



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)
Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)

2013 United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

IOM Position Paper

This paper spells out a) the background to the 2013 UN General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD); b) the basis for IOM's engagement in the HLD; c) IOM's institutional position vis-à-vis possible outcomes of the HLD; and d) policy recommendations in six priority areas for the HLD's attention.

A. Background

Ours is an era of unprecedented human mobility, with the greatest number of people ever living outside their country or region of origin. Migration today is relevant to all countries in all regions, whether as countries of origin, transit or destination or any combination thereof. In view of trends in demography, development and labour demand, large-scale migration in the 21st century is inevitable, necessary and desirable. With the growth in human mobility set to continue and likely to accelerate to become a "mega-trend" of our century, governments increasingly recognize the importance of cooperating on migration matters as well as the relevance of migration to all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and to the post-2015 development framework.

In 2006, then United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan spearheaded the first ever UN General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD). Earlier that year he had appointed a Special Representative of the Secretary General for International Migration and Development. In the same year, the existing Geneva Migration Group was expanded to become the Global Migration Group (GMG) as the main inter-agency coordination mechanism on migration.

The 2006 HLD placed migration more squarely on the development agenda of States and other interested parties across the world. While it did not generate consensus to establish a norm-setting institution or regime on migration, the 2006 HLD led instead to the establishment of the State-led "Global Forum on Migration and Development" (GFMD). The GFMD was conceived as a mechanism for informal, non-binding dialogue – outside of formal institutional structures – among governments, and between governments and other partners, including international organizations, NGOs, academia and the private sector.

Despite this progress in dialogue and cooperation at the global level, however, migration remains inadequately reflected in development frameworks and broader sectoral policies, both at the national and local levels and in global development agendas. Furthermore, migration policies do not ensure adequate protection of the human rights of all migrants and public perceptions of migrants and migration have not kept pace with the reality of human mobility and remain dangerously negative. The 2013 second HLD on International Migration and Development presents the

international community with a critical opportunity to review progress since the first HLD and to address these gaps in a spirit of multilateral cooperation.

B. Basis for IOM Engagement in the 2013 HLD

As the only international organization with a global mandate and footprint on migration, IOM is committed to broad-based dialogue, partnership and consensus-building.¹ Over the past sixty years, IOM has partnered with Member States, UN agencies and other international organizations, civil society and the private sector to improve human development outcomes for migrants, while enhancing overall levels of development for societies of origin, transit and destination.

In its 2011 Resolution A/RES/65/170, the **UN General Assembly** invites IOM to participate in the preparations for and proceedings of the second HLD in 2013. In the same resolution, IOM is invited to support regional preparations for the 2013 HLD in cooperation with the UN Regional Commissions and other relevant entities. In line with paragraph 26 of this resolution, IOM will also support Regional Consultative Processes on migration in preparing for the 2013 HLD.

The UN General Assembly **resolution concerning the modalities of the 2013 HLD**, adopted in December 2012, repeats the request to IOM to participate in the HLD and to contribute to its preparation. It also invites IOM and the IOM Council to collaborate with UN Regional Commissions in organizing discussions on regional aspects of international migration and development and to provide inputs to the preparatory process of the HLD.²

In addition, the **UN Chief Executives Board** issued a decision in April 2012 asking IOM and UNFPA to prepare, in collaboration with the GMG, a set of **draft outcomes and recommendations** on migration in preparation for the 2013 HLD to be considered at the UN High Level Committee on Programmes' spring session in 2013.

At the 101st Session of the **IOM Council** in November 2012, IOM's 149 Member States adopted a resolution on "IOM and the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013" (Resolution No. 1244) which resolves to:

- *Request the Director General to keep Member States fully informed of preparations for the HLD in 2013 in order to assist them in preparing for this event;*
- *Further request the Director General to ensure that IOM's engagement in the preparatory activities and proceedings of the HLD in 2013 creates sustained attention of the international community to the perspectives of migrants themselves;*

¹ In line with IOM's mandate expressed in its Constitution, "to provide a forum to States as well as international and other organizations for the exchange of views and experiences, and the promotion of co-operation and co-ordination of efforts on international migration issues..." (Art. 1(1)(e)) and in the 2007 IOM Strategy document.

