

United Nations General Assembly

2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

Roundtable 3 Background Paper:

Strengthening partnerships and cooperation on international migration, mechanisms to effectively integrate migration into development policies and promoting coherence at all levels

The complexity and reach of international migration today manifests itself in three main ways: many countries and regions are simultaneously places of origin, transit and destination; migration patterns have become more diversified, including short-term or temporary, permanent and circular movements; and migration is relevant to many areas of public policy. At the same time, there has been a growing recognition that migration and development are intrinsically linked and that it is important to strengthen this linkage by promoting a human rights- based approach to address the challenges as well as the opportunities of migration for development.

For some time, and particularly since the first UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) in 2006, more governments have pursued coherent migration policy-making through inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, and the elaboration of coherent development frameworks and partnerships. Increasingly, countries have been signing bilateral labour mobility agreements to regulate the entry and stay of people. The 16 existing regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs) are dedicated migration dialogue and cooperation fora which have evolved as important state-led and informal mechanisms at the regional level. Some regional economic communities (RECs) that promote economic and political integration now also address migration and mobility, including ancillary measures such as those relating to social security provision and recognition of skills and qualifications. At the global level, the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) has been an informal space for action-oriented dialogue, while the United Nations takes up migration in the General Assembly, its Committees, the Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures and in the Economic and Social Council; and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) addresses this topic through its Member States' governing Council.

These coordination mechanisms have led to increased confidence-building and cooperation. However, ensuring that there is effective cooperation, consultation, coherence and coordination¹ remains a challenge. In particular, strengthening vertical partnerships and cooperation between the local, national, regional and global levels, and horizontal partnerships within those different levels, is essential so that migration is regular, orderly and safe, the rights of migrants are protected and development outcomes for countries of origin, destination and migrants are maximized.

This paper briefly examines four different areas for strengthening partnerships, cooperation and coherence on international migration.

1. Strengthen horizontal and vertical partnerships

In view of the importance of cooperation for migration, several types of partnerships have developed. There are many examples illustrating the effectiveness of horizontal and vertical partnerships. The Council of Europe's programme, *Intercultural Cities*, is a joint project of the Council of Europe and the European Commission aimed at stimulating new ideas and practices concerning the integration of migrants and minorities. The network is a learning community of cities, politicians, practitioners, academics and members of society, learning from each other's experiences in order to enable cities to respond positively to the challenge of diversity. More than 20 cities in Europe are currently participating. At the bilateral level, the Migration Partnership between the governments of Nigeria and Switzerland creates synergies between the various stakeholders, including international organizations, civil society and the private sector, to address the challenges of migration and to promote its opportunities. Through a Whole of Government Approach a comprehensive range of projects in the areas of integration, voluntary return, capacity-building, Diaspora engagement, protection, education and training reflect the broad interests of the

¹ Cooperation here is defined as the process of working or acting together; coordination as the process of bringing different actors, institutions and levels of governance together to achieve a common goal; consultation as the process of seeking input from relevant actors to achieve greater efficiency and transparency, and coherence as the process of aligning different sectoral policies so that they support and complement their respective policy objectives.

two countries. Cross-border cooperation and partnerships also occur between non-state actors, such as agreements adopted on migrant worker protection between trade unions in origin and destination countries (e.g. trade unions in Sri Lanka with Bahrain, Jordan and Kuwait, and in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine with Italy).

Regionally, cross-fertilization among RCPs is already taking place, for instance through regular global meetings as well as between RECs and other interregional fora; in most regions, RCPs represent the principal mechanism for dialogue, cooperation and coordination on migration issues and are a key element of discussions at the GFMD. At the global level, the GFMD has built confidence and trust between states around sensitive topics and allows governments to share best practices and policies. As an example, the GFMD Platform for Partnerships has become an effective tool to facilitate exchange and showcase projects, programmes and policies that are undertaken by governments, and which are related to GFMD themes, debates and outcomes. Despite its achievements, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of GFMD recommendations remains a challenge. The Global Migration Group (GMG), following its internal review, recognized the need to further strengthen interagency cooperation, and is currently implementing a joint multi-annual work plan focusing on, for example, human rights of migrants, mainstreaming, capacity-development as well as data and research. As part of the activities of the group, the GMG has, for example, developed a common set of indicators to be used in Migration Profiles and worked jointly on a publication focusing on migration and youth and international migration and human rights.

