

Kenyan diaspora remittance overtakes earnings from tea, coffee and tourism

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By Brenda Kalya

Remittance from Kenyans in the diaspora increased from Sh 1.05 billion in 2004 to Sh 300 billion in 2020, making Kenya to be ranked the third country with the highest diaspora remittances in Africa.

The Cabinet Secretary for Labour and Social Protection, Mr Simon Chelugui said diaspora remittances is currently the country's highest foreign exchange earner, overtaking tea, coffee and tourism.

Mr Chelugui said that Kenyan diaspora population, estimated to be 4 million spread across the globe largely constitute the youths who have exported their skills to international markets

The Cabinet Secretary pointed out that, employment agencies in country are faced with a range of challenges that slow down export of Kenyan skilled labour.

Mr Chelugui cited weak coordination of labour migration, inadequate information on labour migration, policy and legal framework as factors that slow down export of labour in the country. He added that, limited Bilateral Labour Agreements and inadequate social protection for migrant workers among other are some of the challenges that impede effective admiration of Kenyan migrant workers.

Mr Chelugui also pointed out that, the Ministry is making effort to strengthen monitoring of private recruitment agencies in the country to promote transparency and secure migrant workers against exploitation and abuse.

Speaking at a virtual meeting organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mr Chelugui pointed out that, he formed a team to review the regulations on private employment agencies to promote ethical practices and ensure operations are within the framework of the national and international standards.

He explained that an inter-ministerial committee from the relevant ministries has been set up to vet applications to ensure they are in line with regulation