
Global Meeting on Migration and Development

25. – 27 May 2016, Switzerland

The Global Meeting on Migration and Development, hosted by the SDC's Migration Network, brought together key stakeholders from governments, civil society, the UN system, international organisations and research organisations working in the area of international cooperation as well as migration and development (M&D) more specifically in various regional and national contexts. The overall goal was to exchange on practices and perspectives, establish common ground and strengthen a global network engaged for a pragmatic and result-oriented implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The workshop was articulated along four main thematic clusters. First, the meeting started with an introductory block focusing on the current status of the Agenda 2030 to set the scene. The second cluster concentrated on forced displacement in the context of development, and the third block focused on linking migration and several SDG goals, including goal 5 on gender equality, goal 3 on good health and well-being and goal 8 on decent work and economic growth. The fourth and last cluster included a panel and a discussion around implementation and contextualisation of the Agenda 2030. For more details on the objectives of the meeting and a full overview of the programme please visit: <http://mdglobalmeeting2016.org>.

1. The Agenda 2030 for sustainable development: a global commitment

The conference started with an introduction by Ambassador **Michael Gerber** SDC and was followed by a panel discussion with **François Crépeau**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, **Shabarinath Nair**, SDC, **John Bingham**, ICMC and **Gibril Faal**, ADEPT, chaired by **Markus Reisle**, SDC with a view to developing a common understanding on the positioning of migration in the Agenda 2030 from the perspective of stakeholders who have been involved in this process at different levels.

1.1. Setting the scene

In 2015 important achievements were made and in particular the adoption of 3 major international documents: first the **Paris Agreement on Climate Change**, second the **Addis Ababa Action Agenda** (AAAA) and last the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. What can be labelled as a “successful year of multilateralism” signals a strong political commitment and the mobilisation of government, the private sector and civil society. The Agenda 2030 with its 17 goals and 169 targets is based on 5 pillars: **People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership**. Furthermore, it is celebrated as a universal agenda, whose objectives and targets apply to both developing and developed countries.



The Agenda 2030 highlights the **positive contribution of migration to development**. Migration and migrants are furthermore at the centre of several targets, such as 10.7 on “facilitating safe and regular migration” or explicitly integrated such as in target 8.8 on “decent work for all workers, including migrant workers”. For a full overview of the references to migration into the Agenda please see: <http://mdglobalmeeting2016.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/SDG-Migration-References.pdf>.

Migration is also to be understood as a transversal dimension of the agenda. As emphasized during the discussions, migrants are first and foremost human beings and their equal and full access to the universal rights contained in the agenda – rights applying to “all” – will need to be ensured. In the same vein, goal 17 also commits to report progress through data disaggregated according to migratory status.

The adoption of this ambitious agenda in September 2015 now opens up a timeframe of 15 years for effective implementation. While the Agenda represents huge opportunities, a number of challenges ahead were also mentioned, including the current **international political context**, which brought migration back to the forefront and highlighted important divisions within the international community and in particular within the “solidarity crisis” around migration in Europe, could contribute to slow down the effective implementation of the migration aspects of the 2030 Agenda. Second, the AAAA does not fully answer the question of the necessary **resources** that will need to be mobilized and the contribution of the respective stakeholders, including the private sector. Third, targets are still formulated in a way that allows great room for manoeuvre in the interpretation. Therefore, there is a **need for a common understanding and language** on the objectives and precise targets proposed in the agenda. Fourth, assessing progress implies relying on data which are currently not always available. Selecting or designing **methodologies for solid data collection** will be critical for assessing and comparing progress. Fifth, the agenda cannot be implemented in “abstracto” and disconnected from other policies. Hence the need for mechanisms to support articulated and complementary policies. While the influence of a plurality of interests and policy fields was recognized as a reality of contemporary external policies, participants underlined the need for collaboration/coordination mechanisms to **reduce the risks of conflicting policies and promote policy coherence**. Finally, the implementation of this agenda will require a multi-stakeholder involvement. A broad **societal partnership** will be critical for coherent and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its multiple dimensions.

