelecer mecanismos para o intercâmbio e a partilha de informações sobre o mercado de trabalho e a migração entre ministérios, departamentos, agências e grupos da sociedade civil, bem como instituições de investigação e entidades formadoras.

### *Desenvolver políticas de migração nacionais*

Os Estados da CEDEAO têm de apoiar o desenvolvimento de políticas de migração nacionais e garantir a integração da migração laboral e das questões relacionadas com a migração nos programas de planeamento de desenvolvimento nacional e nos quadros regionais para beneficiarem do potencial da migração laboral.

### *Beneficiar do potencial da migração laboral interna para o desenvolvimento*

Embora a migração interna seja quase o quádruplo da migração internacional, a CEDEAO não se centrou muito nestes movimentos de pessoas. Dada a sua magnitude e importância para os meios de subsistência e para a redução da pobreza, a CEDEAO tem de se centrar não só na migração intra-regional mas também na migração interna.

### *Promover políticas sociais, políticas e económicas mais abrangentes*

Os governos nacionais têm de promover políticas sociais, políticas e económicas mais abrangentes, cujo objectivo seja transformar as respectivas economias e criar oportunidades de emprego sustentáveis para os jovens nos seus países.

No respeitante aos mecanismos legais e institucionais:

- Promover estudos periódicos sobre a migração intra-regional e a implementação dos respectivos protocolos e identificar os desafios práticos na implementação dos mesmos.
- Criar estruturas para tratar as questões relacionadas com a migração e, em especial, criar mecanismos para o registo e a resolução de queixas de assédio e violação dos direitos humanos dos cidadãos da Comunidade.
- Dar prioridade à harmonização dos documentos de viagem e das políticas de migração na sub-região.
- Promover a adopção de medidas legislativas, regulamentares e concretas a nível nacional para implementar as prioridades estratégicas e os planos de acção da Abordagem comum da CEDEAO.
- Capacitar os responsáveis – funcionários aduaneiros e dos serviços de imigração, polícia e segurança – para a gestão da circulação de pessoas e bens. Institucionalizar a formação de funcionários, intercâmbio de informações e redes para substituir os acordos *ad-hoc* em curso.



## **I. Introduction**

### **I.1 Background and rationale for study**

As migration has gained significance in the global agenda, its potential for development and for poverty reduction is increasingly acknowledged. In line with this, many governments are striving to effectively integrate human mobility into their national and regional development plans and poverty reduction strategies. Although the focus is often placed on South–North migration in West Africa,<sup>1</sup> contemporary mobility patterns indicate that only a small share of African migrants actually move to the global North and that intra and intercountry movements within the region are and continue to be a central feature of peoples’ livelihood strategies. Intra-regional migration, and in particular labour migration, is the major trend in the region, offering development opportunities and challenges for the countries and peoples concerned. Indeed, in 2006, data indicate that 84 per cent of migration movements from West African countries were directed toward another country in the region. Such intraregional migration movements, estimated at 7.5 million persons, are seven times greater than migration movements from West Africa to the rest of the world, including Europe and North America (SWAC and OECD 2006). Although different data sources provide different estimates due to the difficulties of documenting movements within West Africa, all data sources indicate that the majority of West African movements are largely intraregional in nature.

Much of this movement takes place in diverse political, economic and ecological settings and is critical for the livelihoods of many families and communities in West Africa. The current demographic, economic and political situation in West Africa is likely to continue to fuel migration both within and out of the region and to continue to explain regional mobility in West Africa. Furthermore, the diversities and inequalities between countries in the region, as shown in the development indicators highlighted in table 1, imply that an increase in intraregional migration flows is inevitable.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),<sup>2</sup> founded in 1975, aims to promote economic integration within the region, and the Protocol on

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1 West Africa is comprised of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

2 The 15 ECOWAS Member States are comprised of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Thus, Mauritania is not a member of ECOWAS.

Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, adopted in 1979, represents a crucial step toward the creation of a borderless region. However, as pointed out by several studies (Adepoju, 2009), although ECOWAS represents an excellent example of regional cooperation, policies are needed to facilitate labour migration within the ECOWAS region, as are greater harmonization and exchange of data on interregional migration flows.

The 2008 ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration aims to foster the harmonization of policies, the protection of migrant workers, the promotion of regular migration, gender-sensitive policies, and policies for the protection of the most vulnerable persons, among others. It also sets out migration and development action plans to remedy the obstacles to an effective implementation of the Free Movement Protocol. Despite having the potential to address and manage intraregional migration in the region, translation of the ECOWAS framework into workable programmes at the national levels is lacking, as regional and national regulations are often not synchronized, thus impinging on the practical implementation of the policy (Adepoju, 2006).

More recently, labour migration in the region has taken on more complex shapes and patterns in response to globalization: urbanization; new natural resource discoveries, such as oil and gas; the establishment of new industries, such as tourism (Senegal and the Gambia); and the development of information and communication technologies (ICT), which has led to outsourcing of employment to countries like Senegal and Cabo Verde (SWAC and OECD, 2006). While it is likely that some traditional labour mobility patterns will remain, these may bring about changes in intraregional mobility patterns.

In light of these developments and changing trends, it is important that comprehensive labour migration policies are developed to manage the migration process. As West African governments seek to harness the benefits of migration while minimizing the associated risks, there is a need for evidence-based data for policy formulation on labour migration within the region. Yet little or no reliable data are available on these major migration patterns, nor its linkages with development priorities. The lack of adequate data and concrete and reliable evidence on the interrelationships between South–South migration and development limits the global understanding of migration opportunities and impedes efforts to address challenges facing ECOWAS countries. This continues to represent a major obstacle to designing evidence-based policies.

As part of efforts to improve the policy framework on intraregional migration and development in the ECOWAS region, the Centre for Migration Studies of the University of Ghana was selected by the ACP Observatory on Migration through

a call for tenders to conduct research on the facilitation of intraregional labour migration in the ECOWAS region. The study was undertaken with the scientific coordination of the Migration Policy Centre (MPC) at the European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Italy, and facilitated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with the financial assistance of the European Union. The study seeks to improve the evidence base for programmes and policies aimed at facilitating labour mobility within the ECOWAS region. The study, therefore, is a response to existing data gaps and lack of institutional capacity and aims to contribute to an evidence base for migration policy decisions in African, Caribbean Pacific (ACP) countries.

## **1.2 Aims and objectives of study**

The main tasks of the research study as stated in the terms of reference are to:

- a) Identify data sources and compare existing data on labour migration within the ECOWAS region;
- b) Analyse the structure of the labour markets (demand and supply of labour) and the patterns of labour migration in the ECOWAS region; and
- c) Examine the obstacles in the implementation of the Free Movement Protocol.

## **1.3 Research outcomes**

The research outcomes are to produce a synthesized report which will:

- a) Contribute to the understanding of labour migration and its obstacles in the ECOWAS region by raising awareness on possible scientific assessments of the economic and social impact of labour mobility, for the benefit of evidence based policy making;
- b) Strengthen the contribution of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol to human mobility and reinforcing its development potential;
- c) Promote new research tools and methods in a multi-disciplinary way, and to contribute to capacity-building on migration research in the ECOWAS countries.

## **1.4 Research strategy and methodology**

Recognizing the multidimensional nature of labour migration, the study on the facilitation of labour migration within the ECOWAS region adopted a

multidisciplinary and a multilayered approach towards the management of the study. At the management level, the overall management was at the Level of the ACP Observatory on Migration, while scientific coordination was provided by the MPC at EUI in Florence, Italy. The MPC, in addition to providing scientific input, also provided direct technical input in reviewing the reports submitted in French as well as served as the link between the Francophone and Anglophone countries. This was especially important for the overall management of the study. The Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana provided direct oversight and coordination of the study, ensuring technical quality and consistency.

At the country level, one country researcher in each of the 15 ECOWAS countries was contracted to compile and write a 40 page country report on intraregional mobility under the supervision of the Centre for Migration Studies and the MPC. The researchers used primary data collected from available administrative data sources, surveys and censuses in all 15 ECOWAS countries, as well as through interviews with key informants, such as policymakers, immigration officials and employees in statistical offices. At the Centre for Migration Studies, a multidisciplinary team of core researchers was set up composed of a geographer/demographer as team leader, an economist, a lawyer and a statistician. The main task of the core team was to ensure the technical quality of the country reports in terms of the specific sector (migration statistics, labour market, legal framework) and to synthesize the sector reports from each of the country reports into an overall report according to the guidelines. The list of researchers is presented in annex 1.

Although many of the data in this synthesized report are from the country reports, data had to be complemented by information from various international sources, as many of the country reports did not, or in some cases could not, provide the requested information. Comparability of data is therefore limited, in some tables, to selected countries where data were available.

### *Research tools*

The data were collected through a variety of methods, as follows:

- Desk research of existing studies on labour migration patterns in the ECOWAS region. This was to highlight key patterns, trends and dominant themes on intraregional labour mobility in the region and to highlight the gaps in order to provide context for the research study;



- Secondary data collected from available administrative data, surveys and censuses and small-scale surveys in all 15 ECOWAS States;
- Data from various international sources, such as World Bank, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Population Division, University of Sussex DRC Global Migrant Origin Database, International Labour Organization (ILO) and IOM were also used for the synthesized report. Data from these sources were used to provide data on migration stocks and flows and labour market statistics;
- In-depth interviews with key informants in selected countries, including policymakers, immigration officers and officers in ministries of foreign affairs in charge of ECOWAS;
- Review of legal migration frameworks and migration related policies in all ECOWAS countries.

### *Training workshop*

A training workshop for all country experts and the core research team was held from 4 to 6 September 2012 at the University of Ghana, Legon, organized by the ACP Observatory on Migration with technical and logistical support from MPC (EUI) and CMS and a representative of the ECOWAS Commission as a resource person. The training addressed thematic areas in labour market issues, migration legal frameworks and policies, statistical data collection in the ECOWAS countries, formal and informal labour markets in the ECOWAS zone, and implementation of legal commitments and regional policies in the ECOWAS countries.

## **1.5 Project partners/institutional framework**

The MPC of the EUI provided scientific coordination for the study and the IOM facilitated the study. The Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana provided direct oversight coordination of the study.

## **1.6 Research outputs**

- A country report for each of the 15 ECOWAS countries that addressed intraregional migration;
- A synthesized regional report on ECOWAS consisting of a set of key recommendations suggesting policy interventions and adaptations to facilitate regional labour mobility.



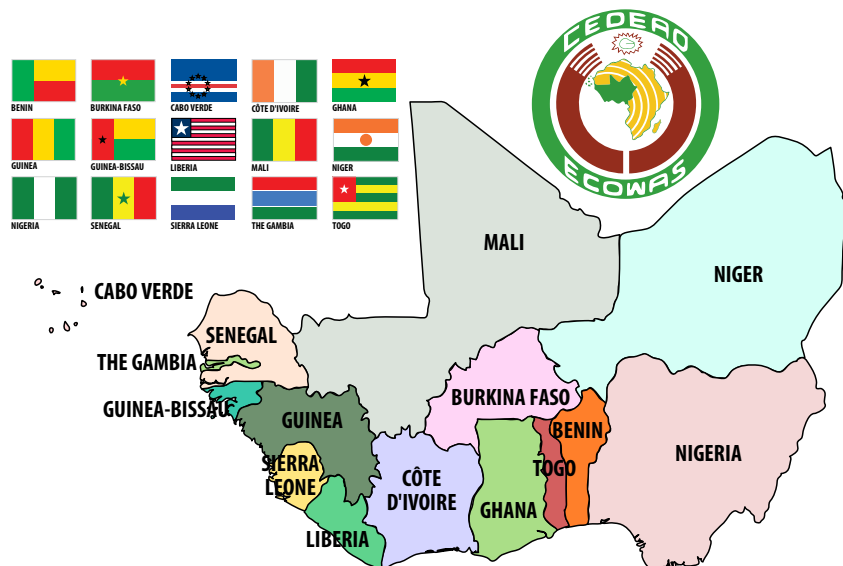
## 2. The context for migration in West Africa

### 2.1 The socioeconomic and geopolitical context for migration in the region

West Africa has been described as politically and culturally complex, as evidenced by the diversity of religions, dialects and colonial systems and reinforced by a linguistic divide (see figure 1). The ECOWAS region consists broadly of two distinct linguistic blocks, namely an Anglophone and Francophone region, divided along colonial lines. In addition to French and English, two countries – Guinea Bissau and Cabo Verde – are Lusophone, being former Portuguese colonies (Olukoshi, 2001).

In 2010, West Africa’s population was estimated at 302.9 million people with a growth rate of 2.5 per cent, and with declining infant mortality and a high fertility rate. United Nations (UN) projections indicate that these dynamics are likely to continue (SWAC and OECD, 2006). Overall, the region’s population is expected to reach 430 million people by 2020 and half a billion by 2040 (AfDB, 2011, Olsen, 2012). In 2010, 70 per cent of the region’s population were under the age of 30, and slightly more than 20 per cent were young people between the ages of 15 and 24 (UN DESA and UNICEF, 2012).

Figure 1: Map of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)



Source: Sar, 2013.

West Africa has been described as consisting largely of low-income countries with a gross national income per capita ranging from USD 3,402 in Cabo Verde to USD 641 in Niger and USD 265 in Liberia in 2011 (UNDP, 2011). However, over the last decade, some strong gains have been made in economic growth in the ECOWAS region. For instance, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth was above 5 per cent in 2004 and 2005, reaching almost 6 per cent in 2007 before declining in 2009 as a result of the global economic crisis and rising again in 2010 (AfDB, 2011).

In 2010, the region as a whole recorded a real GDP growth rate of 6.7 per cent, considered the highest among Africa's five Regional Economic Communities (AfDB, 2010). The largest economies of the region are Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal, with Nigeria being the strongest and accounting for 60.5 per cent of the regional GDP in 2009. The renewed growth in commodity prices, especially oil and minerals, benefited natural resource-rich West African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Guinea fostering higher growth in the region as a whole.

However, despite overall growth in economies within the region, this growth has not been even, resulting in disparities in growth and development across countries in West Africa. Furthermore, as illustrated in table 1, although the region in general has low levels of development, there are great variations, with Cabo Verde, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal having the highest human development indices and lowest poverty levels in the region. Of the 15 ECOWAS countries, 12 have a human development index (HDI) below 0.5 (see table 1). Poverty continues to be a major challenge in the region, with an estimate of more than 50 per cent of the region's population living on less than a dollar a day (ECOWAS/WAEMU, 2006). Significantly, 12<sup>3</sup> of the world's 50 poorest countries (Sesay and Omotosho, 2011) are in the ECOWAS region. However, there are marked variations in national poverty levels across countries in the region. Although Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria are comparatively more developed, the majority of their populations are living through subsistence livelihoods, especially in agriculture.

Conflicts and internal political instability have further deepened, and in some countries have eroded marginal socioeconomic gains achieved. While post-conflict violence in the region is waning, the general instability leaves a legacy of negative economic and developmental consequences in the West

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3 Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo (Sesay and Omotosho, 2011).

African region. Conflicts notably in Liberia and Sierra Leone made West Africa host to one of the continent's largest refugee populations, although significant return has now occurred to both these countries (Boateng, 2012). As at 2010, Liberia had about 62,015 refugees in ECOWAS Member States while Côte d'Ivoire also had about 31,043 in ECOWAS countries (UN DESA and UNICEF, 2012). Countries such as Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria also experienced various forms of coup d'états and civil unrest.

In terms of governance systems, many countries in the region are increasingly moving into democratic governance, as illustrated by the number of elections conducted in West African countries in recent years. Successful transfers of power in countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Liberia, Guinea, and Niger provide a sense of stability and greater prospects for peace. regionRecent developments such as the post-election conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, activities of extremist groups (Boko Haram and Tuareg Rebels) in Nigeria, Niger and Mali respectively, and coup attempts in Guinea Bissau still makes the region vulnerable to incidents that jeopardize progress in peacebuilding, democracy and economic growth.

These relative inequalities in development levels, lack of opportunities to enhance quality of life, coupled with political, social and economic instability create conditions and the context for population mobility in search of sustained livelihoods options within, as well as outside, the region.

10 Table 1: Key demographic and economic indicators in ECOWAS countries, 2011

Country	Total population (millions)	Percentage of population in urban areas (%)	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Total fertility rate (TFR)	Gross National Income (USD)	Population below international poverty line (ppp USD 1.25 a day) (%)	Adult literacy rate (% ages 15 years and older)	Human Development Index (HDI)	Position in Human Development Index (HDI) rankings
Benin	9.1	42.5	56.1	5.1	1,364	47.3	41.7	0.427	167
Burkina Faso	17.0	26.5	55.4	5.8	1,141	56.5	28.7	0.331	181
Cabo Verde	0.5	61.8	74.2	2.3	3,402	21.0	84.8	0.568	133
Côte d'Ivoire	20.2	51.3	55.4	4.2	1,387	23.8	55.3	0.400	170
Gambia, the	1.8	58.9	58.5	4.7	1,282	34.3	46.5	0.420	168
Ghana	24.6	50.9	64.2	4.0	1,584	30.0	66.6	0.541	135
Guinea	10.2	35.9	54.1	5.0	863	43.3	39.5	0.344	178
Guinea Bissau	1.5	30.2	48.1	4.9	994	48.8	52.2	0.353	176
Liberia	4.1	48.2	56.8	5.0	265	83.7	59.1	0.329	182
Mali	15.8	36.6	51.4	6.1	1,123	51.4	26.9	0.359	175
Niger	16.1	17.2	54.7	6.9	641	43.1	28.7	0.295	186
Nigeria	162.5	50.5	51.9	5.4	2,069	64.4	60.8	0.459	156
Senegal	12.8	42.7	59.3	4.6	1,708	33.5	49.7	0.459	155
Sierra Leone	6.0	38.8	47.8	4.7	737	53.4	40.9	0.336	180
Togo	6.2	44.1	57.1	3.9	798	38.7	56.9	0.435	162

Source: UNDP, 2011; GSS, 2012.

### **3. Intraregional labour migration trends and patterns**

#### **3.1 Assessment of migration statistical data collection systems**

There is a general consensus that accurate statistical data on population movements is required for managing migration and ensuring that it is beneficial to both sending and receiving countries. All the country reports submitted as part of this study highlight the paucity of reliable and accurate data on migration in all ECOWAS countries, and the shortcoming of the data collection systems of most of the ECOWAS countries. As a result, comparability of data across all 15 ECOWAS countries based on the country reports is problematic as many of the country reports did not or could not provide the required data. This section examines the quality of the migration statistical data collection systems of the ECOWAS countries, providing a context for analysing the labour migration trends in the ECOWAS region.

##### *Population and housing census data*

All ECOWAS countries have been collecting some form of statistical data on migration through national population and housing censuses for a long time. These censuses are usually conducted by the national statistical institutes/ departments in each country (see annex 2). During these national population censuses, data are collected on the entire population, and through this system, data on immigrants are obtained. In a few countries, such as Ghana, data on emigrants are also collected during population censuses. The questionnaire used to collect data on individuals differs from one ECOWAS country to another. In general, however, most of the countries investigated have been collecting information on the nationality, place of birth, age, gender, and occupation of individuals. Based on the census questionnaire, it is possible to get information on stock of immigrants from the census report. One advantage of population and housing census data is the fact that they cover all immigrants, irrespective of their legal status. The census data are also relatively accessible as they are usually published.

There are, however, some challenges associated with the use of census data in any analysis of migration trends in ECOWAS. In many ECOWAS countries, national population censuses are not conducted regularly, as a result of financial constraints and political instability among other factors (see annex 2 for a complete list of recent census for all ECOWAS countries). For instance, since 1990, Togo has conducted only one census round that provides some

information on both internal and international migration. Since 1990, Guinea has also conducted only one round of census (1996), while Sierra Leone conducted recent censuses in 1985 and 2004. In Benin, recent censuses were conducted in 1978, 1992 and 2002. Côte d'Ivoire had censuses in 1975, 1988 and 1998. Consequently, it is difficult to use census data to determine trends in the ECOWAS region. As databases are not regularly updated to provide current trends within census periods (which are sometimes more than 20 years), the census data are sometimes too outdated to support ongoing policy initiatives.

Additionally, definitions of what constitutes a migrant differ from country to country. For instance, in Togo and Côte d'Ivoire, questions on country of birth and current residence are used to distinguish migrants from non-migrants (see annex 2). This implies that people born outside the country but enumerated during a census period were listed as migrants. In the 1960s, for instance, most Ghanaian-born Togolese who returned home as a result of Ghana's Aliens Compliance Order were recorded as immigrants in Togo (Manley, 2003). In Ghana, migrants are simply defined as all non-nationals found in the country during the census period. Such a system does not distinguish between immigrants and tourists in the country. Given these variations in definition of migrants, comparability of migration statistical data among different ECOWAS countries, to which this report aims, is quite problematic.

Another inherent challenge associated with the use of census data in analysing migration in the ECOWAS region is the fact that they do not provide any useful data on flows of immigrants/emigrants. In most of the countries, including Liberia, Mali, Benin, Senegal, Benin, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau and Togo, the census data lack useful information on immigrants, such as the age at which they entered the country of destination, the purpose of immigration and their intended duration of stay. Again, the completeness of the filled questionnaires is a critical component of census. In most cases, however, certain individuals may not disclose certain vital information. The census reports of all the ECOWAS countries examined are replete with a number of missing variables. For instance, during the 2008 census of Liberia, over 20 per cent of international migrants did not state their countries of origin and approximately 56 per cent did not disclose their employment (work) status (Wesseh, Liberia country report).

The census reports also usually do not capture data on emigration. Although the 2010 census report of Ghana published information on Ghanaian emigrants aged 15 years and above, it evidently under-estimated the number



of Ghanaians living in other countries. According to this data, there were only 63,919 Ghanaians in all ECOWAS countries (GSS, 2012). This figure is far less than the estimated 186,015 Ghanaians who were living in Nigeria alone (World Bank, 2011). One reason why data on emigrants are not reliable is the fact that the information is provided by migrants' relatives left behind in Ghana. This means, in cases where the entire family has moved out, no information is captured.

### *Surveys and related research initiatives*

The national statistics offices of the individual countries also collect some form of migration related data in surveys (see annex 3). These include migration surveys, living standards surveys (LSS) as well as demographic and health surveys. For instance the Ghana Statistical Service, with the assistance of the World Bank, has conducted four LSS since 1992. The 2008 Ghana Living Standards Survey, for instance, contained data on remittances, source region, recipients' relationship with emigrants and uses of remittances. A number of demographic and health surveys were also conducted in Ghana since 1990, with the latest one undertaken in 2008. In Togo, a national health survey was conducted in 2002 and a LSS was conducted in 2006. In Côte d'Ivoire, LSS were conducted in 1998, 2002 and 2008.

