

## Civil Society Days 2016, 8-9 December, Dhaka, Bangladesh

ACTION PAPER FOR WORKING SESSIONS 3.1<sup>1</sup>:

### Doing Inclusive Development

#### ***3.1: Creating welcoming societies and ensuring the social inclusion of diaspora and migrants***

##### **1. Introduction**

This Working Session will focus on changing public perception of migrants, on combating and preventing xenophobia, and ensuring the social inclusion and participation of migrants and diaspora in the societies in which they live. It will also look at related global frameworks such as [the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants](#), as well as the UN-led [Together Campaign](#), which is expected to be launched in 2017 and which will “aim to change negative perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants, and to strengthen the social contract between host countries and communities, and refugees and migrants”. As a starting point the session will use such civil society joint statements as the [7 actions world leaders urgently need to take to make a new deal for refugees, migrants and societies a reality](#) and [A New Deal for Refugees, Migrants and Societies](#) - which were prepared and signed by over 100 civil society organizations towards and in response to the UNGA Summit for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016.

With the increase in global migration (including irregular migration), lacking rights-based migration management policies and implementation, as well as growing far-right and extremist political movements in every region of the world, there has been a noticeable increase in incidents of racist attacks, xenophobic rhetoric and irrational suspicion and fear among a number of citizens and governments of receiving countries towards people of different ethnicity, race or nationality.

Acknowledging that getting to know each other has the potential to break down barriers in ways that other initiatives cannot reach, important next steps for civil society to take are tackling negative perceptions about migrants and refugees and calling on governments to implement sound inclusion and cohesion policies and plans, while holding perpetrators accountable for racist and xenophobic speech and crimes. This will be in addition to looking at the effects of negative perceptions and xenophobia on vulnerable groups such as migrant women and children.

Before 2015, the issues of xenophobia and social inclusion were not central to the GFMD agenda. Previous evaluations and surveys at the Civil Society Days indicated the need to focus more on countering xenophobia, creating public support for migration and on encouraging social inclusion and cohesion. Consequently, a Working Session at CSD GFMD 2015 was held on ‘Beyond Xenophobia:

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<sup>1</sup> This Action Paper has been prepared as input for the 2016 GFMD Civil Society Days by the African Foundation for Development UK (AFFORD) and BASUG- Diaspora and Development

materializing social inclusion of migrants and diaspora'. This was linked to Theme 4 on 'Achieving goals for migrant empowerment and action for human development'.

## **2. Inclusive development in the UN 2030 Agenda and the “New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants”**

Some relevant references in the UN 2030 Agenda related to creating welcoming societies and ensuring the social inclusion of migrants are:

### **Goal 5: Gender Equality**

**Target 5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

### **Goal 8: Employment & Decent Work**

**Target 8.8** Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment

### **Goal 10: Reduce Inequality**

**Target 10.7** Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

### **Goal 16: Peaceful and Inclusive Societies**

**Target 16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

The “[New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#)” that was unanimously adopted by 193 UN Member States during the UN High Level Summit of 19 September 2016 includes numerous commitments for migrant workers, including the following:

- **par. 14:** “We strongly condemn acts and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance against refugees and migrants, and the stereotypes often applied to them, including on the basis of religion or belief. Diversity enriches every society and contributes to social cohesion. Demonizing refugees or migrants offends profoundly against the values of dignity and equality for every human being, to which we have committed ourselves. Gathered today at the United Nations, the birthplace and custodian of these universal values, we deplore all manifestations of xenophobia, racial discrimination and intolerance. We will take a range of steps to counter such attitudes and behaviour, in particular with regard to hate crimes, hate speech and racial violence. We welcome the global campaign proposed by the Secretary-General to counter xenophobia and we will implement it in cooperation with the United Nations and all relevant stakeholders, in accordance with international law. The campaign will emphasize, inter alia, direct personal contact between host communities and refugees and migrants and will highlight the positive contributions made by the latter, as well as our common humanity.”
- **par. 39:** “We commit to combating xenophobia, racism and discrimination in our societies against refugees and migrants. We will take measures to improve their integration and inclusion, as appropriate, and with particular reference to access to education, health care, justice and language training. We recognize that these measures will reduce the risks of marginalization and radicalization. National policies relating to integration and inclusion will be developed, as appropriate, in conjunction with relevant civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations, the private sector, employers’ and workers’ organizations and other stakeholders. We also note the obligation for refugees and migrants to observe the laws and regulations of their host countries.

- **par. 61:** “While recognizing the contribution of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to promoting the well-being of migrants and their integration into societies, especially at times of extremely vulnerable conditions, and the support of the international community to the efforts of such organizations, we encourage deeper interaction between Governments and civil society to find responses to the challenges and the opportunities posed by international migration.”
- Furthermore, **Annex II** includes **par. 8.u:** “Combating racism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance towards all migrants;” as one of the elements to be included in the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

### 3. Existing recommendations from civil society

#### GFMD Recommendation 5 – on xenophobia and social inclusion

Civil society recommendations from GFMD 2015 called upon governments to:

- Do much more to fight xenophobia and discrimination, e.g., enacting and more vigorously implementing legislation against discrimination, hate crimes and xenophobic violence; incorporating meaningful anti-discrimination and migration history education at schools; and establishing formal social dialogues between employers, employees and government to combat xenophobia at the work place.
- Establish and maintain regular links, including in the GFMD, with relevant special human rights mechanisms and mandate holders, such as the UN Special Rapporteurs on the Rights of Migrants and on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances in order to strengthen and synthesise issues of migration and xenophobia into international processes.
- Ensure the social inclusion of migrants in societies, by providing access to services, language training, local voting rights and pathways to citizenship; with particular and urgent work to improve access to healthcare and justice, including strong “firewalls” between these public services and immigration authorities.