1.2. Perspectives

The finalisation of the **indicators** by the “inter-agency experts group on SDG indicators” will represent an important step in the coming second half of 2016, not only for clarifying means of verification but also as a way to **operationalize some of the targets**.

Operationalizing the agenda also means analysing and **breaking down the objectives and targets in the respective national contexts**. It is worth in this context remembering the very different national contexts and starting conditions. For instance, most countries do not have a comprehensive migration policy in place yet.

In addition, there is now a need **to raise awareness on the agenda and its objectives, mobilise the different sectors of society and create national and local ownership**. This means in particular linking macro-level objectives with field realities, creating bridges between the stakeholders that negotiated the vision and those who are responsible for implementation, between national and local level and between the government and the population.

Implementation will also need “champions” to lead the way and inform on progress. “A hyperactivity of the devoted” (as it was labelled by one participant) should stimulate a broader engagement.

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2. Sustainable development in the context of forced displacement

This second thematic block was structured along three sessions, including an introductory expert input on forced displacement and development by **Xavier Devictor, WB**, a panel session chaired by **John Bingham**, ICMC to circumscribe the different dynamics at stake presented by the panelists **François Crépeau**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, **Marta Vallejo**, UNDP Jordan, **Pascal Raess**, SDC, **Linda Al-Kalash**, Tamkeen and a group work session to discuss the role of development actors and entry points for intervention.

2.1. Setting the scene

Migration is a phenomenon that encompasses different dynamics and a combination of push and pull factors. In the international and public discourse, forced displaced persons are further sub-categorised as **refugees, asylum seekers, internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees**¹, terms that are linked to legal and socio-economic status. In parallel, discussions on migration are often marked by **myths on the basis of unrealistic and diverging figures**. Such biased data need to be carefully interpreted. There is a **need for more accurate data and knowledge**. The framework of the SDGs could be seen as an opportunity to overcome gaps of data and knowledge.

Each migrant has a different characteristic and specific vulnerabilities including psychosocial aspects, trauma and loss. Forcibly displaced persons, however, have a specific vulnerability, which affects their possibilities to seek economic opportunities in host communities.

Statistics show that forced displacement is not short term or temporary but rather reflects a long term situation for many migrants, with an average duration of stay abroad of 17 years. This increasingly implies that a **long-term development approach to forced displacement**, also focusing on socio-economic aspects, is needed.

Two main perspectives came out of the discussions: First, with displacement being protracted over time, many migrants find themselves in limbo situations with limited longer term perspectives. Support thus needs to go beyond satisfying humanitarian needs and propose longer term development opportunities. Second, long term support can only happen through involvement of the host communities and an integration of forced displacement aspects into development plans.

2.2. Sharing perspectives

Concrete field examples and policies addressing forced displacement were shared in the subsequent panels. The case of **Jordan**, which considers gradually opening its labour market to forcibly displaced persons in certain sectors, triggered interesting discussions. Such an initiative might for instance imply creating employment possibilities and formalising existing jobs. On the basis of this example multiple aspects to be considered for successful implementation of such an engagement were discussed, including raising public awareness and preventing xenophobia, supporting conditions for investments in job creation by the private sector and coordination with civil society organisations working on migration. Discussions also underlined the need for cautious analysis of the possible indirect unintended consequences of such an engagement which may target certain categories of migrants at the expense of others. The panel therefore emphasised the need for comprehensive approaches and for continued efforts on the human and economic rights of migrants both in countries of origin (COOs) and in countries of destination (CODs).

