

## Labour Migration Statistics Report Developed



Delegates attending the migration statistics report validation workshop at the COMESA Secretariat

The first COMESA labour migration statistics report is set to be published after undergoing review by stakeholders in March 2022. The report, which is yet to be validated, is aimed at facilitating trade and investment by harnessing the potential of effective migration management in the region.

It is a product of collaboration between COMESA, the Swedish Statistics through the African Union Labour Migration Statistics Programme and the International Labour Organization (ILO) under the Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMB) project. It was prepared following consultations with national and regional level statistics' agencies.

On 22 - 24 March 2022, delegates from the 21 COMESA Member States met in Lusaka, Zambia, and the findings of the report which will eventually be part of the COMESA regional migration database. This marks a step closer to the realization of a regional database on migration statistics and information sharing

mechanism.

It is also in accordance with the decision of COMESA Ministers responsible for immigration, which was endorsed by the COMESA Council of Ministers and the COMESA Authority of Heads of State and Government.

The report will contribute towards addressing the challenges that face the implementation of the COMESA Visa Protocol and the entry into force of the protocol on free movement of persons, labour, services, right of establishment and right of residence in COMESA, enshrined in Article 164 of the COMESA Treaty.

Addressing the delegates, COMESA Assistant Secretary General in Charge of Programmes, Ambassador Kipyego Cheluget, urged Member States to mainstream statistics into national and regional strategic development plans to contribute to effective decision and policy formulation in our governance systems.

"With proper labour migration statistics in the region, it will be possible to dispel myths that migrants come to take away jobs of nationals," he noted.

At the validation workshop, the delegates also discussed the future of labour migration statistics in COMESA, by exploring the need for technical support to align national data with international statistical standards and support coordination and information dissemination within and between Member States.

Speaking at the event, Dr Nikolaus Koutakis, Advisor on Labour Migration at Statistics, Sweden said:

"The support to improved statistical capacity is part of Swedish work globally aimed at ensuring a world where everyone counts, and no one is left behind."

# Measures to Improve Transport Corridors' Performance

Transport Ministers commit to enhance transit facilitation



(L-R) Katanga Governor Jacques Kyabula Katwe, National Minister of Transport for DR Congo His Excellency Cherubin OKENDE SENG (C) and Senior Transport Economist at the COMESA Secretariat, Bernard Dzawanda

The need for increased border operating hours at the regional transport corridors is one of the key recommendations that emerged from a recent meeting of ministers of transport from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and Namibia.

Also proposed for immediate implementation was the harmonizing of transit fees and cross border charges among the countries as recommended by the various regional economic communities namely COMESA, East African Community and the Southern Africa Development Community.

This was during the 12th Tripartite Ministerial meeting on 16 – 17 March 2022 in Lubumbashi, DR Congo. The Governor of Haut Katanga Province in the D R Congo, Mr. Jacques Kyabula Katwe opened the meeting.

Among the issues discussed was the need for DR Congo and Zambia to hold regular bilateral engagements to address challenges that may from time to time over the operation of the corridor. They urged the governments of the two, which are COMESA Member States, to increase border operating hours from 06:00 to 18:00 to 06:00 - 20:00 with immediate effect owing to high traffic at Kasumbalesa Border Post.

The Ministers agreed to improve the road infrastructure on the Walvis Bay-Ndola-

Lubumbashi corridor to facilitate easier and quicker transit for freight and persons travelling along the corridor. They instructed border agencies along the corridor to promote free movement of people in line with the African Continental Free Trade Agreement.

Further, the meeting recommended the harmonization of axle load limits by DR Congo and gross vehicle mass limits in line with the tripartite blocs (SADC, COMESA, EAC) vehicle load management strategy.

The blocs have so far harmonized the COVID-19 Guidelines on Trade and Transport Facilitation for Safe, Efficient and Cost-Effective Movement of Goods and Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Key activity under this initiative was the development of the Corridor Trip Monitoring System (CTMS) in response to the transport and transit challenges posed by the pandemic.

The CTMS is an electronic surveillance system to monitor driver health and track the movement of drivers and trucks. It was designed as COVID-19 mitigation measure in the short term and to provide corridor performance monitoring as part of the smart corridor concept in the long term. It was launched at Chirundu in November 2021.

COMESA was represented by Senior Transport Economist, Bernard Dzawanda.

## Businesswomen Brace for a Stake in AfCFTA Opportunities

Regional businesswomen are building their capacities to enable them to participate in trading opportunities that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) brings forth. Working with the COMESA Federation of Women in Business (COMFWB), national chapters have come up with capacity building initiatives for their members.

