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A general view during the Diaspora Ministerial Conference.  
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## Contents

Introduction.....	2
Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko	
International migration and development– Towards a high-road scenario.....	4
William Lacy Swing	
Progress in EU migration policy since 1999.....	8
Cecilia Malmström	
Great expectations: Migration, development and the second United Nations High-level Dialogue .....	11
Imelda M. Nicolas	
Diaspora communities as aid providers.....	14
Dennis King and Hermes Grullon	
The value of regional consultative processes on migration as a vehicle for promoting dialogue and cooperation among countries with shared interests and challenges .....	18
Jose-Ivan Davalos	
Converging for a single outcome: A five-year action plan for collaboration of civil society and states on international migration and development.....	21
John K. Bingham	
Diaspora capital: Why diaspora matters for policy and practice .....	26
Kingsley Aikins and Dr. Martin Russell	
Publications .....	31

# Introduction – Special issue on the United Nations High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development: Comparing 2006 and 2013

Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko<sup>1</sup>

Welcome to the twelfth issue of *Migration Policy Practice*. This issue focuses on the upcoming United Nations High-level Dialogue (HLD) on Migration and Development. For only the second time in its history, the United Nations General Assembly will focus on international migration and its implications for development. As UN Special Representative for Migration Peter Sutherland noted in the previous issue of *Migration Policy Practice*, the summit in New York must generate action and deepen cooperation between States to maximize the benefits of migration for development. The HLD also provides the international community with an opportunity to underline the importance of integrating migration into the emerging post-2015 development framework. Migration was barely mentioned in year 2000 when the Millennium Development Goals, targets and indicators were framed. Today, there is much greater discussion of the case for integrating migration into the global development agenda (see, for example, IOM, 2013a).

Let's briefly look at how migration trends have changed since the first HLD on migration and development in 2006. In many ways, the challenges remain the same. The number of migrants has increased somewhat but remains at around 3.2 per cent of the world's population (UN DESA, 2013). New data from Gallup presented in a previous issue of *Migration Policy Practice* (May–June 2013) shows that **8 per cent of adults have moved within their countries in the past five years. Gallup estimates that 381 million adults worldwide can be counted as internal migrants during this period.**

We do not know what proportion of the world's migrants are living or working in an irregular situation – some estimates suggest the figure could be around 30–40 million persons. But there is evidence to suggest that the scale of irregular migration has decreased since 2006 in some regions, notably Europe and North America due to the impact of the global economic crisis. For example, in the United States, the estimated number of irregular migrants fell from 12 million in 2007 to 11 million in 2011 (Pew Research Center, 2013). In Europe, the number of attempted illegal border crossings at the EU external

borders fell from 468,840 in 2011 to 427,195 in 2012 (European Commission, 2013).

Although the number of migrants has not increased substantially, the figure for remittances received by developing countries has increased significantly from **USD 221 billion in 2006 to USD 401 billion in 2012** (World Bank, 2013). Remarkably, however, only a minority of all migrants send remittances. Figures from the *World Migration Report 2013*, based on a global survey conducted by Gallup, show that only 27 per cent of migrants living in high-income countries in the North “send financial help to another country,” and the figure falls to 8 per cent for migrants in the South (IOM, 2013b).

The first HLD in 2006 led to the creation of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). The GFMD, an informal, non-binding, States-led process has helped to change the way in which migration and development challenges are framed. For example, there is now a growing recognition that migration is not simply due to a lack of development. Approximately one third of all migrants move between developing countries, and a small but growing percentage of migrants are moving from richer countries in the North to developing countries in the South (IOM, 2013b, and *Migration Policy Practice*, June–July 2013). Only a minority of all migrants, about 40 per cent, migrate from the South to the North (IOM, 2013b). Indeed, a higher percentage of people living in the North (5.2%) migrate to another country than those living in the South (2.5%), according to figures from UNDESA for 2010 (IOM, 2013b). In absolute terms, the majority of international migrants are from countries in the South, given the much larger size of the global population residing in lower- and middle-income countries in the South.

But there are many new challenges. There is now a much greater awareness compared with 2006 that changes in the environment, and climate change in particular, are likely to affect the movement of people in the coming years. There is also a greater recognition of the needs of vulnerable migrants caught up in crisis situations. The recent conflict in Libya, which led to the return of hundreds of thousands of migrant workers to their countries of origin, has added a new dimension to the migration and development debate.