In the ensuing discussion, participants added that it is necessary to elaborate **comprehensive, rights based and long-term framework conditions for employment** that are decent as a means to promote self-reliance of migrants while ensuring that host communities and other migrants including forcibly displaced persons are not left behind. In addition, the focus of the discussion was on migration

¹ The term migration comprises all those mentioned categories

policies that need to be comprehensive, supportive and include opportunities for **regular migration**. Once again, participants underlined that a comprehensive migration policy should **include the concerned host communities**. This implies working on a local level with local authorities and local CSOs. It is also important to involve the **media** to avoid stigmatisation and raise awareness.

2.3. Joint messages

As highlighted in the Input paper on forced displacement and development, prepared by SDC Global Programme Migration and Development to trigger the reflection, there are different dimensions when considering the issue. In order to look at them more closely and contextualise the discussion, discussion groups were formed around the four topics: **prevention, protection, self-reliance and collaboration**. The paper on forced displacement and development can be found here: <http://mdglobalmeeting2016.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Global-Meeting-2016-Forced-Displacement-and-Development-Discussion-Note-.pdf>.

In a nutshell, the paper indicates that if forced displacement is addressed in appropriate ways, if measures in the areas of prevention, protection and self-reliance are included, and if those measures are embedded in adequate system responses, the number of displaced persons can be reduced, their human rights can be protected, protracted situations can be avoided, and displaced persons might regain hope for a better future in safety and dignity for them and their children.

“**Prevention**” focused on the root causes of forced displacement, and the implementation of the Agenda 2030 was referred to as an instrument to address them. Participants stressed the need for regular channels for migration and inclusive approaches for engaging migration in long-term solutions. The group mentioned goals 8 on decent work and economic growth, goal 10 on reduced inequalities, goal 13 on climate action, goal 16 peace, justice and strong institutions and goal 17 on partnerships for the goals as pivotal in this dimension. Discussions on “**protection**” highlighted the vulnerability that migrants face during their migration cycle. It was agreed that all migrants in vulnerable situations need to be included in protecting mechanisms. Furthermore, protection was described not only as a role of humanitarian actors but also as a responsibility of development actors given its longer term implications. “**Self-reliance**” should be promoted through the recognition of forcibly displaced persons’ skills, talents and ambitions as well as their right to work and accessibility of jobs. Four SDG goals were highlighted in this perspective, goal 4 on access to education including migrants, goal 8 on decent work and economic growth focusing on job as well as entrepreneurship for migrants and their financial inclusion, goal 10 on reducing inequalities concentrating on labour mobility and emphasizing regular channels for migrants and goal 17 on partnerships indicating responsibility-sharing, importance of networks and voluntarism of migrants’ organisations. The fourth topic on “**collaboration and processes**” underlined the importance of the participation of the different stakeholders for achieving the goals especially when looking at migration. Different opportunities, such as fora and platforms, are already set in place for collaboration and supporting the process. Participants agreed on the importance of having a common language on the terminology and to avoid competition between humanitarian and development agendas.

All groups observed that SDGs provide a range of goals which are relevant to forced displacement. They once again underlined the need to promote a long term perspective to forced displacement and adequate funding mechanisms.

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3. Migration matters - a reality across different goals of the Agenda 2030

This block focused on the linkages between migration and three specific thematic areas, taking their respective goals as starting point, i.e. gender, health and decent work. This section started with a panel composed of **Ursula Keller-Alazzawi** SDC, **Karin Gross** SDC, **Beatrice Ferrari Haskal** SDC; **Nilim Baruah** ILO. Discussions then continued in smaller groups before a final panel gathering **Karin Gross** SDC, **Nilim Baruah** ILO, and **Maria Galloti** ILO concluded the discussion. Both panels were hosted by **Riff Fullan** HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation.

3.1. Gender and Migration

Migration can be considered as a gendered topic. When looking at the different stages of the migration cycle, male and female migrants are faced with different experiences, vulnerabilities and opportunities and have different capacities. Migrants may experience a double discrimination being a migrant and a specific gender. At the same time migration can both represent a situation of vulnerability and an opportunity for empowerment for women. As such, the objective should be to decrease vulnerabilities and improve empowerment of migrants.