Since 1990, LSS have also been conducted in almost all the ECOWAS countries. A few ECOWAS countries have also undertaken labour force surveys, which provide data on immigrant labour. In the Gambia, for instance, a labour force survey was undertaken in 2012, the results of which are currently being analysed (Vandermeersch, Gambia country report). Some ECOWAS countries also specifically conduct migration surveys. For instance, in 2000, the National Institute for Statistical and Economic Analysis in Benin conducted a migration survey, and the Ghana Statistical Service conducted a national migration survey covering both internal and international migration in 1991 (GSS, 1995a and 1995b). Currently the Migrating out of Poverty<sup>4</sup> research project, funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and coordinated by University of Sussex, is undertaking a migration survey in five migration source regions in Ghana to provide data on these regions. Nigeria has also conducted a number of migration research initiatives (Afolayan et

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4 The Migrating out of Poverty project is a six year research project funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) focusing on the relationship between migration and poverty in six regions in Asia, Africa and Europe. It is coordinated by the University of Sussex, with the West Africa hub coordinated by the Centre for Migration studies, University of Ghana.

al., 2009). The Migration and Urbanization Surveys Network in West Africa project that was conducted in 1993 in seven countries of the West African region (namely, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) also provides useful information on migrants. The Migrations between Africa and Europe (MAFE) project in Ghana and Senegal also provides useful data on international migration from the two ECOWAS countries among others. The MAFE project provides information on all phases of the migration process, encompassing migration, return and integration, returnees' routes of transit, economic implications and transnational relationships. Various small scale studies by universities and academic institutions also provide useful migration data.

#### *Data collection by national immigration departments and other relevant ministries and departments*

All the ECOWAS countries also rely on their national immigration departments/services to collect data on all immigrants and emigrants who enter or leave the countries through approved entry/exit points. These national immigration authorities include: the National Immigration and Passport Authority (Togo); Ghana Immigration Service (GIS); Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) of Liberia; Nigeria Immigration Service; BIN of Sierra Leone; Department of Air and Border Police (Guinea); Border Police Agency (Benin); and the Directorate of Foreigners and Borders of Cabo Verde (see annex 4). Among other core functions, the national immigration authorities are mandated to defend the countries' territorial boundaries; examine the immigration documents of persons entering and leaving at authorized points of entry/exit, and issue and manage visas and residence/work permits. The immigration authorities are, therefore, strategically positioned to collect relevant migration data through administrative procedures and share with some other agencies.

The data are always collected through self-administered migrant tracking forms completed at the point of entry/exit. Some of the migration statistics collected include age, sex, level of education, occupation, nationality, legal status, residence/work permits issued, types of economic activities that the individual engaged in, and geographical location in the country. Immigration authorities also have data on immigrants expelled and on those who have been denied entry, as well as on victims and perpetrators of human trafficking and other crimes. Though the migrant tracking forms used in ECOWAS Member States are similar, the system of harmonized immigration and emigration forms has been implemented by only three ECOWAS countries: Ghana, Liberia and

Sierra Leone (see table 13). Data on migrants in ECOWAS countries can also be sourced from foreign embassies and the ministries of foreign affairs of the individual countries. In Ghana, a Diaspora Support Unit was set up in 2012 in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration to, among other tasks, compile a Ghanaian diaspora data bank. Although the focus of the Unit appears to be on the diaspora outside Africa, it has the potential to be extended to Ghanaians in ECOWAS.

The use of data collected by national immigration authorities is associated with a number of advantages and challenges. Some of the migrants enter or leave the countries through unauthorized routes since West African borders are porous and poorly patrolled. The data from immigration authorities in the region also do not permit a meaningful analysis due to the fact that the data are not disaggregated by age, occupation, level of education or other relevant characteristics (Afolayan et al., 2009; Quartey, 2009). The data are also neither published nor available online, but can only be accessed on formal request.

### *International agencies*

Some international organizations have also been collecting migration statistical data in the various ECOWAS countries. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), for instance, collects data on refugees and asylum seekers. This is obtained through registration and processing of applications for refugees and asylum seekers, respectively. The UN DESA Population Division also has very useful data on profiles of international immigrants and emigrants of many countries. The database Migration Profiles – Common Set of Indicators was very useful in writing this report. The World Bank also possesses very useful databases on stocks of migrants in the various ECOWAS countries (World Bank, 2012; Ratha and Shaw, 2007). These databases were used in analysing migration trends in countries, such as Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire, where national migration data were outdated. The Migration Profiles of individual countries published by the IOM, and the DRC Global Migrants Origin Database are other useful sources of migration statistical data for most ECOWAS countries. The main advantage of data from these sources is the use of standard definitions. Data from these sources are usually available online, thereby easily accessible. However, since the data are compiled for different countries, it is sometimes difficult to get detailed information on the characteristics of migrants and their migration history.

### *Diaspora organizations*

Data on ECOWAS migrants can also be obtained from diaspora organizations, including home town associations (HTAs). These informal groups, which are based on place or community of origin, have registers for their members. The relevant primary information possessed by these groups includes age, sex, educational attainment, occupation, community of origin, duration of stay (in destination country). However, membership in such associations is voluntary and can therefore not cover all emigrants in any country.

### *Factors affecting migration data collection systems*

Interviews conducted in some countries including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Togo highlight low capacity of national statistical institutes and immigration authorities and financial constraints as important factors accounting for many of the problems discussed above. Therefore, it is recommended to enhance the capacity of the national statistical institutes to enable them to function effectively. Apart from financial support, there is the need to train staff in statistics and information technology skills to enhance data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination.

## **3.2 Labour migration patterns and trends in West Africa: A historical overview**

In this report, we define labour migrants as people who have moved from their countries of birth to other ECOWAS countries for the purposes of work. However, given that there are multiple reasons for migrating, it is difficult to obtain accurate data on the number of people who migrate solely for work-related reasons (ILO, 2012). These challenges associated with obtaining data on labour migrants are even more daunting in the West African region where there is a general paucity of migration data (Quartey, 2009). Following the ILO (2012), we assume that economically active migrants in ECOWAS countries are labour migrants. In cases, where data on migrants are not disaggregated into various age groups, data on migrant population were used in the analysis. It is our view that the patterns derived from such analyses are reliable, given the fact that labour migrants constitute about 90 per cent of the total international migrant population (ILO, 2012).

Our analysis shows that labour migration within West Africa dates back to the period before colonialism. In the pre-colonial era, movements were mainly motivated by the search of security and fertile land for settlement and

farming (Adepoju, 2003). Some cross-border movements were also caused by differences in ecological conditions which necessitated exchange of goods – such as salt, livestock and food – among the population (Zachariah et al., 1980). In the pre-colonial era, migrants regarded the West African region as a borderless area within which goods and people moved freely. Colonialism, however, changed the motivation, direction, and composition of migration by introducing and enforcing various blends of economic and political structures, and establishing national boundaries. The export-oriented colonial economic policies provoked large-scale labour requirements for plantations and mines that exceeded local supply (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003; Adepoju, 2005).

During the colonial era, various economic and recruitment measures, including compulsory recruitment, contract and forced labour legislation and agreements, were employed to stimulate labour migration from Togo, Mali and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) to the mines and plantations in Gold Coast (Ghana) and Côte d'Ivoire. Transportation development, especially the construction of rail and road networks, also stimulated large-scale, male-dominated, seasonal and cross-border labour migrations within the region by reducing the distance and hazards of journeys that previously discouraged long-distance migrations (Adepoju, 2005). Seasonal migration from Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Mali to the groundnut areas of Senegambia, for instance, began by the early 1920s. In Mali, the motivation for young men to take up seasonal work in the groundnut regions of Senegal and the Gambia were mostly to escape recruitment for forced labour and to earn money to pay taxes. The number of Malian workers in the groundnut sector reached 25,000 to 30,000 by 1920-21. The numbers fell sharply in the early 1930s as earnings fell with the drop in the world groundnut price, but rose to 34,000 by 1938 and continued to fluctuate between roughly 7,000 and 25,000 through 1960 (David, 1980). Although most ECOWAS countries do not have reliable data on intraregional mobility during the colonial era, available evidence suggests that the direction of labour movement was generally from poor northern or Sahel West African countries to the plantation and mining areas in southern West African countries (Bump, 2006).

In the 1960s, the composition and direction of population movement in the region were largely influenced by colonial economic and political legacies. Individuals and families migrated in search of better living conditions, especially to cocoa production areas of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003). Also, the seasonal migration of farmers from Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Mali to the groundnut fields in Senegal and the Gambia intensified (Swindell, 1977; Zachariah et al., 1980). Intraregional mobility in the early

post-colonial era was generally still dominated by North–South movements from landlocked countries of Sahel West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) to the plantation-rich and mineral-rich coastal countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and the Gambia). Of these countries, Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana were the two most important migrant destinations in the 1960s. In Côte d’Ivoire, cocoa and coffee production necessitated the recruitment of large numbers of farm labourers from neighbouring poor regions, especially Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali. After independence, bilateral agreements on the conditions of employing workers from Burkina Faso were signed between the governments of Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso on 20 March 1960. Côte d’Ivoire had similar bilateral agreements with Mali, Benin, and Guinea. These agreements facilitated migration of labour from these Sahel countries to the plantation zones of Côte d’Ivoire. The migrants generally worked as farm labourers, artisans, administrative workers, hawkers, and so on (Lazare, Côte d’Ivoire country report). On the other hand, Ghana attracted many migrants from Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Niger, Mali and Nigeria because of the massive extraction of minerals and the cultivation of cocoa taking place in the country (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2011a).

By the 1970s, Nigeria also became a major migrant destination. Buoyed by revenue from oil production, a number of sectors of the Nigerian economy needed a greater supply of both professionals and low-skilled workers (Adepoju, 2005). The ECOWAS immigrants in Nigeria mainly came from Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Cabo Verde. Migration from Ghana to Nigeria was especially high during the 1970s as the economic situation in Ghana deteriorated and the Nigerian economy boomed, driven by the dramatic increase in oil prices after 1973. It is estimated that one million Ghanaians migrated to Nigeria by the late 1970s (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003). In the 1970s, Côte d’Ivoire also received many Ghanaian migrants, but they were less skilled relative to their counterparts in Nigeria (Awumbila et al., 2011). Also in the 1970s, Togo, which was a major migrant-sending country during the 1960s, attracted migrants from other West African countries, including Ghana and Benin. Togo was booming economically because of the high world price of phosphate (Manley, 2003). Its free port and duty free shops also made Togo a commercial hub in West Africa (Zachariah et al., 1980:13). However, the Togolese economy declined again from the 1980s and this affected its ability to attract migrants from other ECOWAS countries.

Since the 1980s, migration flows from several ECOWAS countries have increased, in line with global migration trends (Papastergiadis, 2000; IOM, 2005). At the same time, the patterns of migration and flows have changed slightly. The

major labour-exporting countries in the region have continued to be Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. However, Liberia and Sierra Leone joined these traditional labour-exporting countries with high levels of emigration in the 1990s, mainly as a result of political crises. Senegal has been a labour-exporting and labour-receiving country. It also now serves as a transit country for migrants seeking to enter Europe clandestinely via Las Palmas (Canary Islands) to Spain. Again, since the late 1980s, traditional labour-receiving countries, such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Ghana, have experienced political and economic problems, spurring emigration of their nationals to Europe, North America and other African countries (Adepoju, 2005). Most of the migrants who have been moving to Europe and North America are highly skilled professionals, including doctors, nurses, lecturers, and engineers (Afolayan et al., 2009; Quartey, 2009).

As there are few available data on return migration in many of the ECOWAS countries, many of the country reports did not cover return migration. However, the country reports of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ghana note that in the last decade some return migration has occurred. For instance, a significant proportion of people who left Sierra Leone in the 1990s have returned due to political stability and improved economic prospects. By 1999, about 1,400 Sierra Leoneans returned home from Liberia and Mali, while about 240,000 Sierra Leoneans also returned from Guinea, Liberia and the Gambia (Wesseh, Sierra Leone country report). Ghana has also been experiencing return migration of its nationals in response to political stability and recent economic development (Manuh, 2006). Oil and natural gas discoveries and an improving economic climate as well as political stability have encouraged return migration of Ghanaian professionals and semi-skilled migrants (Quartey and Agyei, Ghana country report).

### **3.3 Typologies of migration in ECOWAS**

In relation to types of migration prevailing in the region, intraregional labour migration in West Africa includes permanent migration, temporary/seasonal migration, cross-border movements, return migration and transit migration. With regard to permanent migration, there are some nationals from ECOWAS Member States who have taken advantage of the provisions in the Free Movement Protocol to relocate permanently or stay in another member State for relatively longer periods. Another group of permanent migrants (period of stay may exceed a year) includes students, whose numbers are increasing among both immigrants and emigrants within the region. Seasonal labour migration is commonly associated with those living in the Sahel Agro-Ecological

Zone due to the relatively short rainy season which alternates with that of the Forest and Transitional Agro-Ecological Zones (Adepoju, 2003 and 2005). In Ghana, for instance, the seasonal immigrants include Fulani cattle herdsman and seasonal workers from Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali (Quartey, 2009).

Migrants in the ECOWAS region also include temporary cross-border workers, female traders and farm labourers, professionals and clandestine workers. Movements are essentially intraregional, short-term and male-dominated and are in response to the interdependent economies of neighbouring countries, with some of these countries being transit points (Adepoju, 2005). For example, migrants still migrate seasonally to the groundnut farms of the Senegambia, and a number of Malians migrate to peanut and cotton plantations in the Gambia (Kea, 2012).

Another important feature of contemporary migration patterns in West Africa is the fact that women migrants are increasingly drawn to the wage labour market (both formal and informal) as a survival strategy to augment meagre family incomes. Traditional male-dominated migratory streams in West Africa are increasingly feminised. Commercial migration is female-dominated, helping to promote intra-regional trade. Trafficking in children from Mali, Togo, and Nigeria to Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa and coffee plantation areas is also pervasive (Adepoju, 2005). Child labour migration is also quite prevalent in Benin. Ouensavi and Kielland (2001) estimated that between 10,000 and 100,000 children have been trafficked from the country for work in other countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Nigeria.

Large-scale refugee movements are also widespread in contemporary West Africa (Ogata 2005; Boateng, 2012). The major causes of these movements include: the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s; political tensions in Togo and Cote d'Ivoire; and ethnic conflicts in northern parts of Nigeria and Ghana. As of 2010, Liberia had about 62,015 refugees in ECOWAS Member States. The majority (25,563) were in Côte d'Ivoire, followed by Ghana (11,585), Guinea (9,789), Sierra Leone (8,341) and Nigeria (5,316). Côte d'Ivoire also had about 31,043 refugees in ECOWAS countries. Ghana also had 13,575 refugees in Togo, mostly displaced by ethnic conflicts in the northern part of the country. Togo also had 1,755 refugees in Ghana and another 21 in the Gambia, while Sierra Leone had refugees in the Gambia (134), Ghana (149), Guinea (177) and Liberia (170) (UN DESA and UNICEF, 2012). In 2012, about 123,066 Malians were living as refugees in other countries, including Ghana and Niger. In many ECOWAS countries, these refugees also contribute to the active labour force (Boateng, 2012).



### 3.4 Characteristics of labour migrants in ECOWAS countries

#### *Countries of origin and destination*

According to Olsen (2011), with more than 3 per cent of the regional population circulating within ECOWAS, migration within West Africa is about six times more prolific than intra-European mobility (which is estimated at 0.5 per cent of the European population living as expatriates within the European Union). Today, almost all West African countries are both migrant-sending areas and immigration destinations. In order to explain the distribution of ECOWAS migrants by country of origin and destination, the research team initially sought to use data from national population census reports and/or other sources from the various ECOWAS countries. Unfortunately, a number of the countries in the region do not have any current data on migration. In such cases where there were no reliable data from a particular country, migration data from the 2010 Bilateral Migration and Remittances database of the World Bank was used. While this database also does not have data for all the ECOWAS countries, it was possible to create a data matrix table that shows ECOWAS immigrants and emigrants in the 15 countries investigated. Despite the inherent challenges associated with the use of data from different sources (Bryman, 2001), the authors believe that the data provided here is reasonably reliable.

Table 2 summarizes the data on *absolute* numbers of immigrants and emigrants for the 15 countries investigated. In absolute terms, Côte d'Ivoire had the highest number of ECOWAS immigrants (2,350,024), followed by Nigeria (823,743), Ghana (409,910), Guinea (381,315) and the Gambia (278,793). Côte d'Ivoire is still the most popular destination for ECOWAS migrants because its economy has historically been strong as a result of cocoa production. The country constitutes about 40 per cent of GDP of the West African Economic Monetary Union (Direction des Services Socioculturels et de la Promotion Humaine de la Mairie du Plateau, 2009). Recent political tensions may have displaced a number of the people from Côte d'Ivoire, but the country still has the highest number of migrants from ECOWAS countries. Countries that receive the lowest number of ECOWAS migrants are Cabo Verde (8,782), Guinea Bissau (15,985), Burkina Faso (53,086), and Mali (65,949). Table 2 also indicates that countries that send out the most emigrants are Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea and Benin, in order of magnitude. Figure 2 is a map that illustrates these major migration flows between ECOWAS countries. It clearly shows major migrant-sending and -receiving countries, as well as the direction of the migration flows. It is clear from both figure 2 and table 2 that countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, and to some extent Guinea, which are key destination countries in the region, are also important sending countries as well.

Table 2: Countries of origin and destination of ECOWAS migrants in West Africa

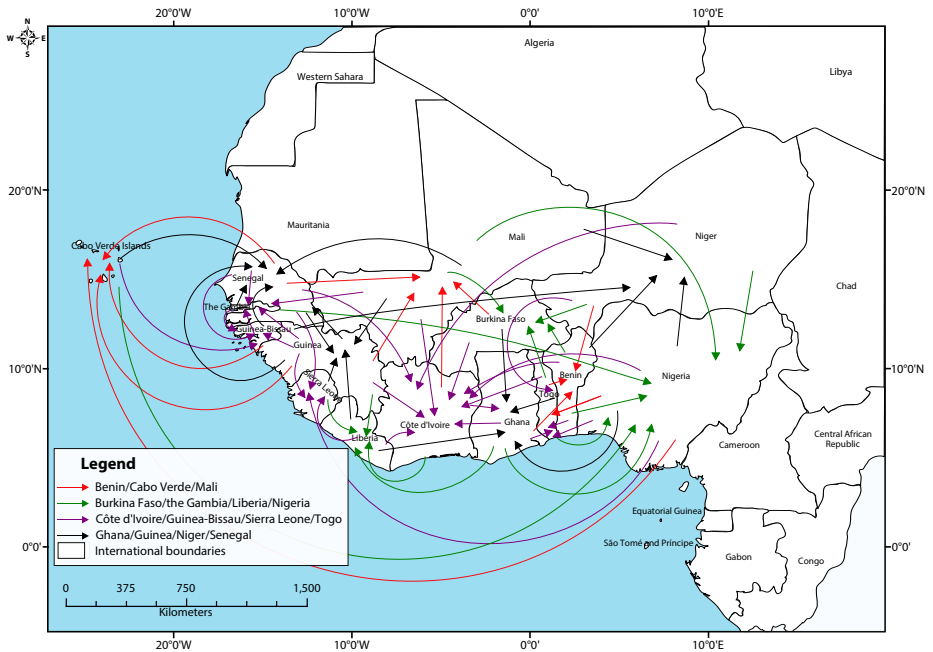
Destination country (read down)	Source country (read across)							
	Benin	Burkina Faso	Cabo Verde	Côte d'Ivoire	Gambia	Ghana	Guinea	Guinea Bissau
Benin	-	-	-	-	-	6,472	-	-
Burkina Faso	5,851	-	947	2,345	103	2,579	1,025	245
Cabo Verde	15	9	-	24	91	67	456	5,543
Côte d'Ivoire	62,371	1,310,892	309	-	857	111,001	134,171	388
Gambia, the	-	-	-	-	-	-	99,155	6,501
Ghana	-	30,664	-	5,001	1,928	-	-	-
Guinea	2,310	472	-	2,429	797	1,314	-	2,749
Guinea Bissau	-	-	436	-	909	-	4,833	-
Liberia	-	211	-	9,180	679	6,744	33,746	-
Mali	-	22,174	-	18,672	-	-	16,464	-
Niger	27,691	29,881	-	1,859	-	2,599	-	-
Nigeria	238,561	8,307	4,259	4,361	6,509	186,015	6,195	4,847
Senegal	-	-	9,315	-	5,881	-	80,773	24,155
Sierra Leone	-	-	-	352	2,361	1,280	58,699	-
Togo	67,665	12,075	36	2,941	944	29,416	2,964	116
<b>Total emigrants</b>	<b>404,464</b>	<b>1,414,685</b>	<b>15,302</b>	<b>47,164</b>	<b>21,059</b>	<b>347,487</b>	<b>438,481</b>	<b>44,544</b>

*Source:* Computed by authors based on the following: Benin – National Statistics Institute of Benin (INSAE French acronym), 2002; Burkina Faso – General Housing and Population Census (RGPH French acronym) 2006; Cabo Verde – 2010 National Population and Housing Census Report; Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Senegal – World Bank Bilateral Migration and Remittances Database (2010); the Gambia – Gambia Immigration Department (2011); Ghana – Ghana Statistical Service, 2012; Liberia – 2008 National Population and Housing Census Report; Mali – National Directorate of Statistics and Information (DNSI French acronym), 2009; Sierra Leone – 2004 National Population and Housing Census Report; Togo – 2010 National Population and Housing Census.

Source country (read across)								
Liberia	Mali	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo	Unknown origin among ECOWAS	Total immigrants
-	-	49,300	29,018	-	-	31,306	16,471	<b>132,567</b>
284	18,526	5,690	5,299	1,407	75	8,710	-	<b>53,086</b>
3	26	2	740	1,634	141	31	-	<b>8,782</b>
74,734	440,960	84,705	38,867	33,250	992	56,527	-	<b>2,350,024</b>
-	3,584	-	3,276	162,582	3,695	-	-	<b>278,793</b>
13,396	-	-	124,653	-	1,043	31,973	201,252	<b>409,910</b>
189,437	15,276	1,369	-	6,652	157,067	1,443	-	<b>381,315</b>
-	-	-	-	9,807	-	-	-	<b>15,985</b>
-	1,209	-	4,696	326	11,816	349	365	<b>69,321</b>
-	-	3,540	-	5,099	-	-	-	<b>65,949</b>
-	69,790	-	30,056	-	-	15,001	-	<b>176,877</b>
19,321	133,464	87,529	-	4,748	3,836	115,791	-	<b>823,743</b>
-	17,502	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>137,626</b>
21,134	709	-	1,996	633	-	35	-	<b>87,199</b>
150	7,641	61,126	29,347	895	93	-	-	<b>215,409</b>
<b>318,459</b>	<b>708,687</b>	<b>293,261</b>	<b>267,948</b>	<b>227,033</b>	<b>178,758</b>	<b>261,166</b>	<b>218,088</b>	<b>5,206,586</b>

*Note:* There are empty cells because all the countries usually provide data on migrants from major source regions only. Consistent with international standards, empty cells are taken to mean zero (see World Bank, 2010).

Figure 2: Map showing major migration flows of ECOWAS immigrants and emigrants



Source: Authors construction based on tables 4 and 5.