On 22nd March 2022, the National Chamber of Tunisian Women in Business (CNFCE) organized a meeting with officials from the AfCFTA Secretariat and trade experts in Tunisia. Its objective was to discuss modalities to reinforce their capacities and structures towards negotiations and the implementation of the continental trade regime.

At the meeting it was agreed that COMFWB Tunisia chapter will engage women in business in the trade processes of the AfCFTA and work on boosting other businesswomen who have been left behind from various sectors of the economy. The meeting urged trade policy makers in Tunisia to come up with functional procedures for trans-border trade between the country and the rest of Africa.

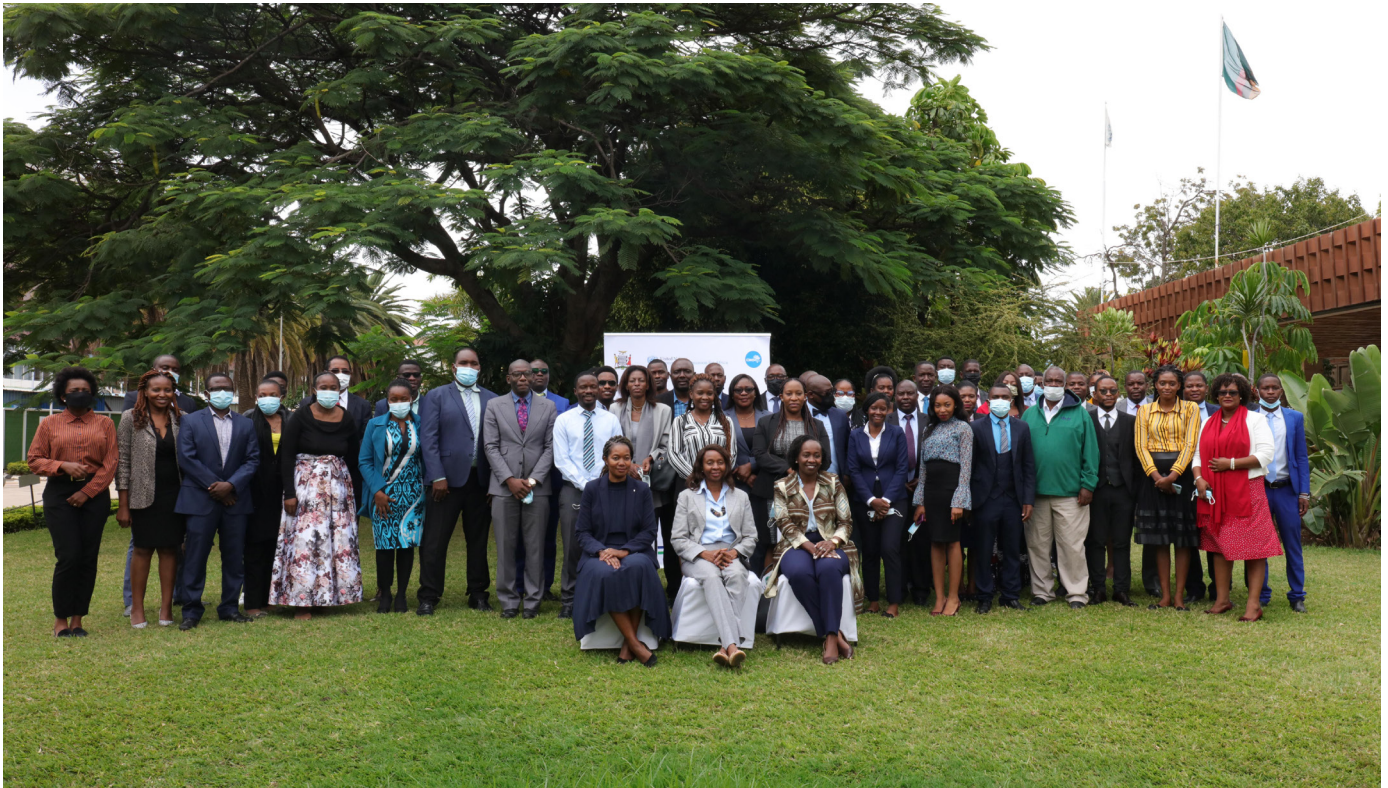
A focus group for Tunisia-Africa Trade was created during the meeting, comprising of women entrepreneurs, to ensure inclusion of women and micro small and medium enterprises in national initiatives relating to trade under the AfCFTA regime.

Tunisia became a member of COMESA in October and later joined the AfCFTA after depositing its ratification on 27 November 2020.





