



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Committee of Ministers
Comité des Ministres

**Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)10
of the Committee of Ministers to member states
on co-development and migrants working for development in their countries of origin**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 July 2007
at the 1002nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Whereas the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, and facilitating their economic and social progress;

Recalling that, at the 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs, organised by the Council of Europe, the Ministers recommended that the Committee of Ministers strengthen dialogue and partnership on questions regarding migration between member states and, when relevant, non-member states;

Defining co-development as any social, economic, cultural or political development activity in countries of origin based on co-operation between migrants, their organisations and their partners – public and private – in both countries of origin and receiving countries;

Acknowledging the need to support migrants' associations that work to promote the socio-economic, political and cultural development of countries of origin both at national level, in receiving countries and countries of origin, and at international level;

Considering that co-development falls within the overall framework of discussions relating to integration, migration and development, and that co-development consequently comes within overall development co-operation policy, and does not replace it;

Acknowledging that, through their knowledge of languages, their skills and their cultures, migrants, persons born abroad and persons of immigrant origin contribute to and strengthen social cohesion in their receiving countries' societies;

Acknowledging that successful integration of migrants into their receiving countries may support and enhance their participation in development in their countries of origin;

Taking into consideration the action undertaken, individually or collectively, by migrants living in receiving countries to support their families and communities in their countries of origin through technical, cultural, financial and other transfers;

Wishing to encourage co-operation and solidarity between receiving countries and countries of origin, so as to foster sustainable development in high-emigration countries, and recalling that Council of Europe member states are countries of origin and receiving countries;

Acknowledging that migrants and their associations, because of their knowledge of the needs of both countries of origin and receiving countries, must always play a part in any co-development activities;

Taking into consideration that reducing the differences in development between countries of origin and receiving countries can reduce migration flows and that co-development can also contribute;

Recalling that several member states and certain non-member countries of origin have introduced policies and financial mechanisms to provide support to migrants' initiatives intended to assist their countries of origin;

Acknowledging that migration is only one of several factors that contribute to the development of countries of origin and receiving countries;

Taking account of the fact that financial transfers by migrants are important for the improvement of the socio-economic situation of their families who have stayed in their countries of origin;

Recalling Resolution 1462 (2005) and Recommendation 1718 (2005) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe entitled "co-development policy as a positive measure to regulate migratory flows";

Acknowledging the need to set up an appropriate and coherent political framework for co-development and to initiate new forms of dialogue in order to stimulate and develop the forms of consultation most likely to strengthen the activities of migrants and their associations, both internationally and at the level of national governments, local authorities, financial institutions, non-governmental organisations and any other body concerned;

Specifying that assistance with return arrangements for migrants in an irregular situation in the receiving country does not come within the remit of co-development,

Recommends that the governments of member states support the activities of migrants and their associations and partners playing a part in development in their countries of origin;

Recommends that the governments of member states collaborate with migrants and their associations in the design and implementation of policies and programmes of co-development in their countries of origin;

Recommends that the governments of member states apply the following principles:

- create an environment conducive to co-development;
- establish and enforce legal frameworks that define, in the context of their development policy, the rights and obligations of migrants and their associations;
- promote migrants' community life;
- facilitate partnerships, public and private, involving players (including migrants) from countries of origin and receiving countries;
- foster mobility for migrants participating in the development in their countries of origin;
- encourage women and young people to get involved, whether they are migrants or of immigrant origin;

Recommends that the governments of member states introduce and apply the following provisions on co-development:

- support measures and give incentives to co-development projects;
- training facilities so that co-development players have the capacity to better develop and manage their projects;
- support and evaluation measures for co-development projects.

Parts I to VII hereafter explain in greater detail how member states may apply these principles and provisions. Part VIII provides for the communication and follow-up of the recommendation.

I. Preconditions for co-development

A. In the receiving countries:

1. All co-development activities are based on migrants' initiative and participation. It is consequently important to promote and consolidate migrants' community life in their receiving societies. If this is weak, it should be given support and broadened through political and financial action.
2. As co-development activities are likely to concern all the aspects of local development – economic, social, political and cultural aspects alike – it is necessary to attach the greatest importance to the internal organisation of migrants' community life in order to promote the effectiveness of their activities.

3. A low level of integration is detrimental to migrants' ability to involve themselves in co-development activities. An improvement in their social, economic, political and cultural integration and efforts to combat discrimination through robust legal frameworks and dynamic social policies will give them the security and confidence that they need to undertake development projects in their countries of origin.

4. As the results of co-development activities manifest themselves a great distance from migrants' receiving countries and, in some cases, lack visibility, it is important to make political representatives and the public in those countries aware of migrants' contribution to development in their countries of origin.