Given that various countries have different population sizes, the study also examined the stock of emigrants and immigrants in each country as a percentage of the country's total population (see table 3). For comparability, the 2010 population of individual countries as provided by the UN DESA Population Division was used in computing the share of the migrant population. Table 3 clearly indicates that the Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire have the largest percentage of their populations made up of immigrants from other ECOWAS countries. About 16.1 per cent of the population of the Gambia and 11.9 per cent of the population of Côte d'Ivoire are made up of immigrants from other ECOWAS countries. On the other hand, only 0.3 per cent of the population of Burkina Faso and 0.4 per cent of Mali's population are immigrants from other ECOWAS countries. Therefore, although a country like the Gambia does not rank very high in terms of migrant destinations in ECOWAS, when considering immigrants from ECOWAS countries as a percentage of the total population in the Gambia, it ranks the highest in ECOWAS.

In terms of sending countries, table 3 indicates that 8.6 per cent of nationals of Burkina Faso and 8 per cent of Liberians were living in other ECOWAS countries. Other countries with a relatively high proportion of their citizens living in ECOWAS countries are Mali (4.6%), Benin (4.6%), Guinea (4.4%), and Togo (4.3%). It is also clear from table 3 that although all the ECOWAS countries from which migrants leave also receive migrants from other countries, Burkina Faso is a predominantly migrant-sending country. The country had 1,361,599 more emigrants in ECOWAS countries than the number of ECOWAS immigrants it was hosting. Other predominantly migrant-sending countries are Mali, Benin, and Liberia. Thus, similar to the situation in the 1970s, landlocked countries in the Sahel region are predominantly migrant source areas. Table 3 also indicates that some countries are both immigration as well as emigration countries. Guinea, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal send out almost an equal number of emigrants as they receive immigrants. This has significant implications for migration policy.

To enhance our understanding of the flow of migrants between various countries, the figures in table 2 were further converted into percentages (see tables 4 and 5). Table 4 provides percentage distribution of *immigrants* in each ECOWAS country by source countries, while table 5 shows percentage distribution of *emigrants* from each country according to destination countries. Table 4 indicates that each of the ECOWAS countries has a dominant migrant-source country. For instance, about 55.8 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants in Côte d'Ivoire are from Burkina Faso. Similarly, about 63.2 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants in Cabo Verde are from Guinea Bissau, while 67.3 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants in Sierra Leone are from Guinea.

Table 5 also clearly demonstrates that migrants from each country tend to have a popular destination, which is not necessarily the most economically prosperous country in the region. For instance, 92.7 per cent (1,310,892) of migrants from Burkina Faso were in Côte d'Ivoire as of 2010. Similarly, 87.9 per cent of migrants from Sierra Leone were in Guinea, while 60.9 per cent of migrants from Cabo Verde were in Senegal. In some cases, the popular destination for a country's emigrants is also the most popular source region for its immigrants. For instance, majority of emigrants from Mali (62.2%) are in Côte d'Ivoire, while Mali also receives the highest proportion (39.6%) of migrants from Côte d'Ivoire. Similarly, the largest group (37.2%) of ECOWAS immigrants in Benin were Nigerians. At the same time, the largest groups of ECOWAS immigrants in Nigeria were from Benin (23%) and Ghana (22.6%). Ghana is also the most popular destination for migrants from Nigeria.

Table 3: Stock of ECOWAS immigrants and emigrants

Country	Population (2010) (000)	Total number of immigrants from ECOWAS countries	Immigrants from ECOWAS countries as a percentage of total population	Total number of emigrants in ECOWAS countries	Emigrants in ECOWAS countries as a percentage of total population	Net migration within ECOWAS (absolute)
Benin	8,850	132,567	1.50	404,464	4.57	-271,897
Burkina Faso	16,469	53,086	0.32	1,414,685	8.59	-1,361,599
Cabo Verde	496	8,782	1.77	15,302	3.09	-6,520
Côte d'Ivoire	19,738	2,350,024	11.91	47,164	0.24	2,302,860
Gambia, the	1,728	278,793	16.13	21,059	1.22	257,734
Ghana	24,392	409,910	1.68	347,487	1.42	62,423
Guinea	9,982	381,315	3.82	438,481	4.39	-57,166
Guinea Bissau	1,515	15,985	1.06	44,544	2.94	-28,559
Liberia	3,994	69,321	1.74	318,459	7.97	-249,138
Mali	15,370	65,949	0.43	708,687	4.61	-642,738
Niger	15,512	176,877	1.14	293,261	1.89	-116,384
Nigeria	158,423	823,743	0.52	267,948	0.17	555,795
Senegal	12,434	137,626	1.11	227,033	1.83	-89,407
Sierra Leone	5,868	87,199	1.49	178,758	3.05	-91,559
Togo	6,028	215,409	3.57	261,166	4.33	-45,757

Source: Data on immigrants and emigrants: Benin – National Statistics Institute of Benin (INSAE French acronym), 2002; Burkina Faso – General Housing and Population Census (RGPH French acronym) 2006; Cabo Verde – 2010 National Population and Housing Census Report; Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea Bissau and Senegal – World Bank Bilateral Migration and Remittances Database (2010); the Gambia – Gambia Immigration Department (2011); Ghana – Ghana Statistical Service, 2012; Liberia – 2008 National Population and Housing Census Report; Mali – National Directorate of Statistics and Information (DNSI French acronym), 2009; Sierra Leone – 2004 National Population and Housing Census Report; Togo – 2010 National Population and Housing Census. Data on population: UN DESA Pop. Division, 2010.

Geographical proximity seems to influence the choice of destination for many migrants, as in the case of Benin and Nigeria. Colonial legacy and common official language may also explain why migrants from Ghana are more likely to move to Nigeria and vice versa. The same factors may explain the exchange of migrants between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire. Ethnic ties also tend to influence the choice of destination among ECOWAS migrants. Most of the Ewes in Togo, for instance, move yearly to stay and work with their relatives in the Volta Region of Ghana, a movement that carries through from a pre-colonial legacy of free movement in West Africa. As the artificially drawn borders created by colonial administrations often span ethnic communities, most ECOWAS migrants perceive their mobility from one country to another as being within one sociocultural space rather than between two nations (Afolayan et al., 2009). Thus, as the Ewes of Togo move to and from Ghana because of their ethnic linkages with the Ewes in Ghana, there is much movement of the Ouatchi, Adja, Kabré, and Losso peoples to and from Benin. Similarly, the Kpelle, which is the largest ethnic group in Liberia, are also found in southern Guinea. Hence, members of this group tend to move across the boundaries of Liberia and Guinea. Additionally, the Kissi are found in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, while the Malinke are found in several countries including the Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Liberia. These ethnic ties and the use of the same language make it easy for migrants to stay and work in different countries. Thus, the destinations of migrants have mainly been countries that share some political, historical and cultural ties, consistent with the network theory of social capital widely used to explain the destination choice, the migration process and livelihoods of migrants in a new environment (Cassarino, 2004; Boateng, 2012). Figures 3 and 4 illustrate these migration flows. Figure 3 illustrates the flow of immigrants from the three most important source countries into each of the top four migrant-receiving countries (namely Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea), while figure 4 shows migration flows from each of the top four migrant-sending countries to their three most important destinations.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of ECOWAS immigrants in West African countries according to source countries

Destination country of immigrants (read down)	Source country of immigrants (read across)													Total no of ECOWAS immigrants			
	Benin	Burkina Faso	Cabo Verde	Côte d'Ivoire	Gambia, the	Ghana	Guinea	Guinea Bissau	Liberia	Mali	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal		Sierra Leone	Togo	
Benin	-	-	-	-	-	4.88	-	-	-	-	37.19	21.89	-	-	23.61	12.43	132,567
Burkina Faso	11.02	-	1.78	4.42	0.19	4.86	1.93	0.46	0.53	34.9	10.72	9.98	2.65	0.14	16.41	-	53,086
Cabo Verde	0.17	0.10	-	0.27	1.04	0.76	5.19	63.15	0.03	0.30	0.02	8.43	18.61	1.61	0.35	-	8,782
Côte d'Ivoire	2.65	55.78	0.01	-	0.04	4.72	5.71	0.12	3.18	18.76	3.60	1.65	0.41	0.04	2.41	-	2,350,024
Gambia, the	-	-	-	-	-	-	35.57	2.33	-	1.29	-	1.18	58.32	1.33	-	-	278,793
Ghana	-	7.48	-	1.22	0.47	-	-	-	3.27	-	-	30.41	-	0.25	7.80	49.10	409,910
Guinea	0.61	0.12	-	0.64	0.21	0.34	-	0.72	49.68	4.01	0.36	-	1.74	41.19	0.38	-	381,315
Guinea Bissau	-	-	2.73	-	5.69	-	30.23	-	-	-	-	-	61.35	-	-	-	15,985
Liberia	-	0.30	-	13.24	0.98	9.73	48.68	-	-	1.74	-	6.77	0.47	17.05	0.50	0.53	69,321
Mali	-	33.62	-	28.31	-	-	24.96	-	-	-	5.37	-	7.73	-	-	-	65,949
Niger	15.66	16.89	-	1.05	-	1.67	-	-	-	39.46	-	16.99	-	-	8.48	-	176,877
Nigeria	28.96	1.01	0.52	0.53	0.79	22.58	0.75	0.59	2.35	16.2	10.63	-	0.58	0.47	14.06	-	823,743
Senegal	-	-	6.77	-	4.27	-	58.69	17.55	-	12.72	-	-	-	-	-	-	137,626
Sierra Leone	-	-	-	0.40	2.71	1.47	67.32	-	24.24	0.81	-	2.29	0.73	-	0.04	-	87,199
Togo	31.41	5.61	0.02	1.37	0.44	13.66	1.38	0.05	0.07	3.55	28.38	13.62	0.42	0.04	-	-	215,409

Source: Computed by authors based on the following: Benin – National Statistics Institute of Benin (INSAE French acronym), 2002; Burkina Faso – General Housing and Population Census (RGPH French acronym) 2006; Cabo Verde – 2010 National Population and Housing Census Report; Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Senegal – World Bank Bilateral Migration and Remittances Database (2010); the Gambia – Gambia Immigration Department (2011); Ghana – Ghana Statistical Service, 2012; Liberia – 2008 National Population and Housing Census Report; Mali – National Directorate of Statistics and Information (DNSI French acronym), 2009; Sierra Leone – 2004 National Population and Housing Census Report; Togo – 2010 National Population and Housing Census.



Table 5: Percentage distribution of ECOWAS emigrants according to country of destination

Destination country of emigrants (read down)	Source country of emigrants (read across)														
	Benin	Burkina Faso	Cabo Verde	Côte d'Ivoire	Gambia, the	Ghana	Guinea	Guinea Bissau	Liberia	Mali	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo
Benin	-	1.45	-	4.97	-	1.86	-	-	-	-	16.81	10.83	-	-	11.99
Burkina Faso	1.45	-	6.19	4.97	0.49	0.74	0.55	0.09	2.61	1.94	1.98	0.62	0.62	0.04	3.33
Cabo Verde	0.003	0.0006	-	0.5	0.43	0.02	0.1	0.0009	0.004	0.0007	0.28	0.72	0.08	0.01	0.01
Côte d'Ivoire	15.42	92.66	2.02	-	4.07	31.94	30.6	23.47	62.22	28.88	14.51	14.65	0.55	21.64	21.64
Gambia, the	-	-	-	-	-	-	22.61	14.59	0.51	-	1.22	71.61	2.07	-	-
Ghana	-	2.17	-	10.6	9.15	-	-	4.21	-	-	46.52	-	0.58	12.24	12.24
Guinea	0.57	0.03	-	5.15	3.78	0.38	-	6.17	59.49	2.15	0.47	-	2.93	87.87	0.55
Guinea Bissau	-	-	2.85	-	4.32	-	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	4.32	-	-
Liberia	-	0.02	-	19.46	3.22	1.94	7.7	-	0.17	-	1.72	0.14	6.61	0.13	0.13
Mali	-	1.57	-	39.59	-	-	3.75	-	-	1.21	-	2.25	-	-	-
Niger	6.85	2.11	-	3.94	-	0.75	-	-	9.85	-	11.22	-	-	-	5.74
Nigeria	58.98	0.59	27.83	9.25	30.91	53.53	1.41	10.88	18.83	29.85	-	2.09	2.15	44.34	44.34
Senegal	-	-	60.87	-	27.93	-	18.42	54.23	2.47	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sierra Leone	-	-	-	0.75	11.21	0.37	13.39	-	6.64	0.1	0.74	0.28	-	0.01	0.01
Togo	16.73	0.85	0.24	6.24	4.48	8.47	0.68	0.26	1.08	20.84	10.95	0.39	0.05	-	-
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of emigrants	404,464	1,414,685	15,302	47,164	21,059	347,487	438,481	44,544	318,459	708,687	293,261	267,948	227,033	178,758	261,166

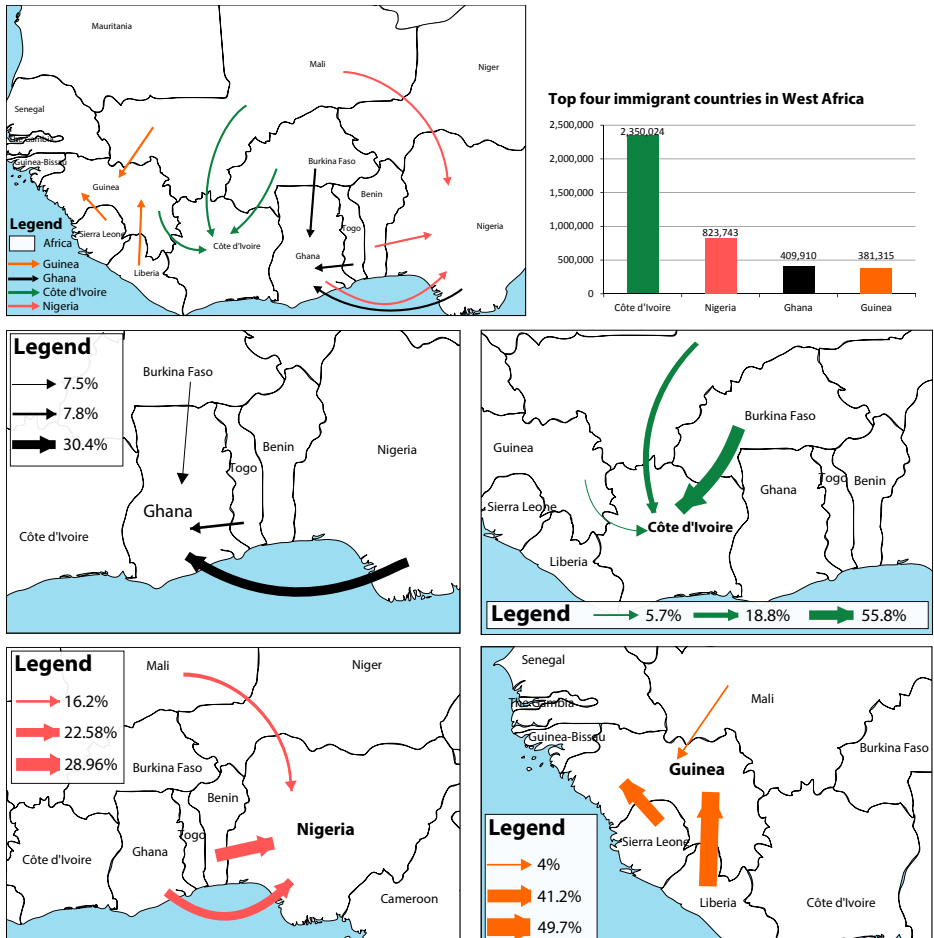
*Source:* Computed by authors based on the following: Benin – National Statistics Institute of Benin (INSAE French acronym), 2002; Burkina Faso – General Housing and Population Census (RGPH French acronym) 2006; Cabo Verde – 2010 National Population and Housing Census Report; Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Senegal – World Bank Bilateral Migration and Remittances Database (2010); the Gambia – Gambia Immigration Department (2011); Ghana – Ghana Statistical Service, 2012; Liberia – 2008 National Population and Housing Census Report; Mali – National Directorate of Statistics and Information (DNSI French acronym), 2009; Sierra Leone – 2004 National Population and Housing Census Report; Togo – 2010 National Population and Housing Census.

*Note:* There are empty cells because all the countries usually provide data on migrants from only major source regions. Consistent with international standards, empty cells are taking to mean zero (see World Bank, 2010).

### *Distribution of migrants by age and sex*

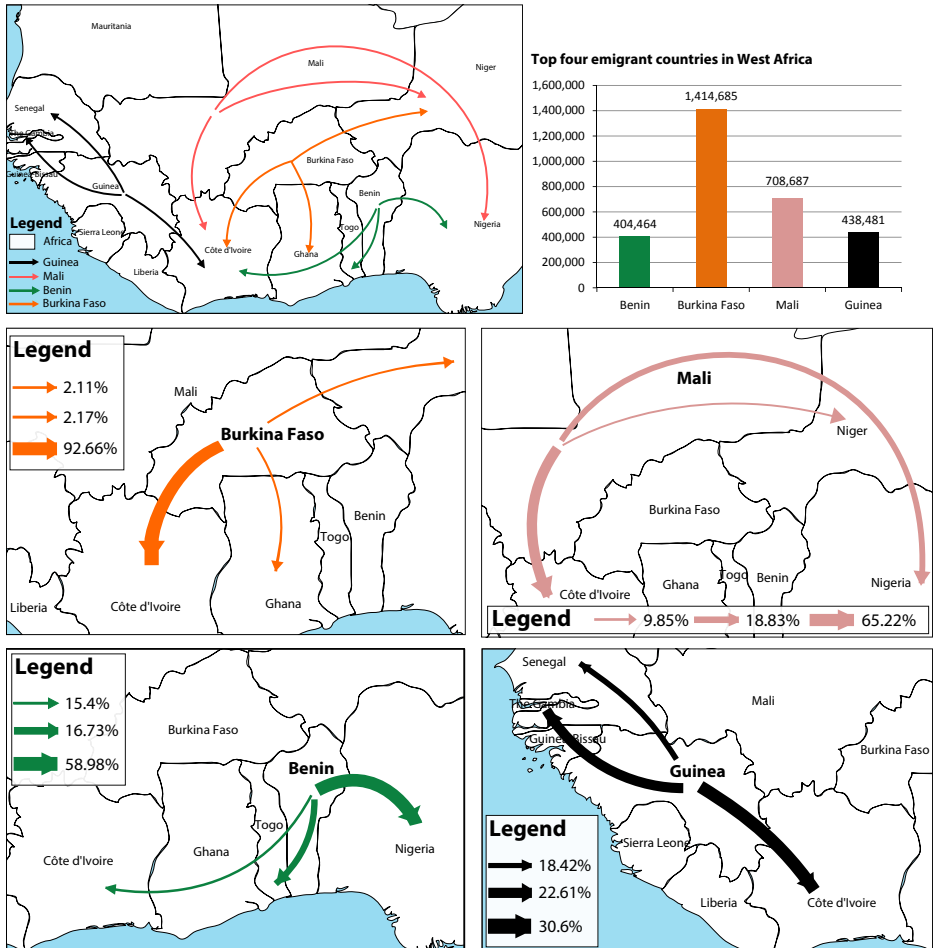
Data on age distribution of migrants was generally difficult to find as many countries have not disaggregated their migration data into various age groups. Only a few countries have detailed data on the distribution of migrants according to age. Furthermore, the age groups used in different countries are not the same. An analysis of the data provided by a few country reports, however, suggests that most migrants are in the active labour age group. For instance, 63 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants in Ghana, 64 per cent in Liberia and 50 per cent in Togo were in the economically active population (15–64 years of age). More specifically, about 56.4 per cent of the male and 65 per cent of female Ghanaians in Togo were in the 15–59 age group. Similarly, about 59.7 per cent of male and 54 per cent of female Burkinabe in Togo were in the 15–59 year group. The situations in the Gambia, Senegal and Nigeria were the same, with more than 50 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants in the economically active age group. This indicates that the major cause of mobility in the region is the pursuit of livelihood activities. Again, at least 10 per cent of immigrants in each of the countries investigated were children (less than 15 years of age). This phenomenon requires more detailed analysis as it could indicate the importance of family migration, but probably also a growing trend of independent child migration.

Figure 3: Map showing major flows of ECOWAS migrants into the top four migrant-receiving countries



Source: Authors' construction.

Figure 4: Map showing the major flows of migrants from top four ECOWAS migrant-source countries



Source: Authors' construction.

In terms of sex composition, West African immigrants in many ECOWAS countries are slightly more likely to be male. Table 6 shows the sex distribution of immigrants in selected ECOWAS countries where recent age-specific data exist from the country reports. Apart from Burkina Faso, male ECOWAS migrants outnumber female migrants in all the countries presented in table 6. Cabo Verde and Liberia have the highest percentage of male ECOWAS immigrants,

with 87.2 per cent and 60.5 per cent, respectively. Burkina Faso has slightly less males, at 49.5 per cent. This trend is not surprising as labour migration in Africa has been traditionally regarded as a male-dominated phenomenon (Adepoju, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2009). The aggregated figures presented in table 6 may, however, conceal patterns of distribution of migrants from some specific ECOWAS countries. For instance, Togo generally has more male ECOWAS immigrants than female immigrants. Yet, 59.5 per cent of the 29,416 *Ghanaian* immigrants in Togo during the 2010 census were women. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most of the Ghanaian women in Togo are traders. Similarly, 51.6 per cent of the 67,665 immigrants from Benin in Togo were women.

Table 6: Stock of West African immigrants in selected ECOWAS countries by sex

Countries	Male		Female		Total number
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Burkina Faso	26,293	49.5	26,793	50.5	<b>53,086</b>
Cabo Verde	7,658	87.2	1,124	12.8	<b>8,782</b>
Ghana	224,414	54.7	185,496	45.3	<b>409,910</b>
Liberia	41,906	60.5	27,415	39.5	<b>69,321</b>
Sierra Leone	47,276	54.2	39,923	45.8	<b>87,199</b>
Togo	109,693	50.9	105,716	49.1	<b>215,409</b>

*Source:* Burkina Faso – General Housing and Population Census (RGPH French acronym) 2006; Cabo Verde – 2010 National Population and Housing Census Report; Ghana – Ghana Statistical Service, 2012; Liberia – 2008 National Population and Housing Census Report; Sierra Leone – 2004 National Population and Housing Census Report; Togo – 2010 National Population and Housing Census.

*Note:* This table contains data on immigrants for only a few countries because there are no data on sex distribution of immigrants of other countries. Also, there are no data on distribution of emigrants by gender for all the countries.