Overall, the panel discussion insisted on two dimensions: migration has an impact on the dynamics of gender roles within a family and also carries a potential for empowerment of women. Second, labour markets, fiscal economic and migration policies should be gender-sensitive.

The group discussions allowed reflection on the above dimensions and statements. It was discussed that there is a need for a systemic approach during the whole migration cycle and its different stages from a gender perspective. Additionally, the gender specific requirements and vulnerabilities need to be considered thoroughly to avoid reinforcement of gender-stereotypes through contradictory outputs.

Concluding, SDGs are a good opportunity to include the perspective of gender and migration. On the one hand gender equality is a stand-alone goal and on the other hand it is a transversal goal. The Agenda 2030 reminds of the importance of analysing the whole migration cycle through a gender sensitive lens.

3.2. Health and Migration

During the panel it was underlined that migration is a determinant of health and that both topics are interlinked. Migrants' health is being discussed at international policy level. It is acknowledged that migrants and their families experience different mental and physical health stages during the migration cycle. While migrants are not specifically referred to in goal 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages, they are implicitly included with the reference 'for all'.

Subsequently, participants stressed the linkages between health and decent work as dimensions of social protection and the example of the misuse of medical testing of migrant workers was highlighted. At the same time, there are also positive examples of CODs offering social protection to migrants, while the latter are nevertheless often discriminated against as compared to nationals in terms of the range of accessible services. Participants emphasised that health care systems in a country should be for all and should be non-discriminatory.

Going further, the discussion groups underlined several dimensions to be considered on the linkage between health and migration such as universal health coverage regardless of status, portability of patient's health information, role of migration in epidemics and therefore the risks of stigmatisation of migrants, building firewalls regarding medical secrecy in order to protect migrants, role and availability of data and finally the role of diaspora as a potential source of information on health for arriving communities.

The concluding discussion underlined the importance of policies supporting the accessibility of universal health coverage in order to include migrants and other vulnerable groups. Therefore, health policies need to be migrant-friendly and sensitive. Information on access to health service is crucial

for migrants and as mentioned in the discussion group diasporas' involvement for newcomers in destination countries could be an important information source. In addition, innovative ICT solutions to spread and to access information on health services should also be explored. In order to continue treatment of diseases, reference systems should be set in place. Therefore, partnerships and networks are to be supported for that purpose.

3.3. Decent Work and Migration

Migrant workers make a substantial contribution to economic growth of the COO and COD. Unfortunately, this contribution is not measured in an accurate manner also given the size of the informal sector. Furthermore, in certain circumstances migrants face unsafe employment and poor working conditions. Migrants' mobility is also often restricted and employers do not provide secure and private space for migrants. Low(er) wages is also a regular issue. The examples of Thailand and Malaysia were given, where migrants compared to national staff are much lower payed, especially women. The benefits of migration can only be fully harvested if proper framework conditions are provided including safe and decent working conditions are given.

The panellists highlighted that the linkages between migration and skills are gaining increased attention. Migration will not change development projects but they will need to be adapted in order to account for migration.

The discussion further included key issues such as the recognition of skills, CODs market demand and the required skills, possibilities to better link with employers in CODs, minimum living wage for migrants in CODs. Participants also emphasized the remaining gaps between often well-developed policies and legislation and incomplete implementation. For example, conventions on domestic workers exist but their implementation is rather weak. In this sense, there is a need for continued advocacy.

In parallel, the competition between COOs to send labour migrants leads to reduced standards, continued discrimination and contributes to the high costs of migration. Hence, there is a need for collaboration between COOs and alliances.

In the concluding remarks, three key issues for implementing a decent work agenda were highlighted: first the abolishment of fees to workers during the recruitment process, second the promotion of equal treatment in working and employment conditions, and third the promotion of inclusive labour laws.

