

MIGRATION AND HUMAN MOBILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA – PERSPECTIVES FROM THE GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SIDE EVENT TO THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF) ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1 JULY 2015, UNHQ, NEW YORK

KEY MESSAGES

On 1 July 2015, the Turkish Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) convened a side event to the HLPF in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The purpose of the meeting was to encourage UN Member States, international organizations, civil society and all concerned stakeholders to consider the GFMD's potential contribution to Post-2015 follow-up and review. The following is a summary of the key messages arising from the event.¹

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a unique opportunity to address migration in a more holistic and positive manner.

- The inclusion of migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda has taken central stage as a follow-up issue to the High-level Dialogue in 2013. It is increasingly likely that – for the first time – migration and human mobility will become an integral part of the new sustainable development agenda.
- The Open Working Group's proposed SDGs include a number of important targets relating to different migration issues, such as human trafficking; remittances; labour migration; safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration; and data disaggregation by migration status. The inclusion of these targets, and others related to migration, would be a significant achievement and reaffirms the fact that migration can be a significant driver of development.
- It is important however, to be vigilant about the broader context: recent crises, such as those playing out in the Mediterranean, the Andaman Sea, and the Gulf of Aden, have caught the eye of mass media and have thus brought an intense spotlight to migration, not always in a positive light. Many stakeholders advocating for the inclusion of migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda were concerned about the negative reference to migration in the preamble text of the zero draft outcome document.
- Yet, migration yields considerable benefits when measures have been put in place to promote strengthened governance. Migration must be supported by a balanced, cooperative and equitable system that is safe, fair, and more beneficial for all. It is not only inevitable, but is also desirable as a means to address many of today's most pressing issues.
- Addressing the root causes of forced migration is one of the international community's fundamental responsibilities. Ensuring that migration becomes a matter of choice rather than necessity is intrinsically linked to reducing inequalities among States and promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth for all.
- The SDGs are a chance to highlight how regular migration is a part of the solution rather than the problem. Human mobility is very effective at increasing human capital but more fundamentally it expands human freedom and capacities. The draft SDGs thus postulates that with good migration governance, human mobility is an enabler of sustainable development.

¹ Panelists included: **Ambassador Mehmet Samsar**, Director General for Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkey (representing GFMD 2014-15 Chair); **Ambassador Abdul Momen**, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (representing GFMD 2016 Chair); **Ambassador Olof Skoog**, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations (representing GFMD 2013-2015 Chair); **Mr. Thomas Gass**, Assistant Secretary General, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA); **Ms. Sonia Plaza**, representing GMG Chair, World Bank; **Mr. Gregory Maniatis**, Senior Advisor, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration and Development; **Mr. Leonir Mario Chiarello**, Executive Director, Scalabrini International Migration Network; and **Mr. Lars Johan Lönnback**, Senior Migration Policy Adviser, International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Migration needs a dedicated thematic review mechanism, and robust indicators.

- Attention must now turn to establishing indicators and a follow-up and review mechanism to inform implementation. We have to instil the language on migration with real, practical meaning for migrants and communities. This discussion has to consider: (i) How to translate the migration targets into actions? (ii) What will those actions be? (iii) Who will be responsible for implementation?
- A sound follow-up mechanism needs to address the migration specific targets, but it should also be able to focus on migration's contribution to other SDGs, as well as promote migrants' access to the development benefits arising from those other areas.
- This would make for a comprehensive migration and development agenda – one in which governments plan for and act upon the opportunities and challenges that migration brings for development.
- The HLPF has been mandated to follow-up and review the implementation of the SDGs at the global level, however thematic platforms will have an important role to play in monitoring and advancing each respective thematic area. A dedicated thematic follow-up and review mechanism is needed for migration for two main reasons: 1) migration is scattered across the Post-2015 Agenda, being part of many targets; and 2) there are different migration realities in countries of origin, transit and destination that must be captured.
- Establishing sound indicators to measure progress is also critical. Meaningful indicators would mean that 'no target is left behind', or emptied of its purpose. Indicators should focus mostly on the opportunities of migration for development. Cooperation should be sought with the statistical community – given its role in selecting indicators – and the case should be made to strengthen migration data and capacity building. In that respect, a dedicated data and capacity building initiative should be established to improve the collection of migration data for development and invest in disaggregation by migratory status.

The follow-up and review mechanism must include all relevant stakeholders.

- To ensure an inclusive development agenda, all relevant actors inside and outside of the UN – the private sector and civil society, amongst others, need to be given the opportunity to contribute. Key multilateral institutions relating to migration – notably the GFMD and IOM – are outside the UN system but must also be included. These various actors need to be engaged on how best to form a follow-up mechanism that accommodates a comprehensive approach to migration and development.
- The October GFMD Summit meeting in Istanbul will take place immediately after the adoption of the Post-2015 Agenda. It will therefore be an important venue to discuss the implementation of migration-related goals, targets and indicators appearing in the SDG report, and to determine how to make migration work for sustainable development.
- The GFMD is a uniquely placed, voluntary process for exchanging policy and experiences in the field of migration and development, and it has made impressive progress to date. Throughout the years, it has proven its ability to play a constructive role in promoting consensus and developing coalitions of interest around the migration aspects of the UN development agenda. The Forum might, at its upcoming summit meeting in Istanbul, consider mandating the chair-in-office to extend its findings on these matters to the President of the ECOSOC/HLPF and the UN Secretary General as appropriate.
- At all levels of review, civil society has an indispensable role in the task to frame, monitor and be co-accountable for progress in achieving meaningful progress towards the indicators. Migrants, diasporas, practitioners, faith based organizations and academics alike should be included in the dialogue, design and follow up of these processes. There is concern amongst civil society actors that this is not happening sufficiently as of yet. However, indicators will not be meaningful 'about us without us'.
- The members of Global Migration Group (GMG) could also contribute to the monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms enumerated in the Post-2015 Outcome Document, including with regard to a) accountability mechanisms at the country level; b) regional trends and lessons learned; c) universal periodic reviews; and d) the global thematic reviews.