### *Migrants' educational and skills qualifications*

Data on migrants' educational and skills qualifications were available in only a few country reports. The majority of West African migrants in the region are not very highly educated. Available data show for instance that the majority (51.8%) of the non-nationals living in Burkina Faso are uneducated. However, there are some disparities among the various nationalities. The proportion of uneducated migrants tends to be higher among the Malians (83.2%) and Nigeriens (71%). This may be explained by the fact that literacy rates vary in general, tending to be higher in Benin than Mali and Niger, for example (UNDP,

2011). Anecdotal evidence suggests that very highly educated citizens (such as university graduates) are more likely to find good jobs in their home countries. If they choose to migrate, they may go to Europe or the United States where they can earn higher wages. In Ghana, for instance, health workers, nurses and engineers are more likely to move to Europe and North America, than another African country (Quartey, 2009). The situation is similar in Nigeria where highly skilled health professionals tend to migrate to developed countries (Afolayan, 2009). Similar trends have been reported in Togo where 10.1 per cent of trained physicians have left the country. Similarly, 40.4 per cent of physicians born in the country have migrated to other regions, mainly in Europe (World Bank, 2011).

Despite this trend, some West African migrants in ECOWAS countries are highly educated. In recent years, a number of Togolese university graduates have moved to Ghana and Nigeria in search of jobs. In some cases, these graduates teach French in Ghanaian and Nigerian basic schools. Similarly, some highly skilled migrants move between Nigeria and Ghana. A higher number of students in some West African countries are from ECOWAS Member States. In Ghana, for example, a total of 3,356 non-Ghanaians from 61 countries were admitted into six public universities in Ghana during the 2010/2011 academic year. In fact, four out of every five foreign students in Ghana are from ECOWAS Member States, with a majority of students (72.9%) coming from Nigeria alone. As shown in table 7, other West African countries also attract tertiary-level students. According to the UN DESA Population Division, in 2010, there were 5,912 Togolese students in Benin, while another 711 were in Burkina Faso. Nigeria had 1,091 tertiary-level students in Gambia. Burkina Faso had 2,678 tertiary-level students in Côte d'Ivoire, while Côte d'Ivoire had 15,578 tertiary-level students in Burkina Faso. The high number of migrants studying in other ECOWAS countries could be explained by the relatively high quality of education in the receiving countries compared to source countries. In some cases, students from English-speaking countries migrate to French-speaking countries to learn French. For instance, Ghana, for decades, has been sending at least one hundred tertiary-level students to the Centre d'Etude de la Langue Française (*Centre for French Language Study*) at Université d'Abomey Calavi in Benin for a year's study of French language. Data from the Scholarship Secretariat in Ghana indicated that between the 2009 and the 2013 academic years, an estimated 450 students benefited from the Year Abroad Programme in Benin.

Table 7: Migration of tertiary-level students in West Africa, 2010

Destination country	Source country											
	Benin	Burkina Faso	Côte d'Ivoire	Ghana	Guinea	Liberia	Mali	Niger	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo
Benin												5,912
Burkina Faso			15,578				840	672				711
Côte d'Ivoire		2,678		737			490					
Gambia, the				345					1,091	582	1,375	
Guinea			450			510	510			830		
Mali		288	591							493		
Niger	350	221	178				291		193			
Senegal	671											
Sierra Leone					310	220			240			

Source: Compiled based on data obtained from UN DESA Population Division and UNICEF (2012).

Note: Some ECOWAS countries are not covered here because data on migration of tertiary-level students are available for only the few countries covered here.

### *Economic activities of ECOWAS migrants*

It is quite difficult to compare across ECOWAS countries the sectors of the economy in which migrants are engaged because different countries have different systems for classifying occupations. However, an analysis of the data provided by the country reports reveals that migrants in most ECOWAS countries tend to work in the informal sector as traders, artisans, and farmers. For instance, according to the *2010 Gambia Household Integrated Survey (IHS)*, non-Gambians are more frequently engaged in retail trade (Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Surveys of the fishery sector in the Gambia suggest that up to 60 per cent of fishermen in the area are foreign-born, mainly from Senegal but also from Ghana (IMF, 2007; Mandy, 2009). In Cabo Verde, of about 5,619 work permits issued between 1976 and 2008, 2,617 (46.6%) were issued to people working in the commerce and service sectors, with only nine (0.2%) working in the banking and insurance sector (Cabo Verde National Institute of Statistics, 2012). In Ghana, managers constitute only 2.8 per cent of ECOWAS

immigrants, while skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers constitute about 34.6 per cent of the ECOWAS immigrants. Another 25.6 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants in Ghana work in the sales and service sectors, while about 14 per cent are craft and related trades workers (GSS, 2012). As shown in table 8, the situation is similar in Côte d'Ivoire. While 9 per cent of Ivoirians were employed in the formal sector in 2002, only 4.6 per cent of Malians and 2.5 per cent of Ghanaians in Côte d'Ivoire were working in the formal sector (AGEPE, 2006). The low educational level of many ECOWAS migrants and scarcity of job opportunities in the region may explain why many of them do not work in the formal sector. Insufficient proficiency in the destination country's language(s) may also affect the ability of ECOWAS migrants in other countries to get jobs in the formal sector. For instance, most Togolese graduates in Ghana and Nigeria cannot speak English, which is the official language in these two countries. Clark and Drinkwater (2007) have documented similar problems faced by migrants in Europe. Despite these challenges, the study shows that ECOWAS labour migrants are contributing positively to socioeconomic development in their destination countries. Indeed, many emigrants have brought capital for trading into their destination countries. In Ghana, for example, the banking sector has been revitalized by the establishment of several Nigerian-owned banks.

Table 8: Population employed in Côte d'Ivoire by nationality and type of activity, 2006

Activity type	Ivoirian		Burkinabe		Malian		Ghanaian	
	1998	2002	1998	2002	1998	2002	1998	2002
Formal	9.2	9.0	9.2	4.6	2.1	4.6	0.9	2.5
Traditional agriculture	63.5	62.6	50.3	64.8	49.3	37.7	55.7	30.4
Informal non agriculture	25.3	27.9	39.6	30.4	45.9	57.9	43.3	67.1
ND	2.0	0.5	0.9	0.2	2.7	0.7	-	-

Source: AGEPE/Employment Observatory for Training and Professions in Côte d'Ivoire (2006).



## **4. Labour markets in ECOWAS**

### **4.1 Labour market information systems (LMISs)**

Globalization, trade and regional integration have become major drivers of the increased demand for readily available and reliable labour market information. Labour and employment variables are important in any analysis and understanding of socio-economic progress. Yet in ECOWAS, the mechanisms for collecting and disseminating information aimed at formulating better labour market policies are ad hoc and often inadequate (GRZ, 2003). The absence of an efficient and effective mechanism for collecting, processing and disseminating labour market data and information has serious implications for policy formulation, planning and the decision-making processes (GRZ, 2003).

As governments develop policies and systems to respond to the issues of unemployment, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, LMISs are one of the readily available information mechanisms for influencing decision-making. LMISs serve as institutional mechanisms for facilitating proper development and use of national human capital. LMISs also help in monitoring changes in the labour market through registration and placement of unemployed/job-seekers, notification of vacancies and provision of employment counselling and vocational guidance (Aubyn, 2011). While prospective migrants in ECOWAS need reliable labour market information to determine their opportunities in the country of destination, governments also require this information for effective and informed policy decisions (Martin, 2011; Aubyn, 2011).

The ILO conceives labour market information as “any information concerning the size and composition of the labour or any part of the labour market, the way it or any part of it functions, its problems, the opportunities which may be available to it, and the employment-related intentions or aspirations of those who are part of it.” A national LMIS would require mapping the labour sector, identifying data producers and users, developing a harmonized set of data collection instruments with the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder clearly defined. Developing a data flow and data warehouse is critical to the establishment of a national LMIS.

West African labour markets are highly informal in nature and lack adequate labour market statistics for policy planning and decision-making. Governments of Africa recognized the fact that information plays a vital role in the operation of the labour market and, hence, the 8th Ordinary Session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission of the African Union in 2004 called for a harmonization and

coordination framework for LMISs in the region. The Ouagadougou Declaration on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa called for the inclusion of initiatives on employment creation and poverty alleviation as indicators in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) African Peer Review Mechanism. It also sought to "strengthen data collection and analysis as well as labour market information systems" as part of a strategy of "setting up and continuously up-dating of national data base on employment and poverty" (Priority Area 6, Strategy iii and Action Recommended vi). These commitments highlight the essence of an African-oriented statistical data production with specific indicators that evaluate the performance of member countries and ensure harmonization of data for purposes of comparison.

A major outcome of these deliberations has been the development of an Action Plan for the African LMIS Project. Yet few governments within the ECOWAS region have taken concrete actions to operationalize and mobilize resources to implement the Action Plan. All 15 country studies indicate that there were no comprehensive LMIS although attempts are being made by Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal to develop LMISs (see table 9). There were no indications in the other studies on the progress and or prospects of LMISs in the respective countries.

In the absence of a functional LMIS, data in ECOWAS countries are produced by various national institutions and private firms or organizations (statistical organizations, ministries, departments and agencies) that keep records of their employees (see annex 3). However, it is important to note that the majority of these institutions lack capacity in terms of personnel, logistics and technology and often do not have adequate funding to effectively manage labour migration stock and flow data, which is needed for intraregional labour migration policy development.

Table 9: Status and prospects of LMISs in selected countries<sup>5</sup>

Country	Prospects for LMISs
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Employment Policy (NEP) provides for the establishment of National Employment and Training Observatory (ONEP) to collect information on employment and training as well as to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of employment policies and programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Gambia, the</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gambia Priority Employment Programme (GAMJOBS) is supporting the Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE) to establish a LMIS.</li> </ul>
<b>Ghana</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Government of Ghana/Danida Business Sector Programme of Support has a component on strengthening the labour market which makes provision for the development of a LMIS;</li> <li>• A LMIS website has been developed and tests undertaken but is yet to be available to labour market operators;</li> <li>• The Labour Department draft strategic plan and Government of Ghana draft national employment policy both recognize and call for development of a LMIS</li> </ul>
<b>Mali</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A National Advisory Committee has been created to coordinate the activities of labour market institutions through the Regional LMIS Project, implemented by AFRISTAT.</li> </ul>
<b>Senegal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new National Employment Policy (NEP) provides for the establishment of a comprehensive LMIS;</li> <li>• The creation of the National Agency of Employment (ANEP);</li> <li>• The establishment of the Operation Directory of Business and Employment (ROME) within the Hospitality and Public Works sector.</li> </ul>

Source: Country reports, 2013 and Martin, 2011.

## 4.2 The context for labour demand and supply in ECOWAS

Labour movements in the region are an important feature of people's livelihood options. Fluctuations in labour demand and supply in the region have been tied to trends in population growth, political stability and macroeconomic factors in ECOWAS Member States. The relatively low population and dominance of agricultural activities in the pre-colonial era did not create imbalances

<sup>5</sup> Only five country reports provided data on the progress of LMISs. Data in table 9 are therefore from these five country reports, as well as from data available online.

between labour supply and demand. Prior to colonization, much movement was seasonal or circular with migration being organized around the principal occupations of herding, farming and trade. It was common for pastoralists to follow seasonally their cattle and goats across the region in search for better grazing grounds, and farmers often moved from field to field after the harvest. Thus, much movement in the region was internal (rural–rural) in search of fertile lands for farming.

The colonial conquest of the region reshaped labour migration patterns. For example, the expansion of French West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal) during the nineteenth century resulted in labour shortages in some regions of the colonies (Kress, 2006). According to Adepoju (2005), the introduction and enforcement of political and economic structures, tax imposition, and establishment of territorial boundaries, coupled with a series of economic and recruitment policies in the colonial era, sparked regional labour migration from Mali, Togo and Burkina Faso to road construction projects, plantations and mines in the Gold Coast and Côte d'Ivoire. After independence, labour migration for wage work was accompanied by a complex grid of relations and inter-dependencies over the artificial borders inherited from colonialism. The expansion of resource-rich areas and the growth of cash crops intensified labour flows, particularly to the cocoa belts in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, coffee plantations in Côte d'Ivoire, groundnut and cotton belts in Senegal (Konseiga, 2005).

The economic growth between the 1960s and 1980s, especially in the extractive industries, as was the case of Ghana and Togo (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2011; Manley, 2003), and cocoa sectors, in both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire (Addo, 1979), led to rapid immigration and emigration of both the skilled and unskilled. However, economic downturns, as evidenced by falls in real wages, high rates of inflation, shortages of food and basic goods and services (van Hear, 1998) from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s also influenced demand and supply of labour in the region. By the end of the conflict in Liberia, the gap in the skilled workforce in Liberia's mining and timber sectors as a result of the emigration of the few professionals has been a major pull factor for foreign labour migrants. Geologists, engineers and other skilled workers, for instance, were recruited from the neighbouring countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria, especially to work in the mining sector (for instance gold, diamond, iron and ores, among others).

More recently, rapid urbanization processes have been a major characteristic of West African economies, and have affected labour markets in individual

countries (Bhorat, 2005). As farm labourers move in search of wage labour in the cities and rural-urban mobility patterns intensify, the resultant effect has been the creation of labour vacuums in some rural areas and the disruption of rural livelihoods (Adepoju, 2009). In Liberia, internal migration dynamics have caused major shifts in population distribution, resulting in shifts in labour supply from rural to urban areas (Wesseh, Liberia country report). Similarly, in Burkina Faso, 70 per cent of informal employment opportunities can be found in urban areas, a reality which is strongly influenced by returning migrants from neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire (Bado, Burkina Faso country report).

Labour markets in most West African States have also been affected by weak and fragile democracies. For example, since the 1960s, Sierra Leone's unstable political environment has been a major factor in the exile of thousands of the country's citizens and has discouraged immigration (Wesseh, Sierra Leone country report). In the case of Guinea, the gap between supply and demand of labour widened, especially in the 1970s, as a result of politico-economic problems, which forced more than a million Guineans to migrate to other countries in ECOWAS, as well as to Europe and the United States. Though relatively peaceful since the 1990s and 2000s, labour supply still exceeds labour demand as a result of rapid population growth and the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries, such as Sierra Leone and Liberia; this is creating high levels of unemployment, especially in urban areas (Bardasi and Wodon, 2006).

Government policies aimed at strengthening the structures of their economies have also helped changing the configuration of labour migration in the ECOWAS region. For instance, the Ivorian government's implementation of the Ivoirization Policy from 1975 to 1980 resulted in increased job opportunities for Ivoirians. The percentage of Ivoirians who had jobs rose from 53.6 per cent in 1974 to 63.1 per cent in 1979 (Ministère d'Etat, Ministère du Plan et du Développement de la République de Côte d'Ivoire, 2006). In Cabo Verde, the National Development Plan III, which spells out the country's overall economic direction, is hinged on the idea of integrating Cabo Verde into the global economic system to create a dynamic competitive advantage. Thus, investments in its tourism and hospitality industry have contributed to the demand for labour, particularly in the construction industry. The influx of migrants and visitors, such as tourists, entrepreneurs, and traders, has been attributed to government's policy intervention. In the case of Liberia, similar policy prescriptions, such as the "open door policy," attracted critical labour migrants from the neighbouring countries prior to the formation of ECOWAS and the implementation of the Free Movement Protocol (Wesseh, Liberia country report).

The discussion above indicates that a variety of factors have influenced labour movements within ECOWAS. However, the current demographic situation, characterized by persisting high fertility rates and accompanied by recent improvements in child survival, indicates that the supply of labour in West Africa is likely to continue to increase (UNDP, 2011). Furthermore, the generally slow progress in economic expansion, as shown in table 1, means that opportunities for employment creation maybe limited in both public and private sectors, leading to labour surpluses. These factors will further influence labour migration flows in the region.

### **4.3 Current patterns and trends of the labour market**

#### *Labour demand*

Since the 1980s, countries in West Africa have experienced changes in their labour markets due to globalization and the withdrawal of governments from direct involvement in productive economic activities, as a result of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) initiated in the early 1980s. A major feature of the SAPs was a substantial reduction in public sector employment in the late 1980s and early 1990s through public sector retrenchment and privatization of State-owned enterprises. Although the country studies highlight the introduction of SAPs, very few country reports examined the implications of these programmes for employment. In the case of Niger, about 2,500 workers were laid off in the public sector between 1983 and 1987 (Hugon et al., 1995), while in Côte d'Ivoire, formal sector employment fell from a growth rate of 7 per cent per annum to 3 per cent per annum between 1980 to 1983 (Lazare, Côte d'Ivoire country report).

Table 10a shows the labour participation rates for the region between 1991 and 2010 and generally indicates that participation rates have been and continue to be high in most ECOWAS countries, although there appears to be a general decline in labour-force participation rates after 2005. This may be due to the difference in data sources for the table. Although data on unemployment in the region is scanty, these rates are considered generally high. Employment or, more appropriately, lack of employment is the single most important socioeconomic and political issue facing policymakers in the ECOWAS region. In all the country studies, estimating employment and unemployment figures were major concerns, partly as a result of poor statistical data collection and the highly informal nature of labour markets in ECOWAS economies.

The demand for labour in the region generally stems from the productive public and private sectors (formal and informal private): namely, agriculture, industry and services, as outlined in the country studies. Although these studies highlight the role of private sector activities, they are not disaggregated in terms of formal and informal subsectors. However, data suggest that the bulk of private sector employment is informal (Ghana – 86.1%; Benin – 94%; Mali – 95.2%; Guinea – 75%; Liberia – 80%, Sierra Leone – 67%), often contributing to family, individual or small enterprises. In the case of Guinea Bissau, the private sector is largely absent and much labour demand is driven by the formal public sector (Butiam C6, Guinea Bissau country report). Although the informal sector is insecure, it continues to provide viable opportunities for generating reasonable incomes for many people in the region; hence, organizing the informal sector could contribute to sustained economic development in the ECOWAS region.

In the Gambia and Ghana, most employment is said to occur in the private sector. Data from Ghana's *Population and Housing Census* in 2010 shows that the private sector, irrespective of sex and place of residence, is the largest employer, accounting for 93 per cent of the economically active population (GSS, 2012). In contrast, in the case of Burkina Faso, C6te d'Ivoire and Niger (until 2002), only a small fraction of the labour force was in the private sector. Private sector demand for employment in C6te d'Ivoire, for instance, has been declining from 1998 to 2003; whereas job offers and placement stood at 3,124 and 3,000 respectively in 1998, in 2008 the numbers declined to 1,181 and 793 respectively (Lazare, C6te d'Ivoire country report).

The agricultural sector remains the major employer in West Africa's labour market. In Ghana, the sector employed 51 per cent and 41.6 per cent of the Ghanaian workforce in 2000 and 2010, respectively (Baah-Boateng, 2004; GSS, 2012). In the case of Guinea, about 76 per cent of the labour force is in agriculture, whereas in Nigeria this share is 59 per cent (Ikwuyatum, 2013). In the case of Benin, agriculture is the single largest employment sector, absorbing about 43 per cent of the labour force, and contributing to around 46 per cent of GDP, an amount comparatively higher than other countries in the region (Atiim and Torvikey, Benin country report). Despite the dominance of this sector, its share has declined over the years. In Ghana for instance, it declined from 61 per cent in 1984 to 51 per cent in 2000 due to its sluggish growth performance over the period (Baah-Boateng, 2004).

Table 10a: Labour force participation rates in the ECOWAS region, 1991–2010

Country	1991*	2000*	2005*	2008	2009	2010
Benin	73	71	70	72	73	73
Burkina Faso	84	84	83	84	84	84
Cabo Verde	61	56	54	66	66	66
Gambia, the	74	73	72	78	78	78
Ghana	78	74	72	67	67	67
Guinea	85	84	84	71	72	72
Guinea Bissau	74	76	77	73	73	73
Côte d'Ivoire	68	65	64	67	67	67
Liberia	70	69	69	61	61	61
Mali	81	80	79	53	53	53
Niger	83	83	83	65	65	65
Nigeria	67	66	64	55	55	56
Senegal	71	75	74	77	77	77
Sierra Leone	74	71	69	68	68	68
Togo	72	71	70	81	81	81

Source: 1991–2005 based on ILO Global Employment Model, 2006; 2008 – 2010 derived from [data.worldbank.org](http://data.worldbank.org).

Note: Figures for 1991–2005 have been rounded up for consistency.

The service sector is increasingly making significant changes in the labour markets of countries in the region. In Liberia, the services sector represented around 20 per cent of GDP in 2011, dominated by government services, wholesale and retail trade, real estate, hotels and catering, transport and communication, and construction. In Benin, it is the second largest employment sector (namely, trade, restaurants and hotels), employing about 28 per cent of the labour force, although its contribution to GDP is low, estimated at 9.7 per cent. Data from the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) indicates that approximately 31 per cent of ECOWAS nationals are engaged in services and sales sector in Cabo Verde (NIS, 2012). In the Gambia, estimates for the industry and services sector by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics show that between 2010 and 2012, GDP increased mostly in construction, hotels and restaurants, finance and insurance, and communication technology sectors. A study on private sector demand for youth labour in Ghana and Senegal in 2009 indicated that, in the case of Ghana, the sectors with the highest employment potential include the services sector, and particularly those linked to telecommunication and ICT (Aubyn, 2011).



In Benin, a recent study by the Observatory for Employment and Training indicated that there are nine growth sectors in which youth and the unemployed could find formal employment opportunities. These sectors range from the garment industry, tourism, transport services and the chemical industry, to telecommunications, food processing, commerce and handicrafts (EDC, 2011). Table 10b summarizes information on youth labour force participation and shows variations in rates for males and females in all countries in the ECOWAS region.

The country reports also indicate that low education levels are major characteristics of the employed population. In the Gambia, 47 per cent of the active and employed population has no formal schooling, with only 3 per cent completing a post-secondary degree/diploma (including vocational training). In Benin, 81.7 per cent of the active working population aged 15 years and over was without any formal education (INSAE, 2012). In the case of Sierra Leone, over half of its estimated 800,000 youth between the ages of 15 to 35 years who are either unemployed or underemployed do not have any form of education (Wessh, 2013b). This has implications for skills development, with the majority of the low-skilled entering the labour force with insecure low-wage activities in the informal sectors.

Table 10c highlights youth unemployment by education in selected ECOWAS countries. With the exception of Senegal, it indicates that unemployment is highest among youth who have tertiary-level education and lowest among those with little or no education, with Mali having the highest unemployment rate of 85 per cent among tertiary-level educated youth and Senegal the lowest rate (6.8%). This is a disturbing trend and an indicator of the lack of expansion of economies of many ECOWAS countries to generate jobs in both public and private sectors. The situation is also exacerbated by the inability of tertiary/university-educated people to create jobs on their own, but rather to depend on both the limited public and private sectors to absorb them.

Thus, it is not surprising that the lack of jobs and career development especially of the highly educated, coupled with the poor working conditions in the region are often driving factors in the movement of the highly skilled population. In Guinea Bissau, these movements are often directed towards the country's neighbours, namely Senegal and Guinea.