# Common Agro-Industrial Park for Zambia - Zimbabwe is on Course



Participants during the joint industrial park sensitization workshop in Lusaka

The governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe with support from COMESA Secretariat, the United Nations Economic for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) are working on modalities to establish a Joint Agro Industrial Park.

The proposed project is expected to increase the availability of industrial goods and services for the bilateral market and expand intra- regional trade in manufacturing. It will help develop industrialists that would acquire ownership and management of the industries, develop appropriate skills and knowledge in industries, strengthen collaboration and bolster networking among policy makers, regulators, industry and academia.

Towards this end, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the two countries in March 2021, which marked the launch of the first ever joint industrialization cooperation programme between the two.

On March 30, 2022, officials from the Zambian government and partners met in Lusaka and Livingstone cities to sensitize stakeholders,

comprising of the private sector, academia, research institutions, civil society, COMESA Secretariat, UNECA, AfDB and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) on the progress. A similar workshop was held in Zimbabwe in 2021.

The industrial park will be partially located on each side of the border. It will prioritise processing of value chains such as cotton, maize, wheat, rice, soya beans, sugar, livestock (leather and dairy) and horticulture. These sectors provide extensive linkages with the manufacturing sector particularly in the processed food sub-sector which is key in promoting industrial activities.

The project is aligned with the COMESA Industrial Strategy, which Member States have adopted to create a globally competitive environment-friendly, diversified industrial sector which is based on innovation and manufacturing as tools for transforming regional resources into sustainable wealth and prosperity for all.

The meeting encouraged the formation of special economic zones (SEZs) as they have a potential to be used as platforms for regional and sub-regional

markets and inputs supply.

Dr Kipyego Cheluget, COMESA's Assistant Secretary General for Programmes informed the meeting that COMESA has provided the framework of managing special economic zones and industrial parks to make them sustainable, inclusive and competitive.

"I commend the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe for the political commitment to support the implementation of this programme," he said in a statement presented by the Director of Industry and Agriculture, Mrs Providence Mavubi.

The meeting was also addressed by the Zambia Director of Foreign Trade, Mrs Bessie representing the Permanent Secretary, Mrs Chawe Chuulu and the UNECA Southern Africa Sub- Regional Office Director, Ms. Eunice Kamwendo.

# COMESA Recognized for its Role in Eradicating Animal Diseases

COMESA has been recognized for its role in the control and eradication of diseases to improve animal production and productivity in Africa. This was through a recognition award presented during the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) 70th Anniversary and 10th Anniversary of Rinderpest Eradication

Director of Agriculture and Industry, Mrs Providence Mavubi received the award on behalf of the Secretary General of COMESA at the event conducted in Nairobi, Kenya on 18 March 2022.

Since its establishment in 1951 as the Inter-African Bureau of Epizootic Diseases (IBED), AU-IBAR has been pioneering the improvement of animal production and productivity and control and eradication of Transboundary Animal Diseases in partnership with COMESA and other regional economic communities.

Among recent partnerships with COMESA are the implementation of the Reinforcing Veterinary Governance (VET-GOV) and strengthening institutional capacity to enhance governance of the Fisheries Sector in Africa (FishGov 1 & 2).

Receiving the award, Ms Mavubi stressed the need to transform livestock agriculture from subsistence extensive system which has been suffering from recurrent drought due to climate change and human made calamities to more intensive and market targeted agriculture.

"In Africa we have land, human power and conducive agroecology, thus we need to open up and attract investment from where there has been a limitation," she said. "We also need to use the opportunities in our continent to trade more among ourselves using the provisions of RECs and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) opportunities."



Currently, the AU member States have increasingly focused their attention to the agricultural transformation, by enhancing livestock and fisheries value chains and expanding agro-processing and opening up their economies to domestic and international investments.

The COMESA director urged for strengthening of regional capacities especially on development and harmonization of sanitary measures and compliance to international standards. This is critical in the phase of increasing challenges of climate change and its effect on the incidence of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases of trans-boundary nature.

Among the key partners in the implementation of the continental livestock development programme are the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and World Health Organization.

## AGRA, COMESA to Collaborate in Promoting Agriculture Productivity

The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and COMESA will renew their commitment to enhance the production of food to ensure food security and regional food balance. The aim of this commitment is to eradicate poverty by the year 2030. This follows a visit by AGRA's deputy president in charge of policy and state capability Apollos Nwafor to COMESA Secretariat on 30 March 2022 and subsequent talks with the Assistant Secretary General - Administration and Finance in COMESA, Dr Dev Haman.