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4. From Commitment to action: Implementing the Agenda

4.1. Implementation at country level

The last thematic block of the workshop focused on the possible modalities, good practices and challenges met at country level in implementing the Agenda 2030. Three country examples were first used to introduce the discussion and draw light on the steps to be taken for implementation, respectively **Serbia, Bangladesh and Nigeria** by **Svetlana Velimirovic** Government of Serbia, **Nahida Sobhan** Government of Bangladesh and **Matthias Esene** Government of Nigeria. This session was chaired by **Yvonne Diallo-Sahli** SDC.

Participants then split into **working groups organised per region**, including a group on global level issues, in order to discuss priorities and challenges in their respective regional as well as national contexts. The presentations and working group discussions converged in emphasizing the following dimensions as critical for the implementation of the agenda:

- **Identifying priority targets:** given the number of targets, countries are recommended to identify a number of priority targets. This is for instance illustrated by Bangladesh which already communicated it will focus its efforts on goals 1 on no poverty, goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, goal 10 on reduce inequalities, and goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.
- **Mechanisms for institutional leadership and interdepartmental coordination:** all country examples highlighted the importance of setting-up mechanisms for inter-agency coordination in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This implies clarifying how many and which agencies lead the process, as well as the necessary coordination and reporting channels. This identification of lead agencies should be accompanied by a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the different ministries and departments, which need to be clearly allocated.
- **Alignment with national policies and strategies:** contributions emphasized the need to integrate the Agenda and its objectives into regional, national and local development strategies. The group discussions indicated that it is not most efficient to produce additional separate strategies for the implementation of the Agenda 2030, but rather to align the goals with existing plans and strategies. For instance, the Bangladesh 7th 5-year Plan, which is the national development strategy, has now included migration as a stand-alone chapter.
- **.... and alignment with regional processes:** it was further emphasized that the implementation of the Agenda also needs to be integrated in regional processes. For instance, the working group on *Eastern Europe* insisted on the alignment the implementation of the SDGs with the European integration process. In *South Asia*, implementation of the SDGs also need to be promoted through regional processes such as ASEAN, SAARC und RCPs. The group agreed that the Colombo Process could be used to promote the implementation of the SDGs. Therefore, the coming Bangladesh Chairing of the Colombo process was seen as an opportunity to introduce it on the agenda.
- **Linkages with other policy fields:** sector policies need to be examined in the light of the 2030 Agenda to favour policy coherence. This need for the SDGs to “transpire” into sectoral and more specific policies and initiatives was discussed at both global and national level. **At global level**, the working group emphasized the importance of linking the SDGs to other global consultations and processes. (e.g. HABITAT III). **At country level**, all regional working groups insisted on the importance of articulating the SDGs with sectoral policies, while raising the question of the responsibility to initiate and monitor such a process.
- **Whole-of-system approach:** the implementation of the plan will require the involvement of different stakeholders in various sectors. A whole-of-system approach implies going beyond inter-ministerial cooperation. For effective implementation of the Agenda, it is of crucial to mobilise and involve **sub-national levels** of government (decentralised local governments) and all sectors of

society, including the private sector, civil society organisations, and academia. **At global level** mechanisms for increased inclusion of non-state actors, such as applied in the framework of the GFMD for the inclusion of the civil society and the private sector, should be encouraged. In addition, bridges with economic related events such as the WEF should equally be promoted and used to advance the Agenda. Examples of private companies pro-actively engaging on migrants 'integration should also be shared and documented.

In parallel, efforts to include civil society and the private sector **in different national contexts** should be pursued. Modalities for the inclusion of the all categories of society in national 2030 implementation processes should be encouraged, including migrants and their representatives. This last point came quite prominently in the proposals of the *Eastern Europe* and *West Africa* working groups which emphasised the possible role of migrants and diaspora in know-how transfer, investments and entrepreneurship and the necessity to work on framework conditions supporting such contributions.