Table 10b: Youth employment to population ratio in the ECOWAS region, 2000–2011

Countries	Employment rates of population aged 15 – 24 (%)											
	Total				Male				Female			
	2000	2005	2008	2011	2000	2005	2008	2011	2000	2005	2008	2011
Benin	63.2	60.3	58.9	56	74.5	71.4	68.9	56	51.7	48.9	48.5	57
Burkina Faso	76.2	74.7	74.2	73	80.2	78.5	77.7	76	72.0	70.7	70.6	70
Cabo Verde	47.2	41.6	38.1	54	59.3	51.9	45.9	65	35.5	31.4	30.5	42
Gambia, the	57.2	55.7	54.5	58	58.3	56.5	54.8	58	56.0	54.8	54.3	57
Ghana	45.1	40.4	39.9	36	44.9	38.5	38.4	36	45.4	42.3	41.6	36
Guinea	74.6	73.6	72.8	52	76.8	75.7	74.7	54	72.3	71.5	70.9	50
Guinea Bissau	61.2	62.4	63.1	50	71.5	73.1	74.3	51	50.9	51.7	51.9	48
Côte d'Ivoire	48.5	46.5	45.3	48	66.2	64.7	63.4	57	30.5	28.3	27.1	39
Liberia	56.4	56.6	56.7	33	62.8	62.5	62.4	34	50.1	50.7	50.9	33
Mali	39.6	36.0	34.5	36	49.2	43.6	40.5	43	29.9	28.4	28.5	28
Niger	50.6	51.2	51.6	53	71.0	71.2	71.3	74	33.0	33.5	33.5	33
Nigeria	27.9	25.8	24.2	34	38.0	34.2	31.1	36	17.8	17.3	17.1	31
Senegal	57.9	55.5	54.5	57	69.5	66.8	65.5	71	46.3	44.2	43.4	43
Sierra Leone	43.6	41.8	42.0	42	40.9	35.7	35.7	37	46.2	47.7	47.9	47
Togo	55.1	53.4	52.7	59	66.1	64.7	64.2	58	44.1	42.2	41.4	61

 Source: [www.socialsecurityextension.org](http://www.socialsecurityextension.org) (2000–2008), <http://data.worldbank.org> (2011).

Table 10c: Youth unemployment (%) by education level in selected ECOWAS countries<sup>6</sup>

Country	No education	Basic education	Secondary education	Vocational training	Tertiary/university
Ghana	3.2	6.2	14.6	17.2	46.1
Niger	7.9	16.9	-	16.1	-
Nigeria	11.7	15.6	19.7	14.7	21.1
Mali	10.2	18.5	54.1	65.1	85.3
Senegal	14.1	25.2	30.2	14.3	6.8

Source: Gallup World Poll (2009–10), National Household Surveys (2002–2007) from African Economic Outlook (2013).

Although in recent times governments have been creating conducive atmospheres for businesses and access to credit, ECOWAS member countries would need to increase the overall capacity of the labour force and achieve a better match between workers' skills and private-sector demand. The relevance of training towards employment needs, for example, can be seen in Benin as the employability rate for graduates is estimated at 10 per cent. Thus, it is not surprising that a number of countries are seeking to connect theory and practice to address these skills inadequacies (see box 1). In Sierra Leone, more than 85 per cent of youth employment projects have focused on improving "employability" (mainly skills training) but have failed in linking these trainings to the business market and labour demand. By far the most important source of skills development for workers in the informal sector is traditional apprenticeship and on-the-job training. In the case of Ghana, it is estimated that 80–90 per cent of basic skills training comes from traditional apprenticeships, compared with 5–10 per cent from public training institutions which, for the most part, have not been very effective in addressing the needs of youth in the informal sector and in reaching the most marginalized youth (Africa Progress Report, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> The four countries in table 10c were selected on the basis of data availability in the country reports. These were complemented with data from the African Economic Outlook webpage.

**Box 1:** Benin strives to make vocational training more relevant to the needs of the youth and the informal economy

*Benin recently reformed its vocational training policy to adjust technical and professional education (enseignement technique et professionnelle, ETPP) to urban labour demand. The reform develops practical training in the form of dual apprenticeships (apprentissage dual) which alternates theoretical training with practical work. A professional certificate of qualification (certificat de qualification professionnelle, CQP) is awarded after 600 hours of training in an education centre, delivered every week for one day during a three year apprenticeship including five days of work per week in a business or artisanal workshop.*

*For the first time in 2006, 292 apprentices were awarded the CQP. In time, the reform will provide 3,000 CQPs per year. Nine options are or will be available: masonry, electricity, plumbing, surface preparation, cycle mechanics, carpentry, refrigeration and air conditioning, sewing and clothing and hair-dressing. The reform will also create a work qualification certificate (certificat de qualification de métier, CQM) to recognize artisanal skills. The demand for this certificate is estimated at 15,000 candidates.*

*Source:* de Largentaye (2009), cited in Atiim and Torvikey, Benin country report.

### *Labour supply*

Labour supply in the region is determined by the size of the economically active population and immigrant population. An important aspect of labour is the quality of training and skills possessed by the population to meet the labour needs of various industries. What seems very clear is that in all countries within the region, labour supply outstrips labour demand. For instance, in Ghana it is estimated that 350,000 youth with various levels of training and skills enter the labour market every year (IOM, 2011). As of 2010, 93.1 per cent of the economically active population in Ghana was said to be employed, while the unemployed (that is, those without work but seeking and available for work) constituted 6.9 per cent. Similarly, the 2004 *Population and Housing Census* data for Sierra Leone show that there are 1,785,662 people in the economically active populations of between 15-64 years of age (about 85.6% of the population). Of this, 96.5 per cent was employed, while only 3.6 per cent was unemployed.

In 2002, the Beninese labour force was estimated at 2,830,876, with 1,396,468 women (49.3%) and 1,434,408 men (50.7%). In 2011, this figure was put

at 3,251,010, representing 72 per cent of the total population; a decline in the 2010 figure of 75.5 per cent (Atiim and Torvikey, Benin country report). In the Gambia, the Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire (CWIQ) data puts the proportion of economically active population (15 years of age and older) at 64.1 per cent, while 12 per cent and 23.9 per cent are unemployed and economically inactive, respectively (Vandermeersch, Gambia country report). The *Integrated Household Survey* (HIS) of the Gambia undertaken in 2009 to 2010, however, estimates the unemployment rate of the Gambia at 22 per cent, probably due to differences in sample, methodology and also in definitions of unemployment and employment by these two data sets (Republic of the Gambia, 2009; Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

Labour supply is not only dependent on the total population but also on the quality of labour available. Data suggest that literacy levels among the population aged 15 years and older vary geographically. While the proportion of literate population has increased in some countries, such as Ghana (71.5%), the populations in others like Benin, Gambia, Guinea, and Liberia have lower educational levels. Only 39.5 per cent of the population aged 15 years and above is literate in Guinea, a figure lower than the general literacy rate for sub-Saharan Africa, estimated at 61.6 per cent (UNDP, 2011). In Benin, the adult (15 years and older) literacy rate was estimated at 40 per cent<sup>7</sup> in 2009. In 2010, 81.7 per cent of the active working population aged 15 years and above had no education (INSAE, 2012). The Liberian *Labour Force Survey* (LFS) of 2010 similarly shows that the country's labour force is largely unskilled, with the literacy rate estimated at 59 per cent.

The labour supply in most countries has also been largely influenced by intra-regional labour migration streams in West Africa. In the 1998 and 2009 population censuses of Mali, the proportion of ECOWAS nationals among the migrant population in the country's economically active population was estimated at 48.8 per cent and 61.7 per cent, respectively (Republic of Mali, 1998; 2009). Guinean and Senegalese migrants dominate the labour market in Guinea Bissau representing 50 per cent and 33 per cent of ECOWAS nationals in the country, with Nigerians, Sierra Leoneans and Malians constituting 6 per cent, 4 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively. These foreign nationals are mainly found in the fishing and trade industries, with trade predominating in urban centres and fishing mainly in rural areas and in the south of the country (INE, 2009b). Box 2 highlights the economic sectors in which ECOWAS nationals are engaged in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire.

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7 [www.irinnews.org/report/84052/west-africa-combating-world-s-lowest-literacy-rates](http://www.irinnews.org/report/84052/west-africa-combating-world-s-lowest-literacy-rates).

**Box 2: ECOWAS migrants in the Malian and Ivorian economies**

*In Mali, ECOWAS nationals are engaged in various sectors of the economy. The most common sectors are:*

- *Industry (timber, metals, food, textiles and leather industries), buildings and public works construction, maintenance and electricity, which are dominated by Togolese, Beninese and Senegalese;*
- *The majority of Guineans, Nigerians, and Nigeriens are engaged in whole sale, semi whole sale and retail trade, which require little qualification and formal education;*
- *Burkinabe and Ivoirians are very visible in the agro-forestry sector, an area unexploited by nationals, while the educational (teaching) sector is dominated by Beninese, Guineans and Togolese;*
- *Nigerians and Ivoirians are also usually concentrated in the transport industry, among others.*

*In Côte d'Ivoire, ECOWAS nationals are particularly concentrated in primary sectors (agriculture, livestock, fishing and fish farming) and the distributive and productive informal activities of the tertiary sector (sales staff and traders). In terms of ECOWAS nationals' engagement in the employment sectors:*

- *Burkinabe dominate the agricultural sector, with 73.5 per cent engaged in this sector, while 9.9 per cent are engaged in trade and 6.6 per cent in non-agricultural work;*
- *Maliens are largely engaged in three sectors in the country. Forty-eight per cent of Maliens are employed in agriculture, 26.5 per cent in trade and 12.4 per cent in non-agricultural manual labour activities;*
- *Ghanaians are mostly in the primary sector (41.9 %), especially in artisanal, fishery and trade (34.9 %). Skilled Ghanaian workers in the services represent 8.5 per cent, while 5.5 per cent and 6.3 per cent are engaged in handicrafts and non-agricultural sectors, respectively;*
- *Nigerien, Nigerians and Senegalese migrants are engaged in trade. For instance, 67.0 per cent; 51.0 per cent and 48.2 per cent of Nigeriens, Nigerians and Senegalese, respectively, are engaged in trading of goods.*

*Source: Cissé, Mali country report; Lazare, Côte d'Ivoire country report.*

Bilateral agreements are also influencing labour supply in some countries, as shown in box 3.

**Box 3: Bilateral agreements and labour supply in ECOWAS countries**

*Bilateral agreements between countries in the West African region can promote labour migration. Liberia has made arrangements with Ghana, for instance, to bridge labour supply gaps in the energy and health sectors. For instance, Ghanaians in Liberia have been involved in the restoration of electricity through the regional power initiative, and have worked in the construction and financial sectors.*

*As part of a bilateral agreement, the Nigerian Government provided both military contingent and medical doctors to support the health system in Liberia. Apart from this arrangement, the banking sector employs many Nigerians. Nigerians are involved in small-scale businesses (i.e.: trade in car parts, electronics, clothing from China) that are helping to develop the trade and industry sector of the Liberian economy.*

*Source:* Wesseh, Liberia country report.

### *Formal and informal labour*

A share of the region's labour force is engaged in the informal economy. Informality of labour is a major feature in the region, an indication that the formal sector has been unable to create sufficient long-term and sustainable employment for the population.

According to the country reports Formal employment represents only a small fraction of total employment in the region. The formal sectors in Benin, Liberia, Mali, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria (1999) account for between 3.9 per cent and 25 per cent of employment in these countries respectively, with an increasing shift into the informal sector. A labour survey undertaken by the Labour Department in Ghana in 2000, for example, indicated that formal employment provided by both public and private institutions constituted just 13.3 per cent of those employed in the country (GSS, 2012). Of Nigeria's total employment, 9 per cent and 11.3 per cent in 1985 and in 1999, respectively, were employed in the formal sector, and just over 10 per cent of the labour force in the Gambia (Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2007). In the case of Guinea Bissau, public administration is the main employer, especially for qualified senior staff with an estimated 90 per cent of Guinean officials with higher levels of education working for the Civil Service (Ministry of Finance of Guinea-Bissau, 2004).

Evidently, the informal sectors of the region's labour markets are critical for the economic well-being of populations and are perhaps the most important single

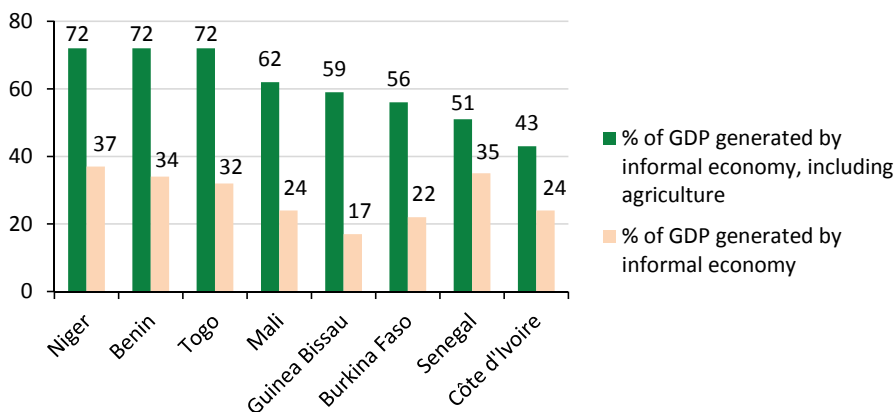
source of employment for many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The 2000 and 2010 census reports from Ghana showed that 80 per cent and 86.1 per cent, respectively, of the labour force were engaged in the informal sector (GSS, 2002 and 2010), while in Benin, Togo and Guinea, informal sector employment accounts for 94 per cent, 80 per cent and 75 per cent of the economic active group, respectively (INSAE, 2012; UNDP, 2011; CIA, 2011). In Côte d'Ivoire, the proportion of the workforce in the informal sector increased from 28.4 per cent in 1998 to 30.2 per cent in 2002. In Liberia, Guineans (mainly Mandingoes and Fulani) make up a significant proportion of the informal labour market and are usually found in the transport sector and sale of agricultural products (for instance, Kola nuts, peanuts, pepper, beanie seeds, and so on), cattle and management of shops. In Guinea Bissau, 72 per cent and 20 per cent of ECOWAS nationals are engaged in fishing and trade, respectively. In the fishing industry for instance, Guineans account for 59 per cent, Senegalese 30 per cent and Sierra Leoneans 10 per cent; in trade, Guineans constitutes 54 per cent, Senegalese 24 per cent, Nigerians 15 per cent, while Sierra Leoneans and Nigeriens account for 6 per cent and 1 per cent, respectively (DGRI, 2012). The country reports generally highlight that the majority of ECOWAS nationals are participating in the informal labour market in the areas of selling clothing, footwear, building materials, and livestock.

The importance of this sector is reflected in its contribution to GDP. In the year 2000, for instance, as figure 5 shows, when agriculture is excluded, the informal sector accounts for about a third of GDP in Niger (37%), Benin (34%), Senegal (35%) and Togo (32%). If agriculture is included, the contribution of the informal sector exceeds 70 per cent for all these countries except Senegal (SWAC and OECD, 2011). Although the data sources may be debatable given the difficulty of obtaining accurate data (see Section 3.1), they do provide some indication of the importance of the informal sector. In Benin, data suggest that the contribution of the informal sector to GDP is declining over the years, especially between 2006 and 2011 when it decreased from 95.3 per cent of GDP in 2006 to 94.3 per cent in 2010 and further declined to 89.4 per cent in 2011 (INSAE, 2012).

The country reports indicate that the informal sector is highly dominated by females in most ECOWAS countries, with the exception of Mali and Niger. This dominance has historical antecedents associated with the rise of urbanization and the emergence of the formal economy during the colonial era. The limited recruitment of females in colonial bureaucracies, public and private enterprises, mines and infrastructure development along with discriminatory practices consigned women to the fringes of the colonial economy.



Figure 5: Informal sector contribution to GDP (2000) in ECOWAS



Source: Sahel and West Africa Club (2012), quoted in country reports.

#### 4.4 Labour policies and institutional frameworks in ECOWAS countries

##### *Employment policies*

The promotion of productive employment and the reduction of unemployment is a critical issue for many ECOWAS governments. Accordingly, ECOWAS countries are seeking to design comprehensive, integrated and coherent employment policies to address the challenge of unemployment. A number of ECOWAS countries have, to some extent, developed various employment policies and initiatives as a first step towards addressing employment issues. Examples of some of these are provided in table 11.

In the Gambia, for instance, a National Employment Policy and a National Employment Action Plan have been developed in response to increasing unemployment and poverty, particularly among women and the youth. The Gambia priority employment programme (GAMJOBS) of the Department of State for Trade, Industry and Employment 2007–2011 represents the Government's attempt to operationalize the National Employment Policy and National Employment Action Plan. The overall objective of GAMJOBS is to foster an enabling environment for employment creation in order to develop a skilled, versatile, dynamic and efficient workforce, thereby enhancing opportunities for salaried employment and self-employment in both the formal and informal economy.

Burkina Faso and Niger have also developed employment policies. In 2008, a number of reforms were initiated by the Burkinabe government such as the NEP and the new employment code. The NEP was aimed at reducing poverty through the creation of proper employment opportunities whilst integrating it with other national development policies. In the case of Niger, the Government established the National Employment Promotion Agency (ANPE – *Agence nationale de promotion de l'emploi*) to implement its National Employment Policy to combat unemployment and underemployment. A number of programmes have been initiated, including programmes to retrain the unemployed, the Young Graduates Integration Programme, the Small and Medium Enterprise Integration Programme (PIPME – *Programme d'intégration des petites et moyennes entreprises*), the Rural Employment Support Programme (PACER – *Programme d'appui à la croissance économique rurale*), and the Self Employment Support Programme (PAIEI – *Programme d'appui aux initiatives d'emplois indépendants*). In Ghana, a National Youth Employment Programme set up in 2004 aims at reducing unemployment and poverty among the youth while equipping it with the skills to compete in the labour market (see table 11).

What is clear in all these national employment policies is that they seek to reduce poverty and improve the socioeconomic conditions of nationals through providing opportunities for investment that create jobs for a vast majority of the population. The implementation of these programmes is, however, often beset by several difficulties such as the absence of information systems for employment, the fragmentation and duplication of responsibilities by employment departments in various State ministries, and funding shortages. These challenges limit the potential positive impact of the programmes.

#### *Recruitment of foreign workers and/or placement of national workers abroad*

In general, countries in the region have formal laws, regulations and policies governing the recruitment of foreign workers. For ECOWAS member countries, the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment (1975) makes it possible for community citizens to enter, reside and establish themselves in the territory of Member States. It entitles the right of the ECOWAS citizen to enter the territory of a member State with a valid travel document and an international health certificate. However, each country reserves the right to refuse entry to any Community citizen deemed inadmissible under its legislation (Article 4).

Table 11: Employment policies of selected ECOWAS countries

Country	Policies/Regulations	Some programmes
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Employment Policy, 2011</li> <li>• National Action Plan 2012–2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Employment Promotion Agency (ANPE)</li> <li>• Collecting specific information on labour market and job seekers</li> </ul> <p>Employment programmes instituted, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary paid jobs</li> <li>• Training for entrepreneurs</li> <li>• Learning and vocation training</li> <li>• National Fund for Business Promotion and Youth Employment</li> </ul>
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Employment Policy 2010</li> <li>• Employment Code</li> </ul>	<p>National Council Employment and Vocational Training (CNEVT) was established and provides for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment funds</li> <li>• Public works or employment generating schemes</li> </ul>
Gambia, the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Employment Policy</li> <li>• National Employment Action Plan</li> <li>• National Youth Policy 2009</li> <li>• Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment 2012–2015</li> </ul>	<p>GAMJOBS, 2007–2011 National Training Authority (NTA) to implement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master Crafts Persons Apprenticeship Training</li> </ul>
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft National Employment Policy</li> <li>• Labour Act (Act 561)</li> <li>• National Youth Policy</li> </ul>	<p>Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA) has initiated a number of programmes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth in ICT Module</li> <li>• Alive Health Check</li> <li>• Youth in Agriculture</li> <li>• Youth in Road Maintenance</li> <li>• Youth in Driving Module</li> <li>• Graduate Business Support Scheme</li> <li>• Alternative Livelihood Programme</li> <li>• The Village Infrastructure Project</li> </ul>

Country	Policies/Regulations	Some programmes
Côte d'Ivoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Côte d'Ivoire Emergency Youth Employment and Skills Development Project (PEJEDEC)</li> </ul>	Partnership with local private companies in areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paid internships</li> <li>● Labour Intensive and Public Work</li> </ul>
Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Labour Policy</li> <li>● National Action Plan for Youth Employment</li> <li>● Presidential Investment Council</li> </ul>	The Accelerated Growth Strategy calls for investments in the following sectors for the benefit of youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agriculture, such as a training programme for Casamance youth</li> <li>● Fish farming in Eastern Senegal</li> <li>● Online management information system to assist young people</li> <li>● National Fund for Youth Employment Promotion</li> </ul>
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Employment Policy</li> </ul>	National Youth Employment Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cash for Work Temporary Employment Programme (CfWTEP)</li> <li>● Waste and Sanitation Project</li> <li>● Skills Training Programme</li> <li>● The Entrepreneur Development Programme</li> <li>● Traditional Road Maintenance Programme</li> <li>● Agricultural Buy Back Programme</li> </ul>
Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Employment Policy</li> <li>● Labour Code</li> </ul>	National Employment Promotion Agency (ANPE). Programmes initiated include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programmes to retrain the unemployed</li> <li>● Young Graduates Integration Programme</li> <li>● Small and Medium Enterprise Integration Programme (PIPME)</li> <li>● Rural Employment Support Programme (PACER)</li> <li>● Self-Employment Support Programme (PAIEI)</li> </ul>
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Employment Policy</li> <li>● National Employment Training Scheme</li> </ul>	National Directorate of Employment programmes initiated include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Youth Employment and Vocational Skills Development Programme</li> <li>● Small-Scale Industries and Graduate Employment Programme</li> <li>● Agricultural Sector Employment Programme</li> <li>● Special Public Works Programme</li> </ul>

Source: Country reports, 2013.

The country reports provide some country-specific regulations that govern employment and recruitment of foreign nationals. In the case of Liberia, the Labour Law guarantees equal employment opportunity for all, including foreigners with valid work permits. Foreigners with residence permits issued by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) can process their work permit with the Ministry of Labour. Over the past six years (2007–2012) for instance, 13,887 work permits have been issued by the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Labour. Of these, a total of 947 permits were issued to ECOWAS member State citizens, and 12,940 to non-Africans. In 2012, 4,013 migrants received work permits (2,611 males and 1,402 females) to work in Liberia. In the case of Ghana, in 2011, of the 637 number of work permits granted, 7.9 per cent were for ECOWAS nationals.

It is worth noting that in all member countries, public service jobs are only available to nationals, except under special arrangements, while foreigners are free to work in the private sector. Those foreign nationals employed by governments in the civil service often provide either technical assistance or have been long-term residents of destination countries, or are granted permission under special executive arrangements (for example, bilateral agreements) as is the case in Sierra Leone. In the case of Gambia, the National Assembly passed an amendment to the payroll tax act in 2010 requiring that employers not hire non-citizens in excess of 20 per cent of their workforce except in a specialized professional category (Vandermeersch, Gambia country report), a move that is regarded as an effort designed to encourage employers to train and employ more local citizens.