B. In the countries of origin:

5. In order to create an environment conducive to co-development activities in their countries, the governments of countries of origin should improve the recognition and visibility of their emigrants' contribution at all levels: cultural, political, economic and social.

6. In order to enable co-development activities to be carried out in their countries, the governments of countries of origin should take legal and administrative measures facilitating the efforts of migrants and their associations; encourage partnerships between migrants and the public and private players concerned; and support migrants' productive investments and the mobilisation of additional resources.

C. Between receiving countries and countries of origin:

7. Bilateral and multilateral agreements on migration, especially on the migration of workers and on the development of countries of origin, should provide for co-development activities and include provisions to protect the rights of migrants, their families and associations engaged in such activities.

8. International consultation bodies based on equal representation, especially the joint committees which exist to devise, monitor and evaluate the development policies of countries of origin, should provide for the involvement of migrants and their associations, in various forms to be defined.

9. Inter-regional dialogue, as informal consultation fora bringing receiving countries and countries of origin together on these issues, should include discussions with a view to recommending measures to be taken by receiving countries and countries of origin, in order to comply with these preconditions for co-development.

II. Partnership

10. Co-development is based on co-operation at many and varied levels, international and national on the one hand, and national and local on the other. Partnerships are therefore essential for designing, implementing and evaluating co-development activities. Effective partnerships will, *inter alia*:

- involve all the players concerned, at every level;
- create and strengthen co-operation among the various players involved in co-development, particularly between local authorities in the receiving countries and those in the countries of origin;
- encourage the training of players new to co-development activities through the sharing of information and experience;
- facilitate the transfer of migrants' skills;
- ensure that the initiatives of migrants and their associations are appropriate to actual development needs, at either national or local level, in the countries of origin;
- encourage the sustainability of co-development projects through joint activities;
- develop in a positive manner national, regional and inter-regional migration management policies and instruments, especially through co-development activities undertaken at local level.

11. The smooth functioning of partnerships on co-development should be ensured through appropriate provisions in bilateral and multilateral agreements.

III. Mobility

12. The promotion of greater flexibility and mobility for skills and know-how between countries of origin and receiving countries will enable migrants and their associations to make their co-development projects more successful by giving priority to exchanges of information and contacts with possible partners.

13. Consideration should be given to practical measures that will facilitate the movement of migrants between their receiving countries, other destination countries and their countries of origin without losing their rights in their receiving countries with regard to the implementation of their co-development projects.

14. The movement of migrants described in the preceding paragraph should be for the purpose of designing, implementing, managing and evaluating a co-development project. This will, in particular:

- identify needs and partners;
- effect diagnoses and feasibility studies;
- sign and implement the project;
- make arrangements for project funding;
- back up implementation of the project by making visits to review progress and to provide technical assistance, advice and training;
- evaluate project results.

15. Persons living in the country where the co-development project is being implemented and who are working on it should be given the possibility of visiting the country supporting and/or involved in it for the following purposes:

- to obtain or exchange information about the project or take part in the training needed for its successful implementation, including acquisition of the necessary skills;
- to take part in internal meetings connected with the project (such as progress reviews or taking of decisions).

16. Migrants and those involved in co-development projects should be encouraged to share their expertise at national, international and inter-regional meetings on co-development. Member states are encouraged to facilitate their movement for this purpose.

IV. Project support and assistance

17. Many skills are needed by co-development project promoters if the project is to be carried out, make a genuine contribution to development in the country of origin and be sustainable. Accordingly, provision should be made for support and assistance, according to promoters' experience and expertise, including the measures set out below.

Associations' management capacity

18. Care should be taken to ensure that the leaders of migrants' associations wishing to participate in co-development activities and/or to carry out co-development projects themselves have the necessary management skills and can, if necessary, improve them.

19. National and local authorities and chambers of commerce might consider making available to migrants' associations advice and training suitable to their needs. They might also consider, where appropriate, seconding appropriately skilled members of their staff without diminishing the central role of migrants and their associations in the management of co-development projects.

Inception and setting up of projects

20. Migrants or their associations wishing to start or to take part in a co-development project (whether through funding, expertise or time) should have access to general information about the situation in the country or region concerned (including relevant legislation, potential development needs and possible partnerships) and about the co-operation and development programmes in progress.

21. They should also have access to specific advice helping them to clarify all that is needed to set up their project. This would enable them, for instance, to set achievable objectives which correspond to actual needs, and to identify and ensure the availability of all the necessary (human, technical and financial) resources.

22. If necessary, they should be able to benefit from grants to assist them in carrying out feasibility studies.

Human and technical resources to support and help with project management

23. Prior to and throughout a co-development project, migrants should benefit from management advice and support from experts specialised in the field.

24. Consideration should be given to the provision, whether directly or indirectly, by public authorities of administrative, financial and technical experts to support, where necessary, the implementation of co-development projects in the country of origin and the receiving country. Local authorities, firms, chambers of commerce, non-governmental organisations and research institutes should be encouraged to take part.