Existing vertical relationships provide promising platforms on which to build more effective and comprehensive partnerships and cooperation. For example, several countries participating in the Youth Employment and Migration Programme under the MDG-Fund have successfully used a combined top-down/bottom-up approach, pairing upstream support for prioritising youth in national development frameworks, employment policies and legislation with pilot projects to address inequalities in access to decent work and social protection at the community level. This approach has led to exchange of information and lessons learned between the national level and the project level. Beyond the national level, regional bodies are an important mechanism in which to share national experiences in migration management and policy coherence. They can be further linked to those at the global level, such as through the GFMD, and some of them have established partnerships with individual countries, such as the EU mobility partnerships with non-EU countries.

However, very few examples exist of regional to global vertical partnerships. In general, ensuring a systematic two-way flow of information – a bottom-up and top-down approach – is a challenge. Although governments participate at all levels, the discussions globally tend to be more theoretical in nature, whereas those at other levels focus more on practical issues, sometimes leaving the discussions disconnected.

2. Improve multi-stakeholder cooperation

The views and contributions of all stakeholders are vital to making migration work, whether they be business and private sector actors, representative employer organizations and trade unions, academics, media analysts and human rights institutions that influence policy and public opinion on migration, families and communities affected by migration, development partners supporting migration-sensitive development efforts or migrants themselves.

They can offer different perspectives, new information and data, political and moral support, monitoring and funding, among other resources.

Several partnership initiatives between local governments in countries of origin and destination, international organizations and civil society have proven successful. For example, the Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMIDI) has effectively brought together civil society and local authorities, including development practitioners. The first phase of this partnership has shown that local authorities often lack the capacity to effectively link migration and development and have few opportunities to learn from other local authorities' accomplishments. Nationally, many governments support public consultation processes with a wide range of civil society organizations, for instance those organized leading up to the regularization of migrants in Brazil in 2009 or those held in preparation for the annual meetings of the GFMD. Others establish advisory bodies, such as migrant councils or business advisory boards, to represent or consult with diverse constituencies, and to advise on the form and content of policy. Examples of multi-stakeholder consultations at the global level include the Civil Society Days of the GFMD or the informal interactive hearings of non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector in preparation for the 2006

and 2013 HLD. Other global mechanisms systematically involve civil society: for example, the Coordination Meeting on International Migration organized by the Population Division (UN/DESA), the International Labour Organization's (ILO) tripartite consultations and IOM's International Dialogue on Migration. However, fully engaging private sector actors in most of these consultations has often been a challenge.

Other effective multi-stakeholder partnerships focusing, for example, on data, research and capacity-development and involving international organizations, intergovernmental mechanisms and other stakeholders, include the ACP Observatory on Migration. This joint partnership between the European Union, IOM, UNFPA and Switzerland produces and collects data on South-South migration and builds capacity at the national level through a network of research institutes and governmental departments. The Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) led by the World Bank and supported by Switzerland and Germany is an inclusive and multidisciplinary initiative intended as a global hub of knowledge and policy expertise on migration and development drawing on multiple stakeholders to synthesize existing knowledge and generate new knowledge for use by policy makers in sending and receiving countries. Migration Profiles, initiated by the European Commission in 2005 and taken forward by the IOM in collaboration with different stakeholders within countries, pool relevant information on migration into one publication, list resources in the field of migration and provide capacity-building opportunities for countries. UN/DESA's Global Migration Database, developed with the support of UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank, contains a comprehensive set of empirical tabulations on international migrants by country of enumeration, birth, citizenship, sex and age. The database is the basis for estimating the global migrant stock for all countries in the world and provides important information for evidence-based policy-making and informed public debate.