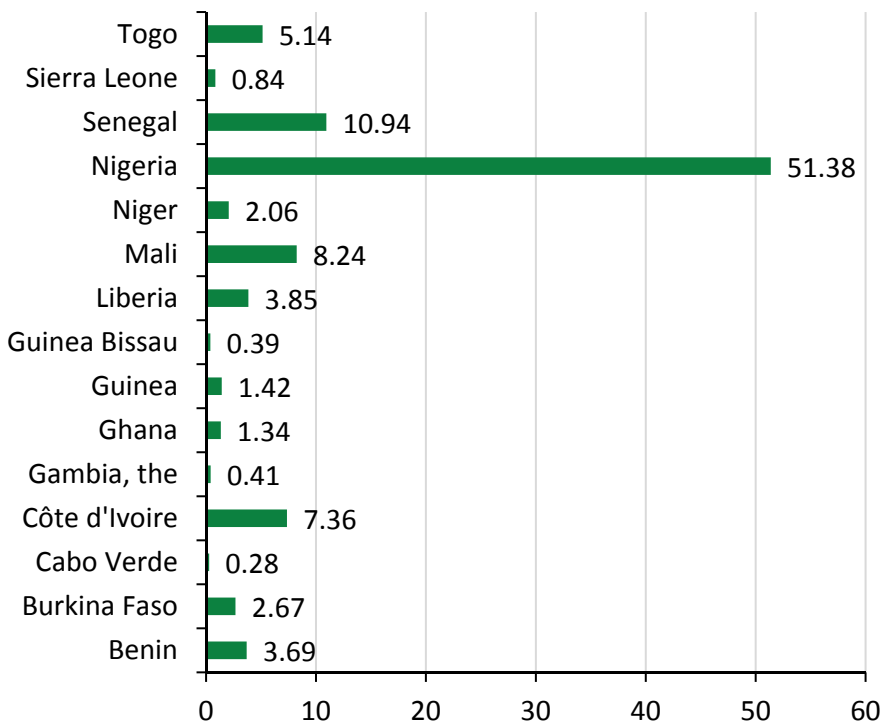
#### **4.5 Labour migration and remittances in ECOWAS**

Remittances from labour migrants have become an important and highly stable source of external funds for many developing countries (Ratha, 2003), especially for many rural and urban households in sub-Saharan Africa. Although the study did not explore remittances in any detail, anecdotal evidence suggest that remittances represent an important source of finance for many households with absent migrants. Evidence from the region suggests that a sizeable portion of remittances are allocated to investment in agricultural land, equipment and small-scale businesses (Addy et al., 2003).

Figure 6 shows the proportion of countries in ECOWAS receiving remittances. For instance, it was estimated that, in 2009, remittance inflows to the ECOWAS region may have reached USD 12.7 billion.

As noted in several studies, these statistics only give us a small picture of remittance flows in the ECOWAS region, as much of these flows are channelled informally. Such informal flows are high in ECOWAS not only because formal financial systems are weak or non-existent, but also due to the high cost of secure transactions and a lack of trust in formal channels (Sander and Maimbo, 2003). If unmeasured flows, mostly through informal channels, were properly captured and accounted for, these conservative numbers could be much higher. Despite the observation that a high volume of remittances does not necessarily mean a high impact on the economy, these flows do indicate at least some positive contribution of labour migrants to the economies of many ECOWAS countries.

Figure 6: Distribution of remittances sent to ECOWAS countries, by recipient country, 2011 (in %)



Source: [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Bilateral\\_Remittance\\_Matrix\\_2011\\_Final.xlsx](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Bilateral_Remittance_Matrix_2011_Final.xlsx).

## **4.6 Sources of data on the labour market and challenges**

West African countries are members of the ILO and many have ratified the ILO Convention 122 on employment policies. However, despite this commitment, Member States of ECOWAS have operated without well-documented and coordinated employment and labour market policies.

### *Sources of information on the labour market*

As indicated previously, all 15 countries in the region lack a functional labour market information system (LMIS). In the absence of a LMIS, countries within the region collect labour market information for planning and policy purposes from various sources (see annex 5).

Censuses have been useful in providing data at various levels on the labour force: employment, unemployment, education and training, and migration, as discussed in Section 3.1. Surveys such as LSS, Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) and labour force surveys (LFS) offer additional sources of information on labour markets. These surveys compile national and county statistics relating to employment, unemployment and underemployment, and to many other aspects of people's working lives; such information is essential to enable policymakers and planners to develop policies and programmes that improve human welfare. As highlighted in the country studies, comprehensive LFS have recently been undertaken in two countries, namely Liberia (1980, 2010) and Gambia (2012) although the results for the latter are not yet available. Ghana is expected to include a LFS as part of the sixth round of its LSS by the end of 2012. Furthermore, the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare conducted a LSS to collect, collate, analyse, interpret and disseminate labour force data on employment, unemployment, under employment, education and skills, among other indicators.

Various national employment agencies also gather labour market information, such as the ANPE and the National Observatory for Employment and Vocational Training (NOEV) in Burkina Faso, the Employment Study and Promotion Agency (ESPA) in Côte d'Ivoire, the Labour Department and Employers Association in Ghana. Further details can be found in the country templates (see annex 5). These national departments, agencies and institutions provide various data on the number of people employed, the sectors of employment, unemployment, and migration variables (number of immigrants and emigrants).





## **5. Legal and policy framework for intraregional labour mobility in ECOWAS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Intraregional migration has been a prominent theme on the agenda of ECOWAS and debates on cooperation and integration of the region. The policy has been to promote the relaxation of immigration control measures in order to facilitate intraregional population movements among countries of the region. To this end, the ECOWAS Treaty, which was adopted in Lagos on 29 May 1975, conferred the status of Community citizenship on the citizens of Member States. The Treaty also enjoined Member States, by agreements with each other, to exempt Community citizens from holding visitors' visas and residence permits and allow them to work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories. Furthermore, Member States are to ensure by stages the abolition of the obstacles to free movement of persons, services and capital. In the view of Adepaju (2005): "[t]he formation of ECOWAS thus to a certain extent re-created the kind of pseudo-homogenous society that had once existed in the region."

The Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 1993, in order to achieve the aims of the Community, provides in Article 3(1) for "the removal, between Member States, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and to the right of residence and establishment". The substantive provisions on "Immigration" under Article 59 are as follows:

- a) Community citizens are granted the rights of entry, residence and establishment and Member States undertake to recognize these rights of Community citizens in their territories in accordance with the provisions of the Free Movement Protocols;
- b) Member States undertake to adopt all appropriate measures to ensure that Community citizens fully enjoy the rights granted to them;
- c) Member States undertake to adopt, at national level, all measures necessary for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Article.

These provisions of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty reflect the three-pronged approach –namely, the Right of Entry, Right of Residence, and Right of Establishment – enshrined in the 1979 Protocol Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment and its Supplementary Protocols, commonly referred to as the Free Movement Protocols (Benneh,

2005; Agyei and Clotey, 2007). These rights were to be progressively established within 15 years from the definitive date of entry into force of the 1979 Protocol.

Using data from the country reports as well as those from existing documents, this section discusses the major ECOWAS protocols on free movement, the measures and actions undertaken by individual national governments and the challenges encountered.

## **5.2 Binding ECOWAS protocols**

Intraregional labour migration in West Africa is governed by the 1979 Protocol Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment and its Supplementary Protocols. These instruments create binding legal obligations for the Member States of ECOWAS, as summarized in the following section.

### ***1979 Protocol A/P.1/5/79 Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment***

This Protocol, which was adopted just four years after the establishment of ECOWAS, sets out the right of Community citizens to enter, reside and establish in the territories of Member States. By this Protocol, which deals with the First Phase, visa entry requirements for citizens of ECOWAS Member States who intend to stay for up to 90 days in the territory of a member State are abolished. However, in line with the Protocol, citizens of ECOWAS Member States must be in possession of valid travel documents or international peace certificates to enter the territory of Member States. An ECOWAS citizen who intends to stay for more than 90 days will be required to obtain permission for an extension of stay from the appropriate authority in the Member State. In line with this Protocol, a number of ECOWAS States, as indicated in table 12, have introduced various measures, including the ECOWAS Travel Certificate, for easier and cheaper cross-border movement.

However, one of the major challenges with the implementation of the Protocol has been the difficulty of establishing the nationalities of travellers because they do not carry national identity cards or passports. Another challenge is presented by the Protocol reserving to Member States the right to refuse admission into their territory of Community citizens deemed inadmissible under their domestic laws (Article 4). This provision, according to Adepoju et al. (2007) undermines the purpose of the Protocol through the use of restrictive domestic inadmissibility laws.

***1985 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/85 on the Code of Conduct for the Implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment***

This Supplementary Protocol obliges Member States to provide valid travel documents to their citizens (Article 2(1)). It also establishes additional requirements for treatment of persons being expelled (Article 4). The protocol also enumerates protections for illegal immigrants (Articles 5 and 7). In line with the Protocol, some Member States have issued ECOWAS passports to their nationals to facilitate travel.

***1986 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/86 on the Second Phase (Right of Residence) of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment***

This Protocol makes provisions relating to the second phase; namely, Right of Residence. The Protocol obliges Member States to grant to Community citizens who are nationals of other Member States the right of residence<sup>8</sup> in their territories for the purpose of seeking and carrying out income-earning employment (Article 2). However, entitlement to residence without a visa is conditioned on the possession of an ECOWAS Residence Card or Residence Permit (Article 5). In addition, the Protocol provides that Migrant workers<sup>9</sup> -complying with the rules and regulations governing their residence- enjoy equal treatment, compared with nationals of host Member States, including security of employment and of access to social, cultural and health facilities (Article 23). Thus, by the Protocol, ECOWAS citizens have the right to reside and work, without discrimination, in ECOWAS countries, being only required to apply for the work permits from the relevant State Agencies. Despite this, in reality, restrictions exist in Member States which mean that ECOWAS citizens cannot work in any sector of their choice. Another challenge is presented by the fact that migrants intending to settle in Member States do not always apply for work or residence permits and often work without the necessary documents.

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8 "Right of Residence" in the Protocol means: "the right of a citizen who is a national of one Member State to reside in a Member State other than his State of origin and which issues him with a residence card or permit that may or may not allow him to hold employment."

9 "Migrant worker" or "migrant" is defined by the Protocol as: "any citizen who is a national of one Member State, who has transited from his country of origin to the territory of another Member State of which he is not a national and who seeks to hold or proposes to hold or is holding or has had employment."

***1989 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/6/89 amending and complementing the provisions of Article 7 of the Protocol on Free Movement, Right of Residence and Establishment***

This Protocol amends the provisions of Article 7 of the 1979 Protocol A/P.1/5/79, confirming the obligation of Member States to resolve amicably disputes regarding the interpretation and application of the Protocol (Article 2).

***1990 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.2/5/90 on the implementation of the Third Phase (Right to Establishment) of the Protocol on Free Movement, Right of Residence and Establishment***

The Protocol granting the Right of Establishment marks the third phase of the implementation of the Free Movement Protocol. By this Protocol, Community citizens are granted the right to settle or establish in another Member State other than their State of origin, “and to have access to economic activities, to carry out these activities as well as to set up and manage enterprises, and in particular companies, under the same conditions as defined by the legislation of the host Member State for its own nationals”. A major challenge presented by this Protocol is the existence of national laws that give preferential treatment or reserve some sectors for nationals, as shown in box 4 for the case of Ghana. Another challenge is the failure of foreign nationals who settle in another Member State to comply with local laws.

***Decision C/DEC.3/12/92 on the Introduction of a Harmonized Immigration and Emigration Form in ECOWAS Member States***

By this Decision, the Member States of ECOWAS are required to establish a harmonized immigration and emigration form called the “Immigration and Emigration Form of ECOWAS Member States” (Article 1). The form aims to facilitate and simplify cross-border formalities in Member States.

### **5.3 Implementation of the Free Movement Protocols**

#### *Actions taken*

As shown in table 12, all the 15 Member States of ECOWAS have ratified the Free Movement Protocol. Table 13 further indicates available information on the supplementary protocols, as captured in the country reports.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Not all information was made available by some studies, despite several requests to authors.

Table 12: Status of ratification of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols as of 2013

Countries	1979 Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment A/P.1/5/79	1985 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/85 relating to the Code of Conduct for the Implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment	1986 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/85 relating to the second phase (Right of Residence)	1989 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/6/89 and complementing the provisions of Article 7 of the Protocol on the Free Movement, Rights of Residence and Establishment	1990 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.2/5/90 Relates to the Implementation of the third phase (Right to Establishment)
Benin	4 Jan 1981				
Burkina Faso	6 April 1982				
Cabo Verde	11 June 1984				
Côte d'Ivoire	19 Jan 1981				
Gambia, the	30 Oct 1980				
Ghana	8 April 1980	12 May 1989	12 May 1989	14 Dec 1992	16 April 1991
Guinea	17 Oct 1979				
Guinea Bissau	20 Aug 1979				
Liberia	1 April 1980	9 April 1992	9 April 1992	9 April 1992	9 April 1992
Mali	5 June 1980				
Niger	11 Jan 1980				
Nigeria	12 Sept 1979				
Senegal	24 May 1980				
Sierra Leone	15 Sept 1982	1 Nov 1988	8 Nov 1988	2 Nov 2000	2 Nov 2000
Togo	9 Dec 1979	17 Feb 1988	17 Feb 1988	19 Dec 1999	30 Jan 1991

Source: Country Reports, 2013.

### *Phase 1*

In relation to the first phase (Right of Entry), all the 15 Member States have abolished visa and entry requirements for those staying up to 90 days. This means that Community citizens in possession of valid travel documents<sup>11</sup> and international health certificate can stay in any ECOWAS member State for up to 90 days without any prior administrative or police formality linked to their stay.

Table 13 shows some actions taken by ECOWAS in the implementation of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols and the status of implementation in individual Member States as of 2013. For easier and less costly cross-border movement, Member States adopted the standardized ECOWAS Travel Certificate in 1985,<sup>12</sup> which has been adopted by Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone (see table 13). Other States such as Ghana, Liberia and Sierra-Leone have adopted the harmonized “Immigration and Emigration Form of ECOWAS Member States,” which aims to facilitate and simplify cross-border formalities in Member States. In May 2000, the Authority of Heads of State and Government adopted the ECOWAS Passport which is now being used by Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra-Leone and Togo.

### *Phase 2*

In relation to the second phase (Right of Residence), which came into force in July 1986 following the ratification by all Member States, Community citizens are required to apply and obtain residence permits or work permits just like immigrants from other parts of the world. However, refusal is possible on grounds of public order, public security or public health.

### *Phase 3*

In relation to the third phase (Right of Establishment), all citizens of an ECOWAS Member State have the right to access economic activities and to hold employment, including pursuit of the liberal professions. Discrimination may only be justified by exigencies of public order, security or public health.

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11 According to the 1979 Free Movement Protocol, “a valid travel document” is defined as: “a passport or any other valid travel document establishing the identity of the holder with his photograph, issued by or on behalf of the Member State of which he is citizen and on which endorsement by immigration and emigration authorities may be made. A valid travel document shall also include a laissez-passer issued by the Community to its officials establishing the identity of the holder.”

12 Decision A/DEC.2/7/85 of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS Relating to the Establishment of ECOWAS Travel Certificate for Member States.

Table 13: Some actions taken by ECOWAS countries in the implementation of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols as of 2013<sup>13</sup>

Country	Abolition of visa and entry requirements for stays up to 90 days	Introduction of ECOWAS travel certificate	Introduction of ECOWAS passport	Harmonised immigration and emigration forms
Benin	√	X	√	X
Burkina Faso	√	√		X
Cabo Verde	√	X		X
Côte d'Ivoire	√	X	√	X
Gambia, the	√	√		X
Ghana	√	√	√	√
Guinea	√	√	√	X
Guinea Bissau	√	X	√	X
Liberia	√	X	√	√
Mali	√	X		X
Niger	√	√	√	X
Nigeria	√	√	√	X
Senegal	√	X	√	X
Sierra Leone	√	√	√	√
Togo	√	X	√	X

Source: Country reports.

Key: √ – Implemented; X – Not yet implemented.

While some progress has been made in relation to the first phase of implementation, as shown in the country reports, and highlighted in tables 13 and 14, because of the concerns about unauthorized migration and the conflicting national laws on trade with immigration, neither the second nor the third phases of implementation of the Protocol have led to free rights of residence or establishment in Member States. For example, the Togo and Sierra Leone country reports illustrate the actions taken, the challenges encountered and the prospects.

13 Not all information was made available in country studies.

## **5.4 National legal and policy framework specific challenges**

Notwithstanding the adoption of the Protocols and their subsequent ratifications, the country reports further show that full implementation of these Protocols is challenged by the differences and lack of harmonization of national laws and policies on migration with ECOWAS Protocols to facilitate intraregional labour migration.

### ***Migrants' rights***

Migrant rights are safeguarded by the national laws of ECOWAS Member States. In Ghana, for example, the 1992 Constitution with its entrenched provisions on human rights guarantees the right of Ghanaians to emigrate and the right of all persons to move freely within Ghana. The Constitution further mandates all ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) to respect and uphold the fundamental human rights of all persons in Ghana, including foreigners irrespective of their legal status. Similarly, the Togolese Constitution seeks to protect the interests of all groups of people, including migrants. Unlike during the 1980s, Senegalese no longer need exit visas to move out of the country. The Labour Code (1997), for instance, guarantees migrant workers and members of their family the same working conditions as Senegalese, provided they have fulfilled the conditions of residence in the country. Specific provisions also exist in the national laws of ECOWAS Member States that guarantee the basic rights of all persons, and include the right to life, liberty and security, the right not to be held in slavery or servitude, the right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right not to be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention, and so on. These rights are provided without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin. These provisions contained in national laws are based on the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states in Article 13 that “everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.” Similar protections are elaborated in treaties, conventions and protocols, which have either been signed or ratified by ECOWAS Member States, as shown in table 14.

As can be seen in the country reports, all ECOWAS Member States have national labour laws that contain provisions reflecting the principles and norms of these treaties and conventions. The Labour Act (Act 651) of Ghana, for instance, contains a list of rights of the worker irrespective of nationality, including: protection against unfair termination of employment; the right



to remuneration; compensation due to the worker in respect of sickness and accident; prohibition against forced labour; conditions of work and the protection of workers at their work places, including the provisions relating to hours of work, wages, safety, health and welfare of the workers; and the employment of young persons. Article 68 of the Act also requires equal pay for equal work without distinction of any kind.

With respect to foreign nationals, the Ghana Labour Act condemns discrimination in employment against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, and nationality, among others. Thus, any person, either citizen or foreigner, who faces discrimination on an ethnic, nationality or cultural basis, may seek redress before the National Labour Commission (NLC), the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) or the regular courts.

While these labour laws seek to provide protections to migrant workers as well as to nationals, State practice does not always uphold this. Discrimination and other predicaments are endured by migrant workers, thus undermining not only these labour laws but also the aims and principles set out in the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol as well as in the international human rights treaties.

Migrant workers are often vulnerable to abuse in their places of destination and lack access to social protection. In theory, migrant workers and their families are entitled to all the social benefits available to national workers, but this is often not the case in reality. The Burkina Faso country report, for example, highlights the fact that the introduction and implementation of the principle of the territoriality of laws prevails in the area of social security in the country (Ba, 2006). Article 2 of the law 13-72/AN of 28 December 1972, which contains the Social Security Code, indicates that all workers are subject to the provisions of the Labour Code and social security regime instituted by law regardless of race, nationality, gender, or origin. In the case of Senegal, the law establishes no restriction, for instance, with regard to payment of retirement pensions. Migrant workers may choose to be paid either in Senegal or in their home country or any place of their choosing (Ba, 2006).

Table 14: Status of ratification of selected international human rights treaties as of 2013

Country	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime	UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	UN Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees	Convention on Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
Benin	✓	✓	Not signed	✓	✓	✓
Burkina Faso	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cabo Verde	✓	✓	Not signed	✓	✓	✓
Côte d'Ivoire	✓	Not signed		✓	✓	✓
Gambia	✓	✓	Not signed	✓	✓	✓
Ghana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guinea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guinea Bissau	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Liberia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mali	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Niger	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nigeria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Senegal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sierra Leone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Togo	✓	✓	Not signed	✓	✓	✓

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Key: ✓ – Ratification, accession or succession.

The potential of these international instruments to protect migrant rights against predicaments, including discrimination, unfair treatment, mass expulsion, persecution, among others, cannot be over-emphasized. Indeed, neither the Revised 1993 ECOWAS Treaty nor its Free Movement Protocol purport to limit the applicability of the rights conferred in these international instruments. It is in this sense that the 1986 Supplementary Protocol on the second phase (Right of Residence) provides that: “no provisions of this Protocol may be interpreted to adversely affect more favourable rights or liberties guaranteed to migrant workers or members of their families by a) law, legislation or practice in a Member State, or b) any international agreement in force vis-à-vis the Member State concerned.”

In the area of bilateral agreements, the country report of Liberia, for instance, makes mention of such agreements between Liberia and Ghana and Liberia and Nigeria (see box 3). While these agreements aim to promote labour migration, it is important to underline that the agreements should conform to the principles clearly defined in the ECOWAS Treaty and in the Free Movement Protocol, as well as to those of international human rights treaties.

The challenges that exist are at two levels:

- ECOWAS Member States which have not yet done so must ratify all the international human rights treaties. Accordingly, where the provisions of these treaties overlap on any given right or entitlement available to ECOWAS citizens, the most generous provision would apply;
- Member States must harmonize their national laws and policies not only with ECOWAS Protocols but also these other international instruments to facilitate intraregional labour migration.

### *Discrimination against migrants in legal codes*

Despite the existence of bilateral and regional agreements and universal declarations as well as national legal frameworks prohibiting discrimination, nationals of ECOWAS Member States continue to be exposed to discrimination. The implementation of the 1990 Right of Establishment protocol in many ECOWAS countries, for example, highlights the discrimination that exists against some ECOWAS nationals living in other ECOWAS countries. For example, within the various national legal frameworks, some privileges and rights are reserved to nationals and are not extended to foreigners. In terms of employment for example, foreigners in Ghana and Togo, including those from

ECOWAS Member States, cannot work in sensitive security services. In Mali, foreigners cannot hold any employment in the public service. Again in Ghana, by law (Section 18 of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, Act 478 of 1994) certain enterprises are wholly reserved for Ghanaian nationals.<sup>14</sup> This provision appears to discriminate against nationals from other Member States and as such it is in contravention of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol, which stipulates that ECOWAS nationals who intend to pursue livelihood activities should be subject to the same laws as the nationals of the destination Member State. Boxes 4 and 5 highlight some of the acts of legal discrimination against migrants in Ghana, Togo, and Mali that act against the implementation of the ECOWAS Right of Establishment Protocol.