Actions for civil society to take against xenophobia and for social inclusion included:

- MADE (civil society Migration and Development network) to coordinate a global network or working group on xenophobia and social inclusion that links civil society organisations with other actors, such as Chambers of Commerce, media, academics, trade union, governments.
- Campaigns by civil society, also together with the Media, to lift up the images of migrants and diaspora as bearers of culture, diversity and development.

### 4. Initiatives and actions taken in the past years to advance inclusive development

There have been numerous campaigns by civil society to raise the images of migrants and diaspora as bearers of culture, diversity, development, and more. Below are a few global and regional examples, including the first ever Global Diaspora Day which was launched in June 2016 to raise awareness of diaspora contributions to development and to identify and share good practices of combatting xenophobia. The working session will attempt to identify more actions and campaigns, assess their effectiveness and lessons learned, and map civil society recommendations for the coming period.

- ▶ [Global Diaspora Day](#)
- ▶ [Myth busting: Deconstructing 10 myths about migration and development](#)
- ▶ [The Island of All Together](#)
- ▶ [Als Ik Daar Ben \(When I’m there\)](#)
- ▶ [Soy del Mundo, SIMN](#)
- ▶ [A Coney Island of the mind \(I am waiting\)](#)

- ▶ [Migrant Voice](#), UK
- ▶ [‘I am an immigrant’](#); Global campaign against xenophobia. This is a global campaign with visibility at country level:
- ▶ [Migration Aid Group](#), Hungary
- ▶ [Refugees Welcome](#), Germany

The Working Session will look at various policy areas that can address the social inclusion of migrants, and combat xenophobia and negative perceptions. Section 4 of civil [society’s New Deal for Refugees, Migrants and Societies](#) elaborates on these in detail. Some areas to explore:

- Campaigns and public relations, e.g. the “Together Campaign” announced in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants
- Access to language training, legal information, cultural orientation, education, health care and justice; and ensure strong separation between these public services and penal and immigration authorities National development plans.
- Anti-racism legislation.
- Inclusive schools and workplaces, including awareness-raising programmes
- Welcoming towns and cities
- Use of social media for immediate response, example [Global Diaspora Day Facebook virtual event](#):

## 5. Suggestions for recommendations for the 2016 GFMD CSD 2016

The Working Sessions will deepen existing goals, benchmarks and actions such as the ones described above. It is suggested to begin with a focus on the following four areas:

### 1. A more coordinated network of organisations challenging xenophobia

*Indicator: Established regional network, plus TOR.*

### 2. A more coordinated approach to sharing and learning about existing tools and practices to challenge / respond to xenophobia

*Indicator: Accessible list of existing and new tools and practices*

### 3. More collaboration with traditional and local host country institutions and organisations, as well as local authorities and media

*Indicator: Database registrations. Increased involvement in webinars and other activities.*

### 4. Strengthening collaboration with inter-faith organisations

*Indicator: Database registrations. Increased involvement in webinars and other activities.*

## 6. Action steps beyond the GFMD

The Working Session will be defining actions to recommend to governments and for civil society to take forward. In line with the goals above, this Action paper proposes to work on these actions for civil society and for governments:

Actions to be taken by [civil society](#) at international, regional and global level

- Identify coordinators/convenors for global network / working group, and establish a global network or working group
- Establish and build on web-based resource platforms for new, existing and effective tools and practices, such as Global Diaspora Day.

- Strengthening inter-cultural and international exchange for friendship

Actions to be taken by governments at international, regional and global level

- Establish and build on web-based resources of new, existing and effective tools and practices, such as Global Diaspora Day, etc.
- More anti-racism legislation and prosecutions
- Support the strengthening inter-cultural and international exchange for friendship
- Publicly recognise and acknowledge migrant and diaspora contributions to economic and social development

## **7. Guiding questions for discussion during the Session**

### **1) *Recommendations for changes in policies and practices***

What legal, regulatory and enforcement mechanisms are necessary to combat xenophobia and racism, and to promote social inclusion and participation? How do we hold leaders accountable, especially in the current political climate? What policies are needed to ensure that those in leadership positions do not incite negative perceptions for their own purposes?

### **2) *Strategies, practices, partnerships and tools***

How can we better engage with the media, local authorities and other stakeholders to promote the image of migrants as contributors to development? What more can governments do? And what will success look like?

### **3) *Actors for success***

What role can multi-stakeholder partnership play in countering xenophobia and promotion social inclusion, and what stakeholders beyond civil society and rights-based groups need to be at the table to ensure success?

### **4) *Actions and strategies***

How does civil society make a stance against xenophobia? And how do we ensure empowerment and social inclusion of migrants and diaspora into societies? What initiatives exist and how do we build on and engage with them at local, national and international levels?

### **5) *The Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration***

How can the Global Compact on Migration and related global mechanisms and campaigns contribute to ensuring the necessary changes at policy and perception level? How should civil society be involved in these processes?