

Kenya undertakes reforms on Labour Migration

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By Cheruiyot Korir

The government is undertaking reforms in the management of labour migration to enhance governance by strengthening Policy and legal regulations.

The Cabinet Secretary for Labour and Social Protection Mr Simon Chelugui said, “the government will design and implement pre-departure training for migrant workers aimed at enhancing safe, orderly and productive labour migration.”

Mr Chelugui who made the remarks when he hosted the Polish ambassador to Kenya Jacek Bazarisk at his NSSF office today said that labour migration is beneficial to the migrant workers, their families and countries of origin and the destination.

The Cabinet Secretary said, “The Government has invested heavily in training and producing a highly skilled human capital in various professionals and technical skills such as engineering, architecture, medicine, nursing, agriculture, banking, teaching, transportation and skilled artisans to ensure a quality workforce for national development and export market.”

The Cabinet Secretary observed that there was need for bilateral labour migration agreements between Kenya and Poland as a primary instrument to facilitate labour mobility arrangements. He said that the government has received demand from employers in Poland for skilled labour on food production, manufacture of apparels, car manufacture, fruit picking and packaging, pharmaceutical industries, carpentry among others and asked Polish government to ease Visas acquisition for migrant workers from Kenya.

Further, the Cabinet Secretary explained that labour migration reduces the stress of national unemployment of countries of origin, and contributes to development through remittances, transfer of skills, and the creation of business and trade networks.

For workers, the Cabinet Secretary added, migration provides opportunities to raise income levels, gain skills and competencies, and improve living conditions for their families and communities.

On his part, the Polish Ambassador to Kenya Jacek Bazarisk said that it is possible to have more Kenyans working in Poland. Ambassador Bazarisk however noted that there was need for Kenyans wishing work in Poland to learn Polish language as it was the only medium of Communication in the country.

He said labour migration had immense benefits to the migrants, communities, employers, governments, and other stakeholders, in both countries of origin and destination.

Additionally, Ambassador Bazarisk said, “Kenyan migrant workers moving to Poland must adhere to their contracts within Poland and observe European Union protocols to minimise conflicts with EU members states.”

The Government of Kenya currently chairs the “Nairobi Process” a Regional Ministerial Forum on Harmonization of Labour Migration Policies in the East and Horn of Africa which will be integral in the labour relations with Poland. The Nairobi process brings together Ministries in-charge of Labour from Kenya, Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda with the aim of harmonizing labour migration policies across the region for enhanced labour migration management.