The passing of indigenization policies by countries to protect the few available jobs, in addition to expulsion and stricter border controls, has impeded free movement of people within the region. Many of these policies were implemented when economic conditions began to deteriorate and the governments faced civil and political upheavals in some ECOWAS countries.

### *Citizenship regimes*

As ECOWAS seeks to build a common citizenship, it is confronted by the challenge of existing national legal frameworks on citizenship which are not conducive to facilitating intraregional labour migration. In some countries, for instance Togo, Ghana and Sierra Leone, citizenship is by descent. In other words, a person acquires the citizenship of a country where at least one of the parents is a citizen of that country. Foreign nationals may only be granted citizenship by registration or naturalization, and this is only possible after a considerable period of time. In Senegal, Law 61–70 of 7 March 1971 makes provisions for individuals to acquire citizenship by marriage, filiation, by birth or by the decision of a public authority. However, Article 18 of the citizenship regulations does not permit dual citizenship. In the case of Nigeria, for example, a foreign national who wishes to naturalize must be at least 17 years and must have resided in Nigeria for at least 15 years, be of good character, plan to remain in Nigeria, be familiar with Nigerian language and customs, have a viable means of support, and must have renounced previous citizenship. Another way is through registration and this mostly applies to women (not men) married to citizens. Another dimension of the challenge is the indigene-settler

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<sup>14</sup> These include: selling in the market, petty trading, hawking, selling from a kiosk, operation of taxi service and car hire service, pool betting and operation of beauty salons and barber shops.

contestations found within some of the Member States of ECOWAS, notably Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire. Bappah (2012) has noted that, in the case of the latter, the policy of *ivoirité* evokes xenophobia, directly challenging to the goal of common citizenship in ECOWAS.

**Box 4: Discrimination against migrants in some sectors of Ghana's Economy**

*It appears that the provisions in the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons guaranteeing that the Community's citizens can pursue livelihood activities in any Member State and be treated as that Member State's citizens were over ambitious. This is based on the fact that the economies of most Member States are relatively small and therefore have low capacity in terms of employment creation. The situation is compounded by the adoption of democracy which requires periodic election; thus, governments are concerned that if nationals are pushed out of the labour market by foreigners, citizens would vote them out of power. To address this concern, some Member States enact laws to reserve some sectors of the economy for their citizens. For instance, Ghana has reserved some sectors for Ghanaians (trading in goods at markets, petty trading, hawking, as well as operating taxi services, beauty salons and barber shops). This has become a bone of contention between the government and some nationals of ECOWAS Member States, particularly Nigerians. This is one of the key challenges to intra regional labour migration and is responsible for much of the difficulty faced by the Community's citizens seeking hassle-free employment outside their State of origin.*

*In order to address this challenge, intraregional labour migration within ECOWAS should be agreed between governments and based on each country's assessment of skills needs. For instance, Ghana currently has such an arrangement with the Government of Liberia where Ghanaian electrical engineers and technicians are working in the energy sector of that country. Another area in which intraregional labour migration can be promoted is in the study of French and English languages; anglophone and francophone countries could exchange teachers in the study of these languages.*

Source: Quartey and Agyei, Ghana country report.

## Box 5: Discrimination against migrants in Togo and Mali

***The case of Togo***

*Apart from security services and a few sensitive sectors, Togo does not prevent ECOWAS citizens from working in various sectors of its economy. However, Togolese officials were not happy with the fact that some countries, such as Ghana, do not allow nationals of other ECOWAS countries to undertake certain types of economic activities, such as petty trading. Again, conflicting national laws on trade and immigration contradict the protocol.*

***The case of Mali***

*Discrimination against foreign migrants in Mali is not legal and yet migrants do not have access to formal employment in the public sector. Some sectors in Mali are not accessible to foreigners. These include professions in the area of health, law and public services, which do not have sufficient capacity for expansion to absorb non-Malians. However, access is open to Malian/French dual nationals or dual nationals with a member State of ECOWAS. In fact, the dual nationals are considered as Malian citizens either by the law of the land or by birth.*

Source: Teye, Togo country report; Cissé, Mali country report.

***Border controls***

Member States do not have sufficient human resources for the effective control of their borders. Consequently, many irregular migrants are able to enter these countries. In addition, travellers are often victims of administrative hindrances and police harassment at numerous checkpoints on the main migratory routes. In the case of Nigeria, the country report highlights the fact that the lack of valid travelling documents, including birth certificates, by many ECOWAS nationals has been exploited by persons who carry out nefarious activities like internet fraud, money laundering and human trafficking, among others. There are also concerns that the privileges enshrined in the protocol have been abused by some citizens of the region, including smuggling of goods and illicit trade in narcotics. These crimes and acts of economic sabotage have led to expressions of resentment among officials and the general public in destination countries. To meet these challenges, Ghana and Nigeria for instance, have established Border Patrol Units within their immigration services to police their borders. There are identified legal border checkpoints; notable among these are the Seme, Idiroko, Ilela and Ikom border posts between Nigeria and neighbouring Member States of ECOWAS.

Box 6: The challenge of the citizenship regime in Côte d'Ivoire

*Despite the ratification of relevant protocols, Côte d'Ivoire continues to violate the provisions of these agreements by imposing entry visas and resident papers on all foreigners, including ECOWAS citizens, in order to give priority to Ivoirians in terms of employment (Brou and Charbit, 1994:46). However, to show the country has not totally broken away from the spirit of the agreements, Côte d'Ivoire gives preferential treatment to nationals from ECOWAS countries who pay CFA 10,000 for the issuance of their resident permit, as compared to CFA 50,000 for other foreigners. Malians and Burkinabes have been particularly discontent with the lack of implementation of the ECOWAS protocol, as many of them participated decisively in the "Ivorian miracle."*

*There is a contradiction between the national legislation and the agreements on free movement. Before 1985, any Foreigner that had a consular card issued by the Embassy of his country could settle legally in Côte d'Ivoire and could engage in an activity to earn a salary. In 1975 and 1988 for example, over 90 per cent of foreigners living in the country were Nationals from ECOWAS member countries. But in 1985, while the second stage of the protocol, namely the right of residence, was to be put into practice, the Ivorian Authorities took restrictive measures in respect of foreigners; some sectors of activities were reserved for Nationals, as the Ivoirization of employment opportunities became one of the preoccupations of the government, Residence in Côte d'Ivoire was no longer considered as a right for Nationals from ECOWAS countries, but as a concession that could be revoked at any time (Brou and Charbit, 1994).*

Source: Lazare, Côte d'Ivoire country report.

The extensive borders of large countries such as Nigeria, Mali and Niger makes policing borders a major challenge for immigration enforcement agencies in such countries. This has led to several hundreds of illegal border crossing points along the border of Nigeria, for example. The Mali country report highlights the fact that the country does not have sufficient human resources for the effective control of its borders. The recent crisis in Mali has also led neighbouring countries, such as Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal, to securitize their borders with Mali, with the aim of preventing the penetration of combatants into their territories.

The strict surveillance of national borders is further compounded by cultural and ethnic bonds which many years of colonial occupation did not dissolve.

Several ethnic groups in ECOWAS have found themselves in different countries although they share the same cultural and kinship ties. For example, the geographical location of countries like the Gambia and Senegal makes it difficult to control the influx of migrants, particularly irregular migrants. This situation then finds expression in the movement of populations between borders.

**Box 7: The challenge of border control in Ghana**

*Ghana is gradually becoming a migration pole within the region due to its relative progress in economic development, democratic governance and political stability within the ECOWAS Region. This situation calls for effective management of its borders and this is constrained by inadequate technological and human resources. The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) has the sole mandate to regulate and monitor the entry, residence, employment and the exit of foreigners in Ghana (PNDC Law 226, 1989; Immigration Act 573, 2000). Apart from the potential security threat posed by refugees (some of whom are combatants in ongoing or past armed conflicts) and other immigrants, crimes associated with immigrants have been on the increase, while collaboration with other security agencies in terms of sharing information has not been very effective among the Member States. The provision of international standard documents through well-structured registration and systems of high integrity is crucial for easy cross border movements and for effective border management. This would also facilitate legal migration of the nationals of the Member States, as ECOWAS exists to promote regional integration and development.*

*In spite of the efforts by the various governments to ensure that the country's borders are safe and secured, they still remain porous; and therefore indirectly promote irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling of goods. It is believed that irregular migration, human smuggling and child trafficking are on the increase. Indeed Ghana has become source, transit and destination for human trafficking in the region.*

*Source: Quartey and Agyei, Ghana country report.*



### *Migrant expulsion*

Though *expulsion en masse* is prohibited,<sup>15</sup> the full implementation of the Free Movement Protocols is undermined by the power of expulsion of individuals granted to Member States for reasons of “national security, public order or morality, public health, and non-fulfillment of essential conditions of residence.”<sup>16</sup> Such expulsions may also occur within the discretionary powers of these States “in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable in the host Member State.”<sup>17</sup> This provision is suggestive of the retention in their domestic laws of States’ discretionary power on the matter of expulsion. At the same time, in line with the obligations assumed under international human rights treaties – such as the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right (ICESCR), and the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families – the Free Movement Protocols oblige ECOWAS Member States to follow procedures for migrant expulsion and admission. However, State practice shows that these procedures were hardly followed in the expulsions that took place in Nigeria (1983 and 1985) and Côte d’Ivoire (1999). In 1998 and 1999 respectively, in occasion of the run-up to the 2000 presidential elections in Côte d’Ivoire, 800 Malian fishermen from the Ayamé region and 20,000 Burkinabe farmers from the Tabou region were expelled (Ouedraogo, 2002; Konan, 2009).

In most instances, the mass expulsions which have taken place involved individuals forming part of a large, unregistered population understandably of concern to the host State. This being said, it is apparent that the mass expulsion of ECOWAS migrant workers not only violates the spirit and letter of the regional law, but also undermines the broader regional aims and principles set out in the ECOWAS Treaty: cooperation and integration leading to economic union, balanced development, equality and inter-dependence, solidarity, good neighbourliness, promotion of human rights, equitable distribution of costs and benefits of economic cooperation, among others (Adepoju et al., 2007).

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15 See Article 14 of the 1986 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/86 on the second phase (Right of Residence) of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

## **5.5 The 2008 ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration**

### *Introduction*

Ratification of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons has been a vital first step in the implementation of the policy on intraregional labour migration. As shown in table 12, all the 15 Member States of ECOWAS have ratified the Free Movement of Persons Protocol. By ratification, the Protocols entered into law at the national level and became directly applicable. Despite ratification, gaps, obstacles and challenges at both the supra-national (namely intraregional) and national levels have persisted acting against the effective implementation of the Protocols. It is to meet these challenges that the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and government adopted the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration on 18 January 2008. Although it is non-binding in nature and scope and content are not to be ratified, the document provides directions on strategic priorities as well as action plans to promote effective migration management in West Africa. The Common Approach is based on the following six principles:

- a) Free movement of persons within the ECOWAS zone;
- b) Promotion of legal (regular) migration as an integral part of the development process;
- c) Combat of human trafficking;
- d) Policy harmonization;
- e) Protection of the rights of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees; and
- f) Recognition of the gender dimension of migration.

## **5.6 Policies, programmes and actions initiated/developed by Member States to facilitate the implementation of the 2008 ECOWAS Common Approach**

As the Common Approach is new, information on the policies, programmes and actions initiated or developed by Member States since its adoption was difficult to obtain by the country researchers. Even the information that does exist is patchy or only provides measures taken before 2008 when the Common Approach was adopted. This problem is compounded by the lack of comprehensive migration policies by Member States to provide direction for overall migration management. Despite this lack of data, the country Reports highlighted the following actions taken at a national level by some countries.

### *Actions to promote free movement within the ECOWAS zone*

By ratifying the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol, Member States have shown their commitment to ensuring the implementation of the Protocol and taking the necessary measures to remove all obstacles to the free movement of persons within the ECOWAS zone (see table 13 for measures taken by ECOWAS member countries). In the years following the adoption of the Common Approach, the country reports indicate that the ECOWAS Passport has been adopted by Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone with the aim of consolidating mobility in the ECOWAS zone.

### *Management of regular migration*

Concerning regular migration, the Ghana country report indicates that mechanisms for the promotion of regular migration by the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) have been developed based on the Immigration Act and Regulations, and that the GIS has established a Migration Management Bureau and Migration Information Bureau to facilitate effective migration management. Absence of cooperation and information-sharing mechanisms among institutions in charge of immigration in ECOWAS Member States and the porous nature of national borders constitute the main challenges.

Similarly, Togolese State institutions are working with a number of international organizations, such as IOM, to manage regular migration (Teye, Togo country report). Since 2012, IOM has been working effectively with Togolese State agencies and some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to facilitate effective migration management. The Togolese government also allows some private recruitment agencies to formally recruit both skilled and unskilled workers to some countries in Europe, Asia and West Africa. If well monitored, this measure can help promote regular migration. Enhanced border control mechanisms are also being adopted by Togolese security services to ensure that irregular migration is reduced. The country report, however, stresses that the lack of adequate resources and capacity makes it quite difficult for Togolese officials to effectively manage regular migration.

### *Policy harmonization*

Available information from the country reports indicates that only Ghana, Nigeria and Burkina Faso have drafted or are in the process of drafting their National Migration Policies to incorporate information on migratory flows inside and outside the ECOWAS region, intraregional mobility and migrants' profiles (Bado, Burkina Faso country report; Ikwuyatuw, Nigeria country

report; Quartey and Agyei, Ghana country report). The main challenges are for all Member States to adopt and harmonize these policies.

### *Controlling irregular migration and trafficking, particularly of women and children*

The actions taken are the following:

- a) Ten of the ECOWAS Member States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal) have ratified the 2003 United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Togo have signed but not ratified the Protocol, whereas Côte d'Ivoire and Niger have not signed it.
- b) Awareness campaigns against irregular migration and education on acquisition of genuine travel documents have been conducted in Ghana, as the country report indicates. The report further adds that through the GIS, Ghana has instituted measures to curb irregular migration among youth. To this effect, the GIS has teamed up with IOM to conduct workshops, awareness-raising campaigns and advocacy in migrant-sending areas to build awareness on the risks of irregular migration. This is being done in collaboration with some civil society groups operating in the localities where there is evidence of irregular youth migration. These activities also equip potential migrants, parents and households with information on acquisition of genuine travel documents to facilitate legal migration. No other information is provided by the other country reports.

### *Protection of the rights of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees*

The following actions have been taken:

Eight of the ECOWAS Member States (Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) have ratified the 1990 United Nations Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers' Rights and Members of their Family. Benin, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Togo have signed but not ratified the Convention. Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire have not signed it.

### *Gender and migration*

Only three ECOWAS Member States –Ghana, Nigeria, Burkina Faso— have drafted or are in the process of drafting their National Migration Policies which recognize and incorporate the gender dimension of migration.

## 6. Summary, conclusions and recommendations

### 6.1 Summary of key findings

The study draws together a number of key findings which are grouped under three broad themes (a) migration flows and statistics; (b) labour markets and mobility strategies; and (c) legal and institutional frameworks for labour migration.

#### *Labour migration flows and statistics*

- Labour migration between countries in the ECOWAS region has and continues to be the dominant form of migration. Contemporary intraregional labour migration in West Africa includes temporary cross-border workers, male farm labourers, female traders, professionals, clandestine workers, tertiary-educated students and refugees.
- Although the direction of flows has been changing over time in response to a variety of factors, in general, intraregional migration has been dominated by a North–South movement from countries of Sahel West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) to the mineral-rich and plantation-rich coastal countries, notably Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and the Gambia. More recently, conflict situations have made Liberia, Sierra Leone and to some extent Côte d’Ivoire also migrant source countries.
- Although almost all West African countries are today both migrant-sending areas and immigration destinations, Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea and the Gambia are the popular migrants’ destination countries. In absolute terms, Côte d’Ivoire remains the topmost immigration country in the region. While the Gambia does not rank very high in terms of migrant destinations in ECOWAS, as a percentage of immigrants in its total population, it ranks the highest.
- Migrants from each country tend to have a popular destination, which is not necessarily the most economically prosperous country in the region. For example, more than 87 per cent of migrants from Sierra Leone are in Guinea. In most cases, the popular destination for a country’s emigrants is also the most popular source region for its immigrants. For instance, the majority of emigrants from Mali are in Côte d’Ivoire, while Mali also receives the highest proportion of migrants from Côte d’Ivoire. Similar patterns were observed between Ghana and Nigeria. The findings further indicate that the destinations of ECOWAS migrants have mainly been countries that share some political, historical and cultural ties.

- Recent political and economic developments, as well as processes of globalization and urbanization within the region are changing the configurations of West Africa's intraregional mobility dynamics. Countries such as Burkina Faso and Mali which are predominantly migrant-sending countries are increasingly becoming destinations for refugee flows from Niger and Côte d'Ivoire. New natural resource discoveries may also be changing labour mobility patterns.
- The majority of West African migrants in the region are not very highly educated. This may be explained by the fact that very highly educated citizens are more likely to find good jobs in their home countries, and if they choose to migrate, often move to Europe or the United States where they can earn higher wages. Despite this trend, increasingly, skilled migrants move within the region, as between Nigeria and Ghana. In recent years, a number of Togolese university graduates have moved to Ghana and Nigeria in search of jobs.
- Labour migrants in most ECOWAS countries tend to work in the informal sector as traders, artisans, and farmers, possibly as a result of the generally low educational level of many ECOWAS migrants and lack of employment opportunities in the formal sector in the region.
- There is a paucity of reliable, up to date and accurate data on migration in all ECOWAS countries, partly due to a lack of harmonization of definitions, the large variety of migration contexts and a multiplicity of institutions in charge of migration data collection systems, all of which work with different interests and priorities. The data-collection systems of most of the ECOWAS countries are therefore faced with problems of comparability, among several other challenges.

### *Labour markets and mobility*

- There is a general lack of data on migrant labour force information, particularly on the number of labour migrants in each country, as well as records of foreigners in almost all countries.
- Intraregional migration can be seen as an integral part of labour markets and livelihoods in the ECOWAS region for at least the last century. Over time, and in different places, it has taken various forms. It also takes place in widely different demographic contexts and skill boundaries.
- There are gaps between labour supply and demand, with supply outstripping demand in the region. Most labour migrants are absorbed in

the informal sector of the economies of most ECOWAS countries, despite the vulnerabilities in the sector.

- Labour migrants within ECOWAS are not only job-seekers, but also contribute to the economies of destination countries. Many labour migrants are highly qualified with adequate capital and actually create employment in countries of destination. Remittances from ECOWAS labour migrants are important for the economies of ECOWAS.
- Institutional frameworks on labour migration and labour markets in West Africa are complex, with a wide range of government departments, agencies and private recruitment institutions all involved. There is no formal framework that guides the sharing of labour market information, which currently is collected by a variety of sources ranging from national statistical institutions to individual private employment organizations.
- Although many ECOWAS countries recognize the need for labour market information systems (LMIS), all countries in this study did not have functional labour market information in place and where some form of LMIS exists, they are not operational.
- The country studies also highlighted the fact that although in principle many Member States of ECOWAS have ratified the Free Movement of Persons Protocol, in practice there are still restrictive policies/initiatives by Member States aimed at protecting certain sectors of their economies for their nationals.

### *Legal and policy framework*

- Along with the Supplementary Protocols, the Protocol relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment testifies to the expressed determination of Member States of ECOWAS to place the free intraregional movement of persons at the heart of the regional integration process.
- In general, the country reports indicate that a gradual implementation of the ECOWAS protocols at the national level is ongoing, but there are also several hindrances in implementation.
- Due to concerns over irregular migration, neither the second nor the third phases of implementation of the Protocol have led to free rights of residence or establishment in Member States.

- While the Common Approach with its strategic priorities and action plans can be said to represent a comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing the interdependence of migration issues, more needs to be done to ensure their effective implementation. Essentially, Member States must adopt a series of legislative, regulatory and practical measures at a national level in order to implement these action plans.
- Although ECOWAS migrants and nationals are expected to have equal opportunities, many countries have provisions in their labour laws and regulations that preserve certain public sector jobs for their nationals.
- There are no deliberate policies or programmes implemented towards meeting the objectives of the ECOWAS Common Approach to Migration.

## **6.2 Key gaps and challenges**

### *Challenges related to migration data collection*

In all the ECOWAS countries, a large portion of migration data is collected by national statistical departments during population and housing censuses. However, the great variation in the questions asked, time-references used, as well as irregularity in census updates further reduced their effectiveness as data sources on migration. Much of the data collected by immigration services from persons arriving and departing, if properly processed and analysed, could provide accurate data on stocks and flows of immigrants and emigrants. However, much of this data is not disaggregated by variables such as age, occupation, level of education, and so on. This places serious limitations on meaningful analysis.

The definition of the term “migrant” and other labour migration concepts is not harmonized and is often defined without reference to a time frame. In view of this, the figures provided are simply non-nationals in a country irrespective of the duration of stay. Following these definitions, there is no distinction between tourist, conference attendees and migrants in the stock of foreigners in the population.

Although harmonization of labour migration definitions and concepts can help address some of the gaps identified, it still fails to capture a large number of different migration movements and contexts in ECOWAS, such as seasonal movements, pastoral movements, internal migration and cross-border movements, that are both seasonal and reflective of actual livelihood opportunities. Over time, these sorts of movements have led to a number of permanent settlements in countries such as Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana.



ECOWAS countries also continue to grapple with the lack of accurate data on the number of emigrants living outside their borders. None of the countries studied have reliable data on the number of nationals living abroad. The lack of available reliable and accurate emigration data is attributed to non-registration of emigrants with ECOWAS missions abroad and the use of irregular channels to enter or leave the country.

The country reports indicate that the gaps identified are partly due to weak institutional frameworks for collecting and managing migration-related data in the country. The institutions responsible for migration data collection are often constrained by various factors, including lack of capacity in terms of equipment, software or trained human resources to process the data in order to make it available to interested institutions. The large variety of institutions working on migration issues also often means that reconciling all the different interests and priorities remains a challenge in many ECOWAS countries, especially as there is also no mechanism for migration data sharing among the various ministries, departments and agencies in all the countries.

### *Key labour market challenges*

#### *- Lack of comprehensive data set on labour markets and LMIS*

One of the major challenges emerging from this study is the inability of governments in West Africa to develop comprehensive data sets on labour markets to provide information on employment opportunities to youth entering the labour market. Few countries have carried out labour force surveys, the most recent country being Liberia in 2010. Almost all countries lack comprehensive labour force data and possess limited statistics on labour migration.

Closely related is the absence of LMIS in countries participating in this study. All 15 countries covered in this study had no functional LMIS and only three countries – namely Senegal, Ghana and Gambia – had made some efforts towards the establishment of such a system. Thus, governments are missing out the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the structure of their labour markets, something that could benefit informed policy making and formulation.

#### *- Absence of national labour policies*

The development and synchronization of national labour policies to guide labour markets is important and necessary to give direction to employment and labour issues in the West African region. Most countries had employment

policies or some regulations governing employment issues; however, some of these policies and laws on trade and immigration contradict certain ECOWAS' protocols. In some countries, certain sectors are exclusive to the citizens of host countries.

