

Migration and Economic Development in Zimbabwe

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Introduction

Zimbabwe is a community of migrants; people have come from Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. Some thronged the then Rhodesia to work in farms and mines as migrant labourers; others came as refugees. . In the past two decades the country has lost a significant number of skilled and semi-skilled workers who migrated to the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and Botswana in search of greener pastures.

Most people emigrated when the political and economic crisis started and deepened during the 2000-2004. In 2000-2008, more than 2 million Zimbabweans migrated to South Africa, most as economic refugees, as the country fell into a deep economic crisis, with inflation shooting up to 231 million per cent.¹ Zimbabweans who migrated abroad for economic reasons continue to support their family members back home, and contribute to economic growth and development through the return of skills, remittances and investments.

However, the diaspora community is concerned about the poor access to investment and trade related information. Legal frameworks were formulated to make it easier for lower skilled people to seek work abroad

1 'Renewed exodus of Zimbabweans amid economic woes', *The Zimbabwe Daily*, 27 October 2019.