

# Tanzanians abroad send \$50m

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Remittances from Tanzanians working in foreign countries increased from \$41.7 million in 1998 to \$50.2 million in 2002, averaging \$47 million per year during the period.

The flow of remittances has increased steadily in recent years compared to the past due to growing regional and international migrations and improved financial transfer technologies.

Dr Joseph Shitundu of the University of Dar es Salaam says although remittances constituted a reliable and potential source of foreign exchange income for the country during the 1998 - 2002 period, as a percentage of exports they remained low - 0.56 per cent during the five years.

While capital flows tend to rise during favourable economic cycles and fall in bad times, remittances have recently appeared to react less

## The remittances by our migrant workers have been growing steadily over time

violently and show remarkable stability over time," he said during the launch of the ILO-supported East African Labour Migration Project.

He said Tanzanians in diaspora were more likely to increase investments in the country despite economic problems than are foreign investors, an effect that is similar to home bias in investment. Remittances as a percentage of total debt increased from 0.56 per cent in 1998 to about 0.63 per cent in 2002.

Dr Shitundu said there is no reliable data on Tanzanians living or working outside although their number is believed to be increasing with globalisation, liberalisation and the of poverty situation in the country. However, Tanzanians in diaspora are few compared to those from neigh-

bouring countries.

"While information on the stock of migrants and inflows of migrants is relatively easy to capture, information on stock and outflows of Tanzanians abroad is not easily captured," he said. According to him, some 775 Tanzanians renounced their citizenship and migrated to Canada, the United States of America and the United Kingdom during 1997 - 2001.

A Kenyan official, Mr E. Achoch, estimated the number of Kenyans in diaspora between 300,000 and 1.8 million with an annual total remittance of \$ 60 million. Although figures of remittances are seen as conservative, it makes about 0.46 percent of

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