² The "HLD Modalities" resolution of December 2012 also sets the theme of the HLD, lays out mechanisms for regional preparations and civil society contributions to the HLD, and determines the format of the HLD in terms of four roundtables: (i) Assessing the effects of international migration on sustainable development and identifying relevant priorities in view of the preparations of the post 2015 development framework; (ii) Measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, with particular reference to woman and children, as well as to prevent and combat smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, and to ensure regular orderly and safe migration; (iii) Strengthening partnerships and cooperation on international migration, mechanisms to effectively integrate migration into development policies, and promote coherence at all levels; (iv) International and regional labour mobility and its impact on development.

- *Affirm the support of the Member States of IOM for the recognition of IOM's current and future role as the global lead agency on migration, as well as its extensive knowledge, expertise and experience, in all aspects of the HLD in 2013;*
- *Encourage Member States to reflect this resolution and the joint positions contained herein in their national positions and contributions for the HLD in 2013;*

As further requested in the resolution, the IOM Council resolution has been forwarded to the President of the UN General Assembly with a view towards ensuring that the work of IOM is drawn upon and appropriately reflected in all aspects of the HLD.

As the lead international organization on migration and in line with the above mandate, IOM is taking the following **approach in engaging in the preparatory process leading up to the 2013 HLD**:

- Firstly, IOM is working in partnership with governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities, including migrant organizations, to ensure the sustainable integration of migration within pro-poor development processes and broader sectoral planning at national, regional and global levels. This includes poverty reduction strategy papers, basic public service sectors as well as transitional justice measures, disaster risk reduction strategies and national adaptation programmes, as well as ensuring due consideration of migration in the post-2015 development agenda.
- Secondly, IOM continues to advocate for the protection and promotion of the human rights of all migrants, including undocumented, stranded, stateless or otherwise vulnerable migrants, taking into account the interests of societies and countries from, through and to which they migrate.
- Thirdly, IOM is supporting inter-State, multi-stakeholder consultation and cooperation on migration with the knowledge and expertise that it brings to the table as the lead global agency on migration. IOM is committed to helping enhance the effectiveness of the GMG and to supporting the GFMD in its objective of engendering regular global dialogue on migration and development.

C. IOM Position on 2013 HLD and Possible Outcomes

- IOM views the **2013 HLD as a necessary and useful forum** to strengthen further international consultation and partnership on migration and development. IOM supports participation in the HLD at the highest possible level. Given the cross-cutting nature of migration and development, IOM is also in favour of broad participation by a range of ministries, including social development, labour and health, in addition to representatives from development, foreign affairs and migration ministries.
- IOM will continue to work for **constructive dialogue and cooperation on migration**. IOM is further committed to working with its membership to ensure **due recognition of IOM's current and future role as the global lead agency on migration** in any outcomes of the HLD³ and that no parallel entity on migration be created in the UN, duplicating work IOM has been doing globally for more than 60 years.
- IOM believes that the value of the 2006 HLD has been amply demonstrated, most notably through the outcomes of the annual deliberations of the **GFMD** since 2007. In IOM's view,

³ As affirmed in resolution of the IOM Council in November 2012 (see section B above).

the GFMD has helped to bridge divergent perspectives, goals and strategies between origin and host countries of migration, as well as to develop common terminology and build confidence among participants. **IOM is committed to facilitating regular dialogue, cooperation and partnerships, and to assisting governments and others in their efforts to give concrete effect to the recommendations of the GFMD, including through IOM's programming and technical support activities.**

- IOM recognizes and applauds the important contribution made by **the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for International Migration and Development** in strengthening cooperation within the GFMD and the GMG and encouraging the UN and the international community to assign greater priority to migration and development. **IOM fully supports his efforts to identify measures to ensure more effective protection of and assistance to migrants caught in crises, and to ensure that migration becomes an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda, both of which are top policy and operational priorities of IOM.**
- While acknowledging that the **GMG** has not yet lived up to its full potential, IOM sees the GMG as an important mechanism for inter-agency coordination on migration issues. A strengthened GMG could help take forward any eventual recommended actions resulting from the 2013 HLD. To this end, **IOM supports the ongoing review process of the GMG and the intention to create a multi-annual work plan for the Group. As the only agency amongst the 16 participating agencies that is dedicated solely and full-time to the complete spectrum of migration issues, IOM is also willing to take a greater leadership role in the GMG and to host a light secretariat to support the GMG's work.**
- The inter-agency process, mandated by the UN Chief Executive Board and led by IOM and UNFPA (see above), that led to the preparation of coordinated proposed recommendations and outcomes on international migration for the UN system, has drawn on the expertise and experiences of 26 contributing entities. **This process could usefully be continued in the lead-up to and potentially beyond the HLD, with continued IOM leadership and support.**

D. IOM Policy Recommendations to the 2013 HLD

IOM views the 2013 HLD as an important opportunity to improve the governance of migration, as well as the migration-development nexus in particular, at local, national, regional and global levels, while keeping the rights and well-being of migrants at the centre of the debate.