25. In view of the specific nature of co-development activities, the relevant authorities and bodies should consider making available, whether directly or indirectly, experts of immigrant origin to provide the administrative, financial and technical support referred to in the preceding paragraph.

26. The use of new information and communication technologies should be encouraged to facilitate the transfer of skills and expertise. Ways of helping migrants' associations to make better use of such technologies should be examined. Provision should be made for the necessary investment in equipment where co-development projects are to take place in countries where these technologies are not well developed.

Networking

27. In order to create the best possible link between co-development projects and the actual needs of local communities in countries of origin, thereby facilitating their implementation, governments should provide support at international level for discussions and consultations between public authorities in countries of origin and receiving countries.

28. Contacts should be facilitated, on the one hand, between migrants and their associations and, on the other, between these and any political, economic, financial or administrative players in the country of origin and receiving country able to help them in their efforts.

Evaluation

29. The setting up of evaluation machinery involving all partners in a project from its outset will make it possible to draw up a list of what migrants and their associations need to carry through their co-development projects, to properly identify the needs of local communities in the countries of origin, and to test outcomes against objectives and available resources.

30. Evaluation machinery of this kind will also make it possible to study the results of individual projects, and to disseminate information to national and international partners, thus helping to ensure that co-development activities endure.

V. Training

31. Training is a key factor both in the strengthening of general co-development programmes and in the success of individual projects. It encourages migrants, their associations and co-development project promoters to get involved and to act independently. It also offers encouragement to design co-development projects, follow them up and make them sustainable. In addition to the measures set out in part IV, the general provisions described below should also be made, taking account of the particular needs of women.

32. General and specific training programmes should be designed and implemented. They should cover the whole range of needs relating to co-development identified in co-operation with the migrants and other persons involved, including how to put together, launch, carry out and evaluate co-development projects. Migrants' associations which are active in co-development should be involved in the design and setting up of these training courses.

33. Information and training programmes should be set up to identify, formalise and turn to the best advantage highly qualified migrants' contribution to the development of their countries of origin.

34. Programmes should be developed in support of entrepreneurial activities undertaken by migrants.

35. Training programmes should be introduced on running associations, project management, the professional approach to socio-economic initiatives and local authority management.

36. Young people should be given access to information on co-development and its importance for migrants and their countries of origin. The participation of young people in general, and of young people of migrant origin in particular, in co-development projects should be promoted by exchange programmes with countries of origin (for example, school, cultural or sports exchanges).

37. In order to increase the knowledge and skills of the various players working on development in countries of origin, the authorities of receiving countries should facilitate the access of these persons to university, vocational and technical training.

VI. Migrants who return to their country of origin

38. Migrants who choose to return voluntarily in the shorter or longer term to their country of origin may initiate and be partners in co-development projects. These projects should, wherever possible, benefit from the support and assistance measures set out in parts IV and V.

39. Skilled migrants' projects which are likely to create considerable employment and which offer high added value, necessitating a short or very short stay, should be encouraged and supported by receiving countries and countries of origin.

40. Once migrants have returned to their country of origin they should benefit from the measures in parts IV and V provided they retain links with their former receiving country through migrants' associations or other partnerships.

VII. The financing of co-development projects

41. It should be possible for co-development projects, irrespective of the scale of the project and the financial resources available to the migrants initiating the project, to benefit from joint funding. The conditions for such joint funding should be defined within the framework of a precise programme of support and assistance that sets, for example, the rates, amounts, partnerships and means of implementation.

42. An institutional and political framework should be promoted which makes it easier, safer and less costly for migrants to transfer funds for investments in social, economic and cultural projects in their country of origin.

43. Consideration should be given to providing public and/or private financial support facilities for migrants' economic co-development initiatives, in particular by facilitating access to credit and the setting up of guarantee funds.

44. In order to encourage participation and the transfer of skills, consideration might be given to examining the feasibility of compensating, at least for transitional periods, any financial disadvantage suffered by persons who leave their employment for the purpose of working abroad on co-development projects.

45. Migrants' associations wishing to work in co-development should benefit from public assistance, financial or other, in the receiving country and the country of origin. Such assistance should be provided in accordance with established criteria.

VIII. Communication and follow-up of the recommendation

46. Member states should translate the present recommendation into their official languages and draw its principles to the attention of the bodies concerned in their respective countries, via the appropriate channels.

47. Member states should define indicators making it possible to measure the extent to which the principles and measures of the present recommendation are implemented.

48. Member states should inform the Secretary General of the Council of Europe of the results of the implementation of the principles and measures of this recommendation, including their experience and best practice, in order that they might be examined and shared within the competent bodies of the Organisation.