

# PRESS RELEASE: Protection of Migrants' Rights Remains a Key Challenge in New Migration Panorama

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Brussels, 18 December 2011/ ACP Observatory on Migration: The International Migrants' Day is celebrated around the world every 18th December, ten days after the Human Rights Day. These two events are linked, since the protection of the rights of migrants remains a challenging issue in many regions of the world. The particular case of women migrants and the impact of migration in the life of women needs to be urgently tackled.

The feminization of migration is a trend that has been frequently observed by migration researchers and specialists. Women have always migrated, but they increasingly do so alone or as heads of households. This often challenges traditional visions of migration, where men migrate to work and send money to households in countries of origin. According to the recent Human Mobility Report produced by the ACP Secretariat, the share of female migrants in ACP countries varies from 43% to 47% of total migration, depending on the sources.

Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Secretary General of the ACP Group of States, points out that the influence of female migration in the evolution of gender roles and in the structure of families needs to be further studied. Migration issues are increasingly affecting societies in countries of destination but also in home countries of migrants.

A study by Caritas International highlights that migration can be a factor of empowerment for women and that "*female migration not only changes the economic role of women, but also, and above all, their role in the family*". Evidence also shows a growing importance of social phenomena such as *grand-mothering*, when grand-mothers take in charge the children of female migrants.

The protection of the rights of migrants remains a key challenge in this evolving situation. Human rights instruments are often not adequate to protect the specific needs, circumstances and vulnerabilities of migrants. Migrant women are particularly vulnerable to the violation of their rights and children back home often suffer from precarious living conditions. Research is a first step to develop comprehensive policies to tackle this situation and ensure that migration plays a positive role for the improvement of the conditions of migrants and their families.

The ACP Secretariat organizes the screening of the film *Africa Shafted* at the ACP House (451, Avenue Georges Henri – 1200 Brussels) on Monday 19 December 2011 to commemorate the International Migrants' Day and shed lights on different aspects of South-South migration.

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