Mr Nwafor said AGRA is mobilizing at least \$500 million in the next five years to directly increase incomes and improve food security for nine million farm households. This will be directly from its activities, its grantees and partners, to increase productivity and access to markets and finance. It is part of the new AGRA Strategic Framework 2030 to scale-up, accelerate and create conditions for agricultural transformation.

"Four years into our five-year strategy, integration is at the heart of everything AGRA does, such as multiple systems working together to deliver fertilizer, seeds and knowledge to smallholder farmer," he added.

The rapidly rising demand for food, he noted, fuelled by population and income growth, provides major opportunities for agri-food systems to accelerate employment creation, boost continental trade, strengthen resilience, and transform African economies. He said the value of Africa's food market is projected to increase from US\$313 billion in 2010 to US\$1 trillion in 2030.





# Africa Making Positive Strides in Democracy



Delegates to the Continental meeting

COMESA Secretariat represented by officials from the Governance, Peace and Security (GPS Unit) participated in a four-day symposium organised by the African Union Commission (AUC) to exchange views on efforts to be used to address the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government in the continent.

The symposium that was held in Accra Ghana, was attended by representatives of Member States, members of the AU Peace and Security Council, representatives of the AU Organs and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including the African Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Key on the agenda was the need to discuss and understand the resurgence of unconstitutional change of government in Africa, the underlying structural drivers, the emerging threats and security implications.

After reviewing and deliberating the recent developments on the continent, the symposium acknowledged that significant efforts have been made in addressing the situation of unconstitutional changes of governments through different measures. It was noted that Member States had made a fair effort in promoting democracy and good governance including through holding free, fair and transparent

elections and upheld term limits contained in the respective constitutions.

The symposium however acknowledged that there are emerging challenges that need concerted and collective efforts to address. It was pointed out that Africa still faces complex challenges particularly gaps in governance and security challenges such as terrorism and violent extremism, illicit circulation of arms and weapons, corruption, illicit financial flows, human trafficking, outbreaks of epidemics and pandemics, impact of climate change, youth unemployment and a slow process of ratification of AU and RECs instruments.

These challenges continue to hamper continental and regional efforts to address socio-economic governance, peace and security issues including the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of governments.

According to the ACCRA Declaration issued at the end of the symposium on 17 March 2022, the delegates agreed that in responding to the challenges, it was critical to ensure political commitment and active engagement of all Member States and its citizens in find solution under the mantra 'Africa solution to Africa problems'.

The symposium called for all necessary measures to be undertaken to strengthen AU/RECs common position on peace and security issues and addressing people's concerns to ensure that the root causes to unconstitutional change of governments are addressed and resolved amicably. In response to this, COMESA will enhance the implementation of its early warning system, which is designed to identify structural and root factors to various aspects of vulnerability, including vulnerability in democratic governance. COMESA, which, in response to several policy organ decisions prioritises partnership with the AU, and other RECs will continue to make deliberate effort to advance the common positions that are reached on matters of peace and security.

The Declaration also called on leaders to fully utilise the digital revolution and enhance effective communication between the State and its citizens, particularly the youth.

The Symposium called on leaders to continue creating a conducive environment for the effective participation of women and youth in the peace and development process at the national, regional and continental levels.

# AGRA, COMESA to Collaborate...



Dr Haman urged AGRA to extend their services to other countries which have potential for agricultural growth. He cited Madagascar and Zambia as some of those whose agricultural productivity have huge potential if boosted.

"Zambia is only using 14% of land for farming and if they used even 40% of the

land, they will be able to feed the entire region because they have good climate. But lack of investments in good and climate smart farming practices compromises their productivity," Dr Haman said.

He said COMESA was ready and capable of facilitating the production and distribution of agricultural products to markets through

programmes that support these activities such as transport, and sanitary and phytosanitary standards (SPS).

Currently AGRA is working with 15 countries in Africa and aims to work with 30 by 2030.

## Calendar of Events

Name of the Meeting	Dates	Venue
Stakeholders Workshop on the Implementation of the Regional Customs Transit Guarantee (RCTG) and the Yellow Card B2B Arrangement in DR Congo	4–7 Apr 2022	DR Congo
Sensitization of Adolescents in Rwanda on Their Role in Fighting Teenage Pregnancies	4 Apr -30 Jul 2022	Rwanda
Public Awareness Campaign Workshop on the COMESA Common Investment Area (CCIA) in Eswatini	6 – 8 Apr 2022	Eswatini
Validation Workshop: Green Pass Modalities	13–15 Apr 2022	Zambia; DR Congo, Zimbabwe, Malawi
Workshop on Trade in Services	11-13 Apr 2022	All Member States



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