



Concept note for the GFMD – GMG side event

Migration and Rural Development: Sharing Experiences and Fostering Partnerships

26th March 13:15 – 14:30

Conference Room 7, UN Headquarters, New York

Background

Migration is inherent to the process of structural transformation of societies and an essential contributor to the development of communities and States of origin, transit and destination. Safe, orderly and regular migration can contribute to sustainable development, food security, resilience and more stable and peaceful societies, thus advancing countries' progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, safe, orderly and regular migration requires that we also address the adverse drivers of large movements of people and by making migration a choice, rather than a necessity.

Conflict, violence and sudden-onset of disasters associated with natural hazards, environmental degradation and slow-onset impacts of climate change are among the many adverse drivers of migration and forced displacement. However, many migrants are compelled to move due to inter-related socio-economic and governance-related factors including gender inequalities, that can result in poverty, food insecurity, lack of employment opportunities, marginalization, disenfranchisement, limited access to social protection, limited access to services, and natural resource depletion.

In this complex setting, the role of agriculture and rural development (ARD) has largely been overlooked, despite the fact that 40 per cent of global remittances are sent to rural areas, indicating the rural origin of a large share of migrants; and that over 70 per cent of the rural poor depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Rural populations are particularly vulnerable to natural resources degradation and climatic events, and have limited job opportunities and these effects are exacerbated for rural women.

Although climate change is a global issue, its consequences are felt locally and it disproportionately affects the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, particularly in developing countries. Among these groups, rural populations are particularly vulnerable due to natural hazards and their dependence on natural resources, extreme poverty, as well as overall lack of public investment in basic infrastructure in rural areas. Therefore, providing

adequate climate change adaptation responses is a high priority for increasing rural resilience to climate change.

Migration and human mobility are explicitly recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which establishes a number of migration-related targets across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that unemployment, especially youth unemployment, as well as natural resource depletion and the adverse impacts of environmental degradation, are among the key challenges to sustainable development. Empowering all, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migrants is key to ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions, as they are essential contributors to inclusive growth and sustainable development. In doing so, it is essential to also recognise the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination they may face including on the grounds of age, gender and other factors.

The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (2016) renews the commitment to address the drivers that create or exacerbate large movements of people, including by adopting, inter alia, measures to implement the 2030 Agenda, strengthen capacities in countries of origin, protect labour rights for migrant workers and for those in precarious employment, and promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. It also recognizes the need to implement more comprehensive and preventative approaches to reducing large movements by addressing the root causes of conflict and disasters and by investing in the long-term development to build resilience and sustain peace. Further, the 62nd session (2018) of the Commission on the Status of Women is currently negotiating agreed conclusions on “Challenged and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls”.

The Secretary-General (SG)’s Report, “Making migration work for all” reaffirms that migration should never be an act of desperation, but that in reality many migrants move in response to “unsustainable pressures”, including extreme deprivation and food scarcity. Objective 2 of the Zero Draft of the Global Compact on Migration calls for “Minimizing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin” and include among the actionable commitments investments in programmes accelerating the fulfilment of the SDGs (e.g. poverty eradication, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation, conflict prevention and resolution), trade and FDI, and the promotion of decent work, entrepreneurship, vocational training and skills development.

Migration is one adaptation strategy that can reduce exposure to immediate threats and help diversify rural household incomes. However, migration can also lead to a different set of risks and insecurities, for the migrants as well as for the sending and receiving communities. Migration resulting from extreme need or distress is more likely to occur when migrants are ‘driven out’ of their homes due to lack of alternative options but to leave.

In this joint GFMD and GMG side event on migration and rural development, we highlight the complex relationship between migration, agriculture and rural development (ARD), and discuss best practices in harnessing the development potential of rural migration.

Objectives:

The side event will provide opportunities for the GFMD and GMG to highlight the importance of working in partnership to generate evidence and raise awareness on the complex relationship between migration and ARD, with the ultimate aim to support policy making and

country-level interventions which successfully address the adverse drivers of rural migration and harness its development potential, including in the context of climate change.

The objectives of the side event are to:

1. Facilitate and contribute to a better understanding of the nexus between migration, and rural development and climate change
2. Identify areas for joint programming and international partnerships
3. Share successful experiences and practical tools to prevent forced migration through agriculture and rural development in the context of climate change.

Guiding questions :

- How can working in partnership help generate evidence and raise awareness on the complex relationship between migration and Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) in the context of climate change?
- What are the causative factors that make women and men from rural areas move? And what is the impact of this movement internally i.e. within the country and outside?
- How ARD can effectively contribute to sustainable development, including to job creation and a more equal access to resources?
- What are the key challenges to increase investments in infrastructure and basic services in rural areas?
- How does ARD address both the impacts of climate change and the other interconnected adverse drivers of rural migration?
- What are the particular risks that rural communities face with regards to climate change? What factors make them perceive there are no other alternatives than migrate to mitigate those risks and ultimately escape poverty?
- What tools and mechanisms can be supported to enhance knowledge exchange about successful climate change adaptation strategies and approaches for rural settings and for creating conditions where those dependents on rural livelihoods have the means to remain productive on their land?
- What concrete measures should be adopted at country and regional level to enhance policy coherence between migration and national sustainable development strategies, agricultural policies and adaptation plans?
- What are the key elements at local/territorial level which can harness the potential of rural-urban linkages for green job creation activities and thus provide alternatives to rural migration?
- Which key technological and/or skills developments can create jobs or enhance productivity in rural communities? How do you ensure these are accessible to rural women?
- How can the diaspora, including transnational entrepreneurship, be more involved in ARD in rural areas of origin? How can we foster more investments of remittances in farm and non-farm activities and green jobs creation?

Provisional Programme

13:15 – 13:25

Opening Remarks

- Mr. El Habib Nadir, GFMD Moroccan Co-Chair
- Ambassador William Lacy Swing, IOM Director General, GMG Co-Chair

13:25 – 14:00

Panel Discussion

- Ms. Carla Mucavi, Director, FAO Liaison Office with the UN in New York
- Ms. Daniela Morari, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Republic of Moldova
- Mr. José Luis Jàcome, Vice Minister of Human Mobility, Ecuador
- Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye, Minister-Counselor to the Presidency of the Republic of Senegal; President of the Alliance for Migration, Leadership and Development, Senegal

14:00 – 14:25

Open Discussion (Interventions from the floor, Q and A)

14:25 – 14:30

Closing Remarks

- Ambassador Jürgen Schulz, for the GFMD German Co-Chair