To this end, the HLD could:

1. IMPROVE PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF MIGRANTS

Call for a fundamental shift in the public perception of migration, as a process to be managed not a problem to be solved. Specifically, move away from a narrow and inadequate view of the phenomenon as an escape from poverty with a negative impact on host communities to an acknowledgement of the important role migrants can and do play as partners in host and home country development.

- Address misperceptions of migration through factual information on current demographic and other relevant trends and the overwhelmingly positive contribution of migrants historically.
- Engage both migrants and the host society, not least to avoid discrimination, xenophobia and violence against migrants.

- States, the media, the private sector, civil society and migrants all have an important role to play in generating accurate and constructive discourse and reporting on migration.
- Redouble efforts on migrant integration – involving governmental and non-governmental actors, especially host communities – and tailored to the local context and profile of migrants.
- Engage diaspora groups and transnational communities in creating links between countries and contributing to the development of their home countries.

For example, IOM calls for a fundamental shift in public perceptions of migrants in its 2011 World Migration Report *Communicating Effectively about Migration*. IOM is also proposing a global campaign on the perceptions of migration and migrants' contributions to societies.

2. FACTOR MIGRATION INTO DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Encourage mainstreaming of migration into development and broader sectoral planning, at local, national and global levels and both in developing and developed countries. Specifically, recognize that migration today is relevant to all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and that migration needs to be appropriately factored into the post-2015 UN development agenda, setting clear targets.

- Embark on a process of mainstreaming migration into development planning that has full national ownership and which is made public and visible.
- Establish or enhance the capacity of designated national institutions or inter-ministerial coordination committees to manage the migration and development nexus.
- Encourage a multi-stakeholder approach, including all relevant ministries and government agencies as well as civil society, academia, and diaspora organizations.
- Consider crucial sectoral topics in the mainstreaming process, especially issues of “Financing for Development”, labour market policy, migrant health and human rights protection.
- Consider demographic trends in migration and development policies, in particular opportunities and challenges surrounding youth unemployment and youth migration and the consequences of demographic ageing for migration policies.
- Bilateral cooperation, especially through dialogue between countries of origin and destination or at regional level can significantly boost mainstreaming processes.

IOM is promoting the inclusion of migration into the post-2015 development agenda as migration: (i) is an important enabler for sustainable development, (ii) is an integral part of a global partnership on development and (iii) is a key component of thematic consultations on population dynamics, health, inequalities, and growth and employment. IOM was invited to be a member of the post-2015 UN Task Team set up by the UN Secretary General and is a lead agency for organising a Global Thematic Consultation on Population Dynamics. Also, IOM has developed tools, trainings and programmes to create better understanding of the potential links between migration and human development and to enhance the capacity of policymakers to identify opportunities and areas for more robust policies and programmes. One example is the IOM-developed, GMG-endorsed publication *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning: A handbook for policy-makers and practitioners* (2010) which is currently being piloted in Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mali and Moldova, with support from UNDP and IOM.

3. PROTECT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL MIGRANTS

Ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants. Specifically, promote a more rights-based approach to migration that ensures access by migrants to their social and economic rights, taking into account differentiated vulnerabilities based on gender, age, health, legal status and other factors.

- Encourage the development and effective implementation of national laws to protect the rights of all migrants, including by ensuring equitable pay and conditions of work and non-discriminatory access to due process of law and relevant health and other social services.
- Promote the development of more bilateral and regional agreements to facilitate the portability of social security and other relevant benefits.
- Urge States to promote migrant-sensitive health policies, with equitable access to health and disease prevention, subject to national laws and practice and without discrimination.
- Provide greater protection and support for families separated by migration.
- Call on States to consider regularizing the status of long-standing irregular migrants in good standing with the law, to improve their protection and contribution to the tax base.