In this issue of *Migration Policy Practice*, authors of different backgrounds outline what they consider to

<sup>1</sup> Solon Ardittis is Managing Director of Eurasyllum Ltd. and Frank Laczko is Head of the Migration Research Division at IOM Headquarters in Geneva. They are the co-editors of *Migration Policy Practice*.

be the key global migration challenges ahead of the 2013 HLD. We hear first from the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), William Lacy Swing, who outlines IOM's vision for a high-road scenario for migration. In the next article, Cecilia Malmström, the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, explains how EU migration policy has changed over the last decade or so, and notes that the 2013 HLD provides an important opportunity to improve the global governance of migration. From the South, we have an article by a representative from the Government of the Philippines, Imelda Nicolas, who outlines her vision for the HLD 2013. Another article is by two representatives from the US Department of State, Dennis King and Hermes Grullon, who document the various ways in which diasporas have become increasingly influential actors on the international humanitarian stage. This is followed by two articles by representatives of civil society, John Bingham, Kingsley Aikins and Martin Russell, who discuss the contribution of diasporas to development and civil society perspectives on international migration and development. Finally, an article on regional consultative processes, by Jose-Ivan Davalos, outlines how far regional cooperation in these fora has progressed since the last HLD on migration and development.

We thank all the contributors to this issue of *Migration Policy Practice* and encourage readers to contact us with suggestions for future articles.

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# International migration and development: Towards a high-road scenario

William Lacy Swing<sup>1</sup>

**M**igration is a megatrend of the twenty-first century. We can no longer think about our economies, societies or cultures without thinking about human mobility. How many of us do not have at least one migrant among our relatives, neighbours or colleagues? Which country can claim that migration has no role in its past, present or future? Migration is a reality for us all, irrespective of whether or not we move ourselves. Migration's increasing visibility and relevance is also reflected in the growth of my own institution – the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – whose membership more than doubled in the last decade, reaching 151 Member States today.

As Member States of IOM and of the United Nations are about to gather at the United Nations General Assembly for the second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development on 3 and 4 October 2013, a great deal more is at stake than a two-day meeting might suggest: Have we overcome old ideological divisions and political taboos that have beset the migration debate? Is the consensus strong enough for real action to follow? As the Millennium Development Goals are set to expire in 2015, can we capture migration's development potential in a new global framework for development?

## Migration and development in the twenty-first century

It is striking that the great twenty-first century challenges are starting to look very similar around the world: for example, competition for labour, skills and talent is becoming a global phenomenon, as is the need to manage inequalities, diversity and social cohesion, or to adapt to an increasingly urbanized planet. We need to recognize that migration is central to these challenges and to their solution. We need to realize, too, that countries are increasingly "in the same boat" when it comes to migration: more and more countries are simultaneously countries of origin, transit and destination; demographic shifts and labour market transformation in both developing and developed countries will lead to increased demand for migrant labour; matching people with jobs and meeting the needs and aspirations of migrants, home countries and host countries will necessitate a shared approach to

human capital development. In a globalized world, we need to think in terms of linkages that connect countries, communities and individuals across borders, rather than in terms of the barriers that divide us.

This interconnectedness is echoed in the current global development debate, which is shifting from a focus on poverty reduction in a few countries to a broader quest in order to achieve sustainable development in all countries.

The second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development takes place amid debates on the shape of the global development agenda after 2015. It also comes at a time when an economic crisis has unsettled a few certainties about the "growth poles" and "migration magnets" of this world. And it takes place against the background of daily accounts of migrants who perish at sea or along borders or face rejection and racism in their places of destination.

What, then, is the link between migration and development? Who pays, who benefits? And how can we make migration better, safer and more productive for all involved?

In short: while migration carries significant development potential, positive development outcomes – for migrants and countries of origin and destination equally – are by no means guaranteed. Migration is integral to development but not a substitute for it, and, by the same token, migrants can be agents of development but ought not to be held accountable for it. Positive development outcomes of migration depend on the protection of the human rights of migrants and on the larger context of a fair, transparent and collaborative system for migration governance.

As it stands, too much migration today takes place at the hands of traffickers and smugglers and through irregular, unsafe and exploitative channels. Too many migrants suffer gross abuses of their human and labour rights. Too many are obliged to take up work that falls far short of their actual qualifications. And too large a share of migrants' earnings does not make it to their families and home communities but are drained away to service extortionate fees for recruitment and remittance transfer. The sad bottom line is that, too often, migrants manage to improve their lot in spite of, not because of, the policies and frameworks currently in place.

