

The Global Compact for Migration: keeping promises in the context of fragile states - The case of Guinea Bissau

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Guinea-Bissau has a small but rapidly growing population, estimated at 1.7 million people and the proportion of population in the age between 0-34 years is 80 per cent (population projection for 2016). In 2016, the country ranked low on Human Development Index (HDI) with a rank of 178 (out of 188) countries (UNDP, 2016). The majority of the population (69 per cent) lives on less than \$2 per day (World Bank, 2010). One out of two persons in the country is illiterate.

The country has been characterized by the political instability for many decades resulting in deterioration of the living conditions of its population. The lack of accountability of the political system is cause for conflict. This has contributed to failing or ineffective state institutions especially in critical areas of health, education, poverty reduction.

A number of studies have examined the correlation between poverty, lack of socio-economic opportunity, and migration finding that all these elements can create a diffuse motivation to migrate but only the families that succeed to collect sufficient funds for the migration project of a family members, could pursue the migration possibility. It is indeed necessary to better understand the motivation to migrate and the consequent migration “choice”.

Guinea Bissau is a country with porous borders, features of both immigration and emigration trends will be discussed and relate to the regional mixed migration flow of people of West Africa. It will also be instrumental to understand some of the characteristics of the current movements and level of inclusion and participation of migrants to Guinea Bissau’ socio, economic and political context.

At the governmental level, despite the pervasive political instability in October 2017, it was possible to organize the national consultation for the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (GCM) with the support of technical and financial partners (IOM, EU and UNCT). Academia, CSOs and national and regional authorities participated to the consultation and developed key recommendations that were sent to New York to feed in the stocking taking exercise held in Mexico in December 2017.

The present paper seeks to analyse how the GCM recommendation could concretize in a context of fragile institutions. Enabling and opposing factors will be discussed and assessed. The current study intends to better understand the current level of integration of migration in public policy and its level of sensitivity to crosscutting issues such as human rights, environment, gender. From this analysis recommendation will be developed to support the concretization of the migration rights that the GCM intends to frame and conceptualize. The predicament of the actualization of international frameworks on migration governance and individual and collective human rights enjoyment will be discussed to suggest possible paths of cooperation to support these fundamental goals. How good governance on migration as expressed by the GCM can ensure the fulfilment of fundamental migrants’ rights and citizens wellbeing in a context of political instability and fragile institutions? The question will be posed to identify enabling factors and possible obstacles to the process.