3. Promote policy coherence and coordination

Within governments, migration is often divided across ministries and agencies, leading not only to a lack of coordination on migration but also, and perhaps more significantly, to inconsistent and incoherent policy outcomes. There is growing recognition that migration policies need to be designed to support, rather than hinder, development and vice versa. The most appropriate way to ensure such a systematic approach is to mainstream migration and development issues into national, regional and global planning frameworks, ensuring that the causes and effects of migration are comprehensively embedded into the design, implementation and evaluation of development and poverty reduction strategies. However, migration remains inadequately reflected in national and global development plans and frameworks, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs), as well as other policies central to development such as those addressing employment, education and health.

National experiences and international discussions on migration and development have shown that development actors' participation is insufficient. Ideally, effective policy coherence requires a comprehensive, "whole of government", cross-sectoral and human rights-based approach to migration and development. Mainstreaming migration effectively into national development planning depends on national ownership of the process, designated institutions or inter-ministerial coordination bodies, strong political support at high levels, and due consideration of cross-cutting policy issues. The GMG mainstreaming initiative, piloted in several countries, demonstrates how migration can be integrated into national development strategies through improved coordination and policy coherence, drawing on the GMG endorsed Handbook on *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning*. With support from the GMG, Jamaica, for example, has developed a comprehensive National Policy on International Migration and Development through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process steered by a specially created National Working Group and eight thematic sub-groups. The Republic of Moldova has recently established a Bureau for Diaspora Relations and appointed diaspora focal points at senior level in all line ministries. The country has also introduced a migration impact assessment tool that will allow all ministries to screen new or existing policies for prospective as well as observed migration related impacts. In both countries, these efforts contribute to the objectives set out in longer term national development strategies, i.e. "Vision 2030 Jamaica" and "Moldova 2020", respectively. Where such overarching strategies are absent – as is the case in many countries of destination – migration should be considered in growth, employment and labour market strategies at a minimum. Bilaterally and regionally, governments could include development considerations in labour mobility agreements, as well as taking migration into account in their respective development plans.

4. Develop an action-oriented agenda to advance partnerships, cooperation and coherence

All stakeholders should identify areas in which consensus exists or is probable when addressing the benefits and challenges of migration for development. For example:

- Guarantee the protection of the fundamental human rights of all migrants, including labour rights, irrespective of their status; with particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as women, children and migrants caught in crisis situations.
- Ensure the reduction of the transfer costs of remittances by engaging partners beyond governments, international organizations and civil society, such as the remittance service providers, the private sector and IT.
- Establish and monitor ethical and responsible standards for recruitment of workers.
- Strengthen data collection and research for evidence-based policy-making and informed public debate.
- Conclude agreements on the portability of social security benefits thereby ensuring migrants' access to assets.
- Facilitate the engagement of the diaspora in countries of destination for development planning in countries of origin.
- Facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications and skills.

In the future, policy coherence on migration and development will most likely go beyond “development” in its traditional sense. Emerging issues, such as humanitarian crisis and the effects of environmental change on migration require strong partnerships and cooperation. Mobility will have to be increasingly considered in disaster risk reduction strategies, disaster preparedness, national climate change adaptation programmes and sustainable urban planning. The current debate on including migration in the post-2015 UN development agenda presents an opportunity to recognize the implications of migration for sustainable development by including relevant goals, targets and indicators specific to migration, without neglecting its human rights component.

No country can manage international migration alone. Existing partnerships and mechanisms for coordination and cooperation show promising results. The 2013 HLD provides an important opportunity for Member States, international organization and civil society to renew their commitment for strengthened cooperation, coordination, consultation and coherence in order to fully harness the benefits of migration and address its challenges.

Questions for consideration during Round Table 3

1. What are the key barriers to effective cooperation, consultation, coordination and coherence, and how do we overcome them?
2. Drawing from best practices, in what innovative ways could whole-of-government approaches, government partnerships and multi-stakeholder initiatives be strengthened to improve synergies, cooperation and coherence?
3. Based on concrete examples and lessons learnt, how can migration be effectively mainstreamed into development and other policy sectors at the national and international level to achieve greater coherence?
4. How can successful partnership and cooperation experiences on migration and development at the bilateral and regional levels be translated to the multilateral level?