For example, IOM supports the implementation of the operational framework on migrant health that resulted from the 2010 Global Consultation on Migrant Health (convened jointly by IOM, WHO and the Government of Spain), in follow up to the 2008 *World Health Assembly Resolution on the Health of Migrants* (WHA 61.17), and promotes a multi-sectoral approach in addressing of social determinants of migrants' health.

4. MANAGE MIGRATION IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Draw attention to the implications of humanitarian crises for migration and migrant populations, including in terms of protection and development. Specifically, consider the role of human mobility in disaster risk reduction strategies, disaster preparedness, national climate change adaptation programmes, and sustainable urban planning.

- Recognize the important role that temporary and circular migration can play in facilitating post-crisis recovery and adaptation to climate change and environmental degradation.
- Incorporate disaster preparedness and resilience measures in development plans to reduce the risk of forced migration and its adverse impact on development; and include migrants in the planning process.
- Put in place measures to protect and assist more effectively vulnerable migrants stranded in host countries in crisis situations, and migrants in mixed migration flows. Both origin and destination countries have responsibilities in this regard. States should also consider the longer-term effects on development of crisis situations affecting migrants.
- Ensure greater synergies between transitional justice, the resolution of land and property disputes and access to reparations, on the one hand, and the pursuit of durable solutions to internal and international displacement, on the other hand.

For example, the IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework – adopted by IOM Member States per resolution in November 2012 – seeks to enhance the quality and internal coherence of IOM's operational response to migration crises. The Framework will help all crisis-affected populations to better access their fundamental rights to protection and assistance. One aspect highlighted in the Framework is the protection of international migrants caught in crises in their countries of destination.

5. ENHANCE EVIDENCE BUILDING AND KNOWLEDGE-BASED POLICYMAKING ON MIGRATION

Raise the quality of research and data collection on migration. Specifically, invest in more systematic evaluation and impact assessments of migration policies and migration and development initiatives.

- Develop comparable indicators and data on migration, and on the nexus between migration and development. Enhance State capacity to capture data by, *inter alia*, integrating migration indicators in routine population censuses and other surveys and enhance State capacity to analyse such data.
- Promote more research on the contributions of migrants, including refugees, to development; on the nexus between climate change, the environment and labour mobility; migration and health, as well as on the developmental implications of migration crises.
- Invest in building migration research and data capacities in developing countries, and develop research networks and observatories to promote the sharing of good practices.
- Encourage all countries to prepare “Migration Profiles” on a regular basis to promote greater policy coherence and evidenced-based policymaking.
- Facilitate action at the global and regional levels to fund and develop more systematic evaluations and assessments of the impact of migration and development initiatives.

For example, IOM’s forthcoming 2013 World Migration Report *Migrants’ Well-being and Development* analyses development in terms of “human well-being” indicators and promotes a more balanced discussion of migration and development – focusing not only on South-North migration, but also South-South, North-South and North-North flows. The report is based on empirical data of 25,000 migrants surveyed in 150 countries by Gallup. As another example, the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States’ Migration Observatory, implemented by IOM, has established research networks on migration issues in the six ACP regions to produce and collect data on South-South migration and build relevant capacities in ACP countries.

6. PROMOTE POLICY COHERENCE AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improve policymaking processes at national, regional and international levels through the effective participation of a range of partners.

- Taking account of global statistics on migration, greater attention should be directed to specific challenges and opportunities with regard to South-South migration. Whereas some developing States have acquired the capabilities to implement migration and development policies, others struggle to translate migration and development theory into practice.
- Encourage States to ensure adequate channels for legal migration and, where labour needs are temporary, to design temporary and circular labour migration programmes for less skilled workers – thereby harmonizing migration policy, labour market needs, and development assistance priorities.
- Encourage Regional Economic Communities and Regional Consultative Processes on migration to devote greater attention to migration and development policy.
- Reaffirm the positive impact of the State-led GFMD in promoting dialogue and cooperation between countries across the migration spectrum.
- Urge States to ensure continued funding for migration and development initiatives, particularly in light of the global economic recession.

For example, IOM has long supported Regional Consultative Processes on migration (RCPs) and regularly facilitates global meetings of all processes. The fourth such meeting in May 2013 is an opportunity for RCPs and participating States to prepare their joint contribution for the 2013 HLD. Also in the run-up to the HLD, IOM regional offices are partnering with UN Regional Commissions and others for regional inter-governmental and expert meetings on topics relevant to the HLD and its four roundtables.