*- Unemployment and informality of labour*

There is a relatively high degree of informality in the labour market and employment is growing in the informal sector. It is extremely difficult to collect information from this sector of the labour market.

*- Weak coordinating mechanisms*

In the absence of LMIS, various stakeholders collect labour market information independently and this is not often shared among relevant stakeholders. There is no coordinated strategy for data collection and dissemination and for engaging the different institutions that are key to the success or otherwise of LMIS.

*Legal and policy challenges*

Several gaps and challenges at both national and regional levels were identified and need to be urgently addressed for Community citizens to enjoy their rights. Among these gaps and challenges there are:

*- Border checks, harassment and extortion of money from travellers by security personnel*

Border checks, harassment and extortion of money from travellers by security personnel undermine attempts to facilitate intraregional labour migration, more so when there is an absence of mechanisms for the settlement of complaints regarding the harassment and abuse of human rights of Community citizens.

*- Mass expulsion of nationals from Member States*

The mass expulsion of nationals in the region affects the goodwill of the people and the commitment of governments towards the full implementation of the relevant protocols.

*- Lack of harmonization of national laws and policies on migration*

The harmonization of national laws with ECOWAS Protocols to facilitate intraregional migration remains a huge challenge in many ECOWAS countries.

*- Political instability*

Political instability also poses a serious challenge to the implementation of the Protocols. Since the early 1990s, the region has experienced no less than 10 low- to high-profile intra-State conflicts, the most notable of which being those of Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Senegal and recently Mali. These conflicts generate many refugees and IDPs. As a result, both the individual countries and ECOWAS have to devote much attention and commit their scarce human, material and financial resources to the resolution of these conflicts, thereby constraining ECOWAS from achieving its set objectives.

*- Tensions created by the dominance of migrants in national economies*

Free movement of people within the region raises tensions in States where migrants dominate the trade and labour sectors of economies. This creates anti-migrant sentiments that render States reluctant to implement the Protocols. There is discrimination regarding the employment of immigrants. Nationals from ECOWAS countries would benefit from a better integration into the labour market.

*- Weak institutional frameworks at both national and supranational levels*

Institutional arrangements at the national and regional levels promote divergence in ECOWAS policy implementation. Within most of the Member States, migration policies are handled by different ministries, departments and agencies. Poor coordination, competition and implementation lapses result in several challenges that hinder free movement of people in the region.

*- Lack of national migration policy frameworks*

Many countries, with the exception of Nigeria and Ghana (draft policy), do not have comprehensive national migration policies. Where some form of national policy exists, it may not be in harmony with regional and international regulations/laws on migration.

### **6.3 Policy recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made for dealing with the data gaps and the challenges associated with the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement in order to facilitate intraregional labour migration.

*Enhance the capacity of the various institutions charged with migration data collection*

While it is generally acknowledged that reliable data on immigration and emigration are important to support on-going policy initiatives, this study has shown that there is a general lack of accurate statistics on the stock and flows on ECOWAS migrants within the region. Therefore, to address this problem, it is recommended that governments of various ECOWAS countries take steps to strengthen the capacity of national statistical institutions/bureaus, immigration departments and labour institutions at local, district and regional levels, as well as strengthen migration research and training institutions to enhance their ability to gather data on labour and migration in order to facilitate research and informed decision-making. This would require adequate investment in state-of-the-art technology, as well as training of personnel to facilitate data collection and dissemination. There should also be capacity-building for migration governance institutions, in terms of training and investment in infrastructure and technology.

*Harmonize definitions, concepts and methodologies, taking into consideration ECOWAS realities*

The findings indicate that lack of harmonization of definitions and concepts is a major constraint to developing effective policies. The adoption of common migration data collection methods and definitions by ECOWAS national statistical offices is urgently required to improve data comparability in the region. This harmonisation must take into account the different realities and specificities, as well as commonalities and experiences of ECOWAS countries with regards to specific movements, such as seasonal, cross-border and internal migration.

*Create a register of foreign residents*

Each ECOWAS country should create a register of foreign residents including those nationals from ECOWAS Member States. Among other things, this would help to provide information on labour immigrants, such as their levels of education, skills, duration of stay and sectors of the economy in which they operate. Such data will help to ensure critical analysis and enable authorities make informed decisions to promote migration for development.

*Build comprehensive data on labour markets and mobility*

Governments and stakeholders in labour markets in West African countries should move beyond recognizing the essence of labour markets and mobility

data; ensuring reliable accurate statistical data on labour market and migration is crucial. In this regard, governments and stakeholders should:

- Harmonize all existing sources of data on labour markets and migration at the national level to consolidate all available data. Migration and labour concepts and definitions must also be harmonized to allow a steady analysis of trends in labour migration in the region.
- Identify and collect data on migration and labour markets from informal sources, such as religious organizations and trade associations, among others.
- Conduct periodic labour market and migration surveys to ascertain labour needs and supplies to ensure regular updates of migration and labour market information at the national level.
- Develop and implement a framework for LMIS. Stakeholders must invest in determining labour demand and supply within the region to contribute to greater employment and lower unemployment.

#### *Strengthen effective coordination*

Promote effective collaboration amongst ministries, departments and agencies and other important stakeholders, such as those in the private sector that deal with labour and migration issues, to ensure that governments, labourers and employers' interest are clearly represented.

- Establish a national steering committee to coordinate, monitor and supervise activities in the LMIS.
- Implement a formal framework on the coordination of LMIS at various national levels.
- Establish mechanisms for the exchange and sharing of labour market and migration information among MDAs, civil society groups as well as research and training institutions.

#### *Promote a legal and policy framework that will facilitate intraregional mobility*

Towards this, the following is recommended:

At the regional level:

- Promote periodic studies on intraregional migration and the implementation of the protocols. As this study reveals, there are a number of practical

challenges in the implementation of the Protocols. Periodic studies are important for understanding and resolving these challenges.

- Establish structures within the organization to address migration issues, and in particular, establish mechanisms for the registration and settlement of complaints of harassment and abuses of human rights of Community citizens.
- Work with national authorities and civil society groups to raise awareness of institutions and procedures for individuals to claim damages to life and property and human rights abuses (including denial of rights enshrined in the protocol).
- Deepen dialogue with national authorities to ensure application and implementation of all phases of the Protocol and the Action Plans and enshrine them in their national laws.

At the national level:

- According to the findings of the study, differences in national regulatory frameworks affect implementation of the Protocols; thus, prioritizing the harmonization of travel documents and migration policies in the region is needed. For instance, while Togo accepts national identity cards for entries, some anglophone countries do not accept such documents. The rapid harmonization of travel documents can help resolve these problems.
- Develop a more coherent and cooperative inter-State approach to migration management in order to include clear objectives and opportunities for the exchange of experiences and best practices to address the growing number of irregular migrants and the complexity of the migratory configurations within and across West Africa.
- Since the institutional capacity in managing migratory flows is weak, some capacity-building of officials (customs and immigration officers, police and security) is required, to manage movement of persons and goods and for effective policy formulation and implementation. The observance of the rights of migrants is critical to achieving the goal of integration; as such capacity-building should be a continuous process.
- Transform border control and security officials' roles to focus on migration management. Training should also include components addressing ways of identifying people in need of protection and of respecting the rights of migrants in accordance with international norms and conventions.

### *Harness the potential of internal labour migration for development*

Although internal migration is almost four times greater in magnitude than international migration, little focus is given by ECOWAS to these movements of people. In Ghana, internal migration was almost four times higher than the emigration rate. Recent evidence indicates that the total sum of internal remittances in some ECOWAS countries exceeds international remittances (McKey et al., 2013). Given its magnitude and importance to livelihoods, and the fact that these remittances are mainly from poorer migrants and often reach a larger number of poor families, it has been argued that the impacts of internal migration on poverty reduction are likely to be significant. There is therefore a need for ECOWAS to focus not only on intraregional migration but on internal migration as well.

### *Develop national migration policies*

Although a range of national and international laws and regulations have guided migration management in individual ECOWAS countries, the findings indicate a near absence of migration policies in the region. ECOWAS States must consolidate national migration policies, in order to provide the context within which labour migration and labour markets interact. Governments should work to ensure the integration of labour migration and migration issues in general into national development planning agendas and regional frameworks, in order to harness labour migration potentials.

### *Promote broader social, political and economic policies*

Governments in West Africa must adopt deliberate and prudent microeconomic policies that have long-lasting effects contributing to sustained job creation in their countries. For instance, it is important that investments are made particularly in the educational and training sectors to enhance the capacity of the labour force in meeting the development needs of the countries.

## **6.4 Conclusions, prospects, challenges and opportunities for intraregional labour migration in the ECOWAS region**

Migration is increasingly recognized as a major human development issue which, if properly managed and harnessed, could contribute to the socioeconomic transformation of the economies of both developed and developing countries. Thus, increasingly, countries of destination and origin are developing policies to harness its impacts on development. In West Africa,

intra-regional labour migration has been a way of life, and has been an integral part of labour markets and livelihoods in the ECOWAS region. Over time, it has taken a number of different forms and occurred in various demographic contexts. Intra-regional migration represents an important livelihood strategy for poor households seeking to diversify their sources of income, but it is also the relatively better-off in the region that tend to engage in migration. It is increasingly acknowledged that, if well managed, intra-regional migration can be beneficial to both sending- and receiving-countries and can create opportunities leading to poverty reduction. Responsive and evidence-based policymaking is therefore required to ensure that migration is beneficial for the region as well as for migrants themselves.

The facilitation of intra-regional labour migration study provides an opportunity to track and assess national development progress related to migration, the implementation of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol and other aspects of social and economic development. The study of the 15 countries reviewed in this report shows how the implementation of such measures facilitates labour migration in these countries. While, in principle, Member States in ECOWAS have ratified the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment and governments have developed various initiatives, the implementation of the Protocol has been slow and beset with several problems. Future labour mobility patterns will largely depend on, inter alia, the political will of Member States of ECOWAS to cooperate and share labour migration data and effectively implement labour migration policies, agreements and protocols.



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**Vandermeersch, C.**

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## 8. Annexes

### Annex I: List of researchers

Name	Qualification	Role / Country Report in which involved
George A. Atiim	MPhil – Geography	Benin
Mariama Awumbila	PhD	Coordinator
Aristide Romaric Bado	MSc – Demography	Burkina Faso
Yaw Benneh	LLB, LLM	Legal Expert
João Ribeiro Butiam Có	PhD	Guinea Bissau
Pierre Cissé	PhD	Mali
Hubert Bonayi Dabire	PhD	Niger
Ibrahima Lamine Diop	PhD	Senegal*
Godwin Ode Ikwuyatuw	PhD	Nigeria
Sika Lazare	PhD	Côte d’Ivoire
Peter Quartey	PhD	Ghana
Joseph Teye	PhD	Statistic Expert Togo Guinea
Gertrude Dzifa Torvikeh	MPhil – Migration Studies	Benin
Odair B. Valera	PhD	Cabo Verde
Celine Vandermeersch	PhD	The Gambia
Chea Stanford Wesseh	MA Population Studies	Liberia Sierra Leone

Note: Provided inputs in an initial draft.

**Annex 2: National population and housing censuses**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Censuses since 1985</b>	<b>Institutional body in charge of conducting national population and housing census</b>	<b>Definition of international migrant(s)</b>
Benin	1992, 2002	National Institute for Statistical and Economic Analysis	Non-nationals of Benin residing in Benin during census period.
Burkina Faso	1985, 1996, 2006	National Institute of Statistics and Demography of Burkina Faso	Persons who were not born in Burkina Faso but were residents in the country at the time of the counting.
Cabo Verde	1990, 2000, 2010	National Institute of Statistics of Cabo Verde	Non-nationals of Cabo Verde who were found in the country during the census.
Côte d'Ivoire	1988, 1998	National Statistical Institute (INS-CI)	People who were not born in Côte d'Ivoire but were residing in Côte d'Ivoire.
The Gambia	1993, 2003	Gambia Bureau of Statistics	A person enumerated in the Gambia and whose place of birth is outside the Gambia.
Ghana	2000, 2010	Ghana Statistical Service (GSS)	All non-nationals residing in the country during census period.
Guinea	1996	National Statistical Institute ( <i>Institut National de la statistique</i> )	Anyone who is not a citizen but was living in Guinea at the time of census.
Guinea Bissau	1991, 2009	National Institute of Statistics and Censuses ( <i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística e Censos</i> )	Non-citizens living in Guinea Bissau during census.

Country	Censuses since 1985	Institutional body in charge of conducting national population and housing census	Definition of international migrant(s)
Liberia	2008	Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services	Anyone whose citizenship was different from Liberia and was counted in Liberia.
Mali	1987, 1998, 2009	National Statistics and Computer Management (DNSI)	Any person who has left his country and who intends to settle or is already settled for a period of at least five years in the host country.
Niger	1988, 2001, 2012	National Statistical Institute of Niger ( <i>Institut national de la statistique du Niger</i> ) (INS)	Any resident of Niger born abroad (even if he/she is a de facto Nigerien or a Nigerien by naturalization).
Nigeria	1991, 2006	National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)	Non-Nigerians living in Nigeria at the time of census.
Senegal	1988, 2002	National Agency of Statistics and Demography ( <i>Agence nationale de la statistique et de la demographie</i> )	A person enumerated in Senegal and whose place of birth is outside the country.
Sierra Leone	1985, 2004	Statistics Sierra Leone	Anyone whose citizenship was different from Sierra Leone and was counted in Sierra Leone.
Togo	2010	Directorate General of Statistics and National Accounts ( <i>Direction générale de la statistique et de la comptabilité nationale</i> )	Persons who are not citizens of Togo but were living in Togo at the time of census.

**Annex 3: Surveys in ECOWAS countries with migration data component**

Country	Survey
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National migration survey was conducted by the National Institute for Statistical and Economic Analysis in 2000.</li> </ul>
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studies on living conditions in 1994, 1998, 2003 and 2009 by the National Institute of Statistics and Demography;</li> <li>Demographic survey by National Institute of Statistics and Demography in 1991;</li> <li>Survey on Migrations and Urbanization in 1993 by CERPOD National Institute of Statistics and Demography (INSD);</li> <li>National survey on “dynamic migration, urban integration and environment” in 2000 by the Institute of Higher Sciences Population (ISSP) in collaboration with the CERPOD and the University of Montreal (INSD 2009).</li> </ul>
Cabo Verde	-
Côte d’Ivoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living Standards Surveys (LSS) in 1998, 2002 and 2008 by the National Statistical Institute;</li> <li>Demographic and household survey in 1994, 1998/99 and 2011/12 by the National Statistical Institute;</li> <li>Migration network survey on migration and urbanization in 1993 by the National Statistical Institute and some universities.</li> </ul>
The Gambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gambia Household Economic Survey, 1992–1993 by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics;</li> <li>Migration and urbanization survey, 2009 by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development.</li> </ul>
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living standard surveys conducted periodically since 1992, with latest one in 2008, conducted by Ghana Statistical Services;</li> <li>National migration survey in 1991 by Ghana Statistical Services.</li> </ul>
Guinea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migration network survey on migration and urbanization in 1993 by the National Statistical Institute.</li> </ul>
Guinea Bissau	-

Country	Survey
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Force Survey in 2010.</li> </ul>
Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migration network survey on migration and urbanization in 1993 by National Statistics and Computer Management.</li> </ul>
Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of surveys on migration and urbanization in West Africa (NESMUA) in 1993.</li> </ul>
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network surveys on migration and urbanization, Afolayan 1997.</li> </ul>
Senegal	-
Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey in 2003/04.</li> </ul>
Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Togo Living Standards Survey (TLSS) in 2006 by the Directorate General of Statistics.</li> </ul>

Source: Compiled by authors based on data from various country reports and United Nations Population Division.

#### **Annex 4: Matrix on administrative data collection**

Country	Name of institution and type of migration-related data
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Border Police Agency of Benin collects data on all non-nationals entering the country irrespective of the duration of stay.</li> </ul>
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burkina Faso Immigration Authority collects data on all non-nationals entering the country irrespective of the duration of stay.</li> <li>• The National Employment Promotion Agency (ANPE) collects data on all jobs applicants (migrants and non-migrants).</li> </ul>
Cabo Verde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabo Verde Immigration Authority collects data on people leaving and entering Côte d'Ivoire through approved routes.</li> </ul>
Côte d'Ivoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ivoirian Immigration Authority collects data on people leaving and entering Côte d'Ivoire through approved routes;</li> <li>• Department of Ivoirians living Abroad (DIE) collects data on Ivoirians who have gone through the consulate registration process.</li> </ul>
The Gambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gambia Immigration Department, Statistics Unit uses questionnaire to collect data on non-Gambian nationals entering and leaving the Gambia.</li> </ul>

Country	Name of institution and type of migration-related data
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) uses administrative procedure (completion of disembarkation forms at the entry point) to collect data on all non-nationals entering the country irrespective of the duration of stay;</li> <li>• Immigration Quota Committee collects data on immigrants granted work permit;</li> <li>• Ghana Refugee Board collects data on Refugees and asylum seekers in the country.</li> </ul>
Guinea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Air and Border Police uses migrant tracking form to collect data on people entering/leaving Guinea through approved entry points.</li> </ul>
Guinea Bissau	-
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) collects data on people entering or leaving Liberia through approved routes;</li> <li>• Liberia Refugees Repatriation and Resettlement Commission collect data on refugees, returnees and asylum-seekers;</li> <li>• Ministry of Labour uses administrative procedures (Work Permit Application Form) to collect information on the profile of non-Liberians within the labour market.</li> </ul>
Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization uses registration form to collect information on Malians and West Africans repatriated;</li> <li>• Ministry of Interior Administration, collectively and decentralized, collects data on the Malian Diaspora aged 18 years and over.</li> </ul>
Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La direction de la surveillance du territoire (DST) collects data on foreigners entering Niger.</li> </ul>
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nigeria Immigration Service collects data on non-nationals entering Nigeria.</li> </ul>
Senegal	-
Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureau of Immigration collects data on regular, irregular, and temporary migrants and resident aliens;</li> <li>• Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security uses the Work Permit Application Form to collect data on non-Sierra Leoneans;</li> <li>• Sierra Leone Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons Commission compiles data on refugees, returnees and asylum-seekers.</li> </ul>
Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Immigration and Passport Authority collects data on Togolese and immigrants entering Togo through approved entry points.</li> </ul>



## Annex 5: Matrix on institutional bodies collecting labour market information

Country	Institutional body collecting labour market data					
	National ministries/bodies	Statistics and research institutions	Agencies	Immigration departments	International development organizations	National surveys
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Labour and Social Security</li> <li>Ministry for Youth and Employment</li> <li>Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Handicrafts (CCIA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Institute of Statistics and Demography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Employment Promotion Agency (ANPE)</li> <li>National Observatory for Employment and Vocational Training (NOEV)</li> <li>Directorates for Promotion of Informal Sector (DEPSI), Strategies and Employment Programs (DSPE), Vocational Training and Learning (DFPA)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>Employment Surveys</li> <li>Private Recruitment Agencies (PEA)</li> </ul>
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry for Industry, Commerce, and Employment Promotion (MICPE)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Institute for Statistical and Economic Analysis (INSAE)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Council of Employers</li> <li>National Employment Promotion Agency (ANPE)</li> <li>National Associations to Trade Union</li> <li>National Union of the Unions of the Workers of Benin (UNSTB)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directorate of Immigration and Emigration, Police Service</li> <li>Department of Integrated Border Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Labour Organization (ILO)</li> <li>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</li> <li>World Bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population and Housing Census</li> <li>Integrated Household Living Standards Surveys (LSS)</li> <li>Enterprise Surveys</li> <li>Demographic and Health Surveys</li> </ul>

Institutional body collecting labour market data						
Country	National ministries/bodies	Statistics and research institutions	Agencies	Immigration departments	International development organizations	National surveys
Côte d'Ivoire		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Institute of Statistics (INS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment Study and Promotion Agency (ESPA)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>Employment Survey (2008, 2002)</li> <li>LSS</li> </ul>
Gambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Planning Commission</li> <li>Ministry of trade, integration and employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gambia Bureau of Statistics</li> <li>Medical Research Council (MRC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Social Security and Housing Finance Cooperation (SSHFC)</li> <li>Chamber of commerce and industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gambia Immigration Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILO</li> <li>UNICEF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>Integrated Household Survey (IHS)</li> </ul>
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ghana Statistical Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labour Department</li> <li>Ghana Employers Association</li> <li>Social Security and National Investment Trust</li> <li>Ghana Revenue Authority</li> <li>Controller and Accountant General Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ghana Immigration Service (GIS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IOM</li> <li>ILO</li> <li>World Bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>LSS</li> <li>Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ)</li> </ul>

Institutional body collecting labour market data						
Country	National ministries/bodies	Statistics and research institutions	Agencies	Immigration departments	International development organizations	National surveys
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Labour</li> <li>National Planning Commission</li> <li>Social Security and Housing Finance Cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI)</li> <li>Personnel Management Office (PMO)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immigration Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>Labour Force Survey (LFS)</li> </ul>
Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institute of National Statistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment (APYE)</li> <li>The Revolving Fund for Employment (FARE)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Agency for Employment (Doef / NAE)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>Permanent Household Survey (EPAM)</li> <li>National Survey on Child Labour on the Labour Market (BSIIMT)</li> </ul>

Country	Institutional body collecting labour market data					
	National ministries/bodies	Statistics and research institutions	Agencies	Immigration departments	International development organizations	National surveys
Niger		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Statistical Institute</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>1 2 3 Survey</li> <li>CW/IQ 2005</li> <li>National Household Budget and Consumption Survey 2007/08</li> <li>National Informal Sector Survey</li> <li>Annual workforce census (administrative data (ANPE) DS/MFP/T (2009)</li> </ul>

Institutional body collecting labour market data						
Country	National ministries/bodies	Statistics and research institutions	Agencies	Immigration departments	International development organizations	National surveys
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Labour and Productivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Bureau of Statistics</li> <li>Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research</li> <li>DRC on Migration, Globalization and Poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Population Council</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILO</li> <li>United Nations Conventions on Human Rights</li> <li>World Bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>Socioeconomic Survey 2011</li> </ul>
Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Labour and Social Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statistics Sierra Leone</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ILO</li> <li>World Bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> <li>IHS</li> </ul>
Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Statistics Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Labour Department</li> <li>Commercial Motor Riders Union</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP</li> <li>CIA</li> <li>UNDESA Population Division</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census</li> </ul>





Which are the obstacles for labour mobility within the ECOWAS region and the implementation of the Free Movement Protocol in each member country? Through seeking to answer these questions, this study highlights that there is actually an absence of comprehensive, reliable and accurate data on migration and labour market in the region and that there are also several hindrances in the implementation of ECOWAS protocols. Through its recommendations, this study is aimed at enhancing the potential of the Free Movement Protocol for the countries involved by contributing to improve the evidence base for programmes and policies that facilitate labour mobility for development within the ECOWAS region.

