



## Migration Symposium 9 & 10 May 2019 on Curaçao

### Migration and Socioeconomic Development

#### Policy challenges and options

#### *BREAK OUT SESSION 1. Reaping the benefits and minimizing the cost of migration.*

Migration is an aspect of development itself and brings significant and long-lasting benefits. What are socioeconomic advantages of immigration? For example: meeting labor demands, cultural diversity, innovations, tax incomes. But immigration comes also with challenges for individuals, communities and institutions. For example: fear for displacement of local labor, fear for less social cohesion and cultural identity. What kind of policies are needed to address these challenges? And to maximize the benefits? The Caribbean perspective.

#### **Results presented by the moderator: Michela Macchiavello - IOM**

##### **Identified needs:**

Our group was quite clear about the lack of a mutually agreed national vision and strategy of what society really wants, of priorities and of where society wants to go, what they want for the future. There was a clear idea and consensus of what the main challenges are, although it was also agreed that these challenges need to be agreed upon at the national level to define where the nation wants to go, a strategy.

##### **Recommendations:**

A mutually agreed vision and strategy for the nation, to be drafted at the national level, if possible, also at the regional level, involving consultations with all relevant stakeholders: 1. business community; 2. public sector (multi-ministerial); 3. labour unions, 4. civil society. This Vision/Strategy will need to be agreed upon by all relevant stakeholders, and it will need to include a Monitoring and Check and Balances Mechanism. This Mechanism should be established at the operational level, to withstand political changes and continue to live through different constituencies.

This vision will need to have the following features:

1. A set timeline by which it will need to be delivered and be valid for a certain period of time (for example for two years, before the next elections in Curacao).
2. Be comprehensive and address the major challenges in the country: some suggestions included (but not exhaustive) 1. education: to be adapted/to reflect the need to labour market, to provide a comparative advantage to national youth on the labour market. This includes social education for the population to dispel preconceptions and help proactive thinking at the individual level, for



the benefit of national building, and to strengthen the cohesiveness of society and identity; 2. Data: while data is available, it is often not shared, and it cannot be used comparatively; data is needed as a basis to identify the responses; 3. population issues; 4. issues related to the internal economy; 5. labour market etc.; 6. migration policy; 7. updating of current policies;

A possible way to go about this came from Canada, a country which is different from the Caribbean, but with a lot of experience with immigration issue: this policy could take the form of a **white paper** drafted by a person/personality that is above politics, and who has gained the respect from communities in the 3 islands (for example from academia, a retired professor, a national UN officer, etc.). This document should be drafted by consulting with all suggested stakeholders, to go across societies, across political orientations and to be publicly presented for consent.

