



Member States to provide statistics on remittances<sup>4</sup>. This data are complemented by a new study financed by the European Commission<sup>5</sup>.

Sub-Saharan Africa received officially almost \$12 billion in remittances in 2007. With "informal" flows, the total amount can double. Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan, Senegal, Uganda and South Africa received the highest volume of remittances, and in small countries such as Lesotho remittances reach a quarter of GDP<sup>6</sup>.

Remittance costs are significantly higher for Africa compared to other regions; costs can go up to almost 25% of the amount remitted. Remittances between African countries (from South Africa, for example) are especially expensive. Reducing these costs will mean substantial extra transfers. The immediate concern is, however, stability of flows: the recent international credit crisis will lead to a slowdown in remittances. Remittances have generally been counter-cyclical in the past, as they tend to increase when the receiving country experiences adverse events.

### **Diaspora: a driver for development?**

The diaspora is regarded by the African Union as the "sixth region" of Africa. Migration can contribute to rural development but little data exists that could help policymakers design policies to boost the contribution of migration to national development.

Brain Drain, or the migration of skilled and educated individuals has adversely affected many countries in ACP regions. However, some countries have made efforts to manage the diaspora in dealing or retaining brain drain. In return, diaspora groups and networks strengthen themselves with a more economic approach in support of their countries of origin<sup>7</sup>. How much of these efforts benefit rural development and rural communities? How diasporas contribute to development policies for their countries?

### **Objectives of the Briefing**

In order to improve information sharing and promote networking, several partners - CTA, the EC-DG Development and EuropeAid, the EU Presidency, the ACP Secretariat, Euforic, Concord and IPS - organise bimonthly briefings on key issues and challenges for rural development in the context of EU/ACP cooperation.

The briefing on 11<sup>th</sup> December will discuss "*Does international migration affect ACP rural development?*" by (i) raising awareness on existing and emerging key challenges; (ii) promoting exchange of information and expertise sharing among the development groups based in Brussels; (iii) feeding in the debate on migration and development by bringing various perspectives around the table.

### **Target group**

More than 130 ACP-EU policy makers, representatives of EU Member States, civil society groups, European research networks, researchers and development practitioners, international organisations based in Brussels.

### **Outputs**

Input and comments before, during and after the meetings will be included in the Briefings blog: <http://brusselsbriefings.net/>. Short reports (briefings) in printed and electronic format will be available shortly after the meeting. Articles by IPS Europe, partner in this event, will be widely disseminated.

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the data provided by the Member States take account of flows officially recorded within the framework of balance of payments statistics. Money sent through informal or illegal channels are not usually recorded and therefore not part of the statistics resulting from this survey.

<sup>5</sup> The volume and geography of remittances from the EU, September 2007. [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/publications/publication10089\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication10089_en.pdf). Notably, the study provide an overview of the geographical breakdown of remittances which complements the Eurostat survey

<sup>6</sup> World Bank Blog 'Africa can help poverty', <http://africacan.worldbank.org/how-will-the-financial-crisis-affect-remittances-to-africa>

<sup>7</sup> OECD, International Migration Outlook, Part III - International Migrant Remittances and their Role in Development, 2006 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/46/38840502.pdf>