- **Awareness raising and perception:** in line with the ambition of a broad and multi-stakeholder mobilisation, the objectives of the 2030 Agenda needs to be communicated and explained through their adaptation to specific national contexts. It is critical to involve the general population in the agenda in all countries. This starts with raising awareness and informing on these objectives.

Global events such as the GFMD should contribute to inform on the SDGs and also change the general public perception of migration. This should be complement by national information/awareness raising campaigns. Civil society can play a key role at both levels.

- **Linking global to local:** in the same logic, it is of particular importance to contextualise the agenda and to connect it to the day-to-day realities of local actors in order to promote ownership. The ambitious agenda 2030 still needs to make sense for local actors. The agenda can only be implemented following appropriation and as a result of ownership of the different set of actors to be involved. Here again, civil society actors could play a significant role in supporting the process.
- **Monitoring and learning** all working groups converged on the critical role of monitoring and developing the capacities to assess progress will be central to support learning, exchanges on good practices, evidence-based policy making and mobilisation of the necessary resources for effective implementation of the agenda. This implies investing the necessary resources for data collection. **At global level**, discussions play an important role for framing the whole process, defining standard indicators, reporting modalities and process. **At national level**, countries will need to contextualize the objectives and indicators, adapt them to their national and local realities and develop the necessary baselines. The reporting modalities will also need to be discussed. Who is in charge of the monitoring process, what modalities make sense for the participation of the civil society (direct participation? shadow reports?) and how can this process be supported?
- **Learn from Pilot Countries:** in an effort to use evidence to feed the reflections on implementation, lessons learned from pilot countries should be widely shared.

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5. Moving forward

The concluding comments of the Global Meeting on Migration and Development 2016 was given by **Claire Melamed**, ODI, **François Crépeau**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, and **Markus Reisle**, SDC and hosted by **Yvonne Diallo-Sahli** SDC.

The international community adopted the Agenda 2030 and entered a new stage of sustainable development, where migration is acknowledged as a positive contribution for development. Therefore, two key issues are necessary in order to use this new opportunity and to progress. First, there is a need for informed policy making and therefore disaggregated data collection on migration is key. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to go beyond the sole responsibility of state actors and define the role of civil society organisations. Second, having a collection of figures will not be enough. In order to efficiently use the data it is crucial to ensure effective monitoring processes are put in place.

With the aim of promoting long-term solutions, the need for devoted and organised actors was emphasized. For instance, this implies the need for proactive policy making for a strong commitment and the development of further regular migration channels. Hence, eliminating barriers to access to justice, will ensure migrants effective access to legal remedies for violations of migrants' rights.

In the concluding words, the importance of migration having different dimensions and different stakeholders' engagement for implementing the Agenda 2030 was reaffirmed. Therefore, there is a need for increasing systemic approaches, meaning promoting interlinkages between different stakeholders in different sectors. Furthermore, the challenging political context for implementing migrant-friendly policies was emphasised. Hence, the dimension of migration might be difficult on domestic political scenes, but it cannot be detached or treated in isolation from foreign policies. In this sense, there is a need for coherence and integration of migration in different sector policies. In parallel, promoting change of mind-sets is needed to promote a better perception of migration and reduce xenophobia and myths on migration. In order to act sustainably we need to think global at local level and think local at global level.

Similar to the manifold interlinkages between the different goals in the Agenda 2030, networks of people across regions, sectors and levels of work will be key in implementing the agenda and moving the process ahead. This meeting represents a contribution to strengthening such networks, bringing different actors together and laying the foundation for future exchanges on the topic.

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Abbreviations:

AAAA	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
ADEPT	Africa-Europe Diaspora Development Platform
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COD	Country of destination
COO	Country of origin
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
ICMC	International Catholic Migration Commission
ICT	Information and communication technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&D	Migration and Development
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
RCP	Regional Consultative Processes
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WEF	World Economic Forum

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