<sup>1</sup> William Lacy Swing is the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Numbers can never express suffering but are nonetheless staggering: for instance, the Council of Europe estimates that in 2011 alone more than 1,500 migrants died attempting to cross the Mediterranean.<sup>2</sup> In 2012, IOM protected and assisted 6,499 trafficked persons representing 89 different nationalities, most of whom had been trafficked for forced labour. A year earlier, IOM and partners evacuated more than 600,000 migrants caught up in the conflict in Libya, often stranded in precarious conditions and with no access to protection and humanitarian assistance. Yet we are only too aware that these figures do not reveal the full extent of and damage done by some of these more harmful forms and consequences of migration.

At the same time, migration has been a success story for many, and one which many economies and societies cannot afford to do without: migration opens doors to opportunities and freedoms, raises incomes and standards of living, and has allowed individuals to pursue education and careers that would have otherwise been closed to them. Migration and remittances have lifted families out of poverty and paid for education and health care. While the global figures for remittances – USD 401 billion according to latest World Bank estimates – never fail to impress, migrants’ contributions go far beyond finance: for example, research in the United States has shown that migrants are more likely than natives to apply for patents or register start-ups. Migration has fuelled growth, innovation and entrepreneurship, not only in migrants’ countries of destination but also their countries of origin. Diasporas and transnational networks are building bridges between countries and societies. Equipped with contacts and cultural know-how, they promote trade, investment and the exchange of skills and ideas. The role of Indian return migrants in getting the Indian IT sector off the ground, for example, or of Chinese diaspora in fostering investment in China is well documented. As the participants at IOM’s recent Diaspora Ministerial Conference affirmed, diasporas can be important players in peacebuilding and recovery in countries emerging from conflict. IOM has assisted individuals to return and contribute to government, private enterprise or the health sector in countries ranging from Afghanistan to Somalia, and some have become influential figures in the reconstruction of their countries. Lastly, in regions in demographic decline, migration has slowed down the slide towards untenable ratios between those who work and those who do not, and keeps the entire sectors of the economy afloat, be it in the care profession, the hospitality industry or the high-tech sector.

<sup>2</sup> Council of Europe Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, “Lives lost at sea: Who is responsible?” (April 2012).

Migration is one of the oldest poverty-reduction strategies, yet we should strive for a world in which migration is not a desperate and dangerous escape from misery, but a true enabler for sustainable development for individuals and societies, at the heart of which are migrants themselves.

### Walking the high road

The past decade has allowed us to make tremendous achievements in “talking the talk”: the shift from migration as a taboo to a standing item on the multilateral agenda has been extraordinary. Much credit for laying the groundwork goes to informal processes, such as regional consultative processes on migration, which originally brought together “like-minded” States before gradually opening up to a broader group of countries. In taking the dialogue to the global level, the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration and Development (SRSG) and of the Global Forum on Migration and Development cannot be underestimated.<sup>3</sup> Civil society and the academe have helped lend a voice to migrants and backed up their stories with data and evidence. International organizations, including IOM, the United Nations system and the Global Migration Group, have raised the profile of migration on policy agendas, built the capacity of policymakers and developed practical solutions.

These actions were indispensable in improving our understanding and generating consensus around migration. On this foundation, we must dedicate the next 10 years to transform the talk into the “walk”. And the High-level Dialogue should be our point of departure.

I would like to propose a “high-road scenario” for migration governance: one in which facilitating, not restricting, migration is the priority, which sees migration as a process to be managed rather than a problem to be solved, and which strives to expand the possibilities for people to realize their human development aspirations and potential through mobility. A high-road scenario aims to offer governments a range of options for meeting short-, medium- and long-term national interests within the framework of the rule of law, through evidence-based migration policy and in a spirit of multilateral cooperation.

<sup>3</sup> See contributions by SRSG Peter Sutherland in *Migration Policy Practice* Volume III, Number 3, June–July 2013 and by the Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development Eva Åkerman Börje in *Migration Policy Practice* Volume III, Number 1, February–March 2013.

## Six steps towards the high road: Improving development outcomes of migration

### 1. Improve public perceptions of migrants

A high-road scenario for migration governance must start with a fundamental shift in the discourse and perceptions surrounding migration. It is alarming that the era of greatest human mobility has been accompanied by a spike in xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiment, and we need to correct persistent myths and misconceptions about migrants and migration. The High-level Dialogue should reaffirm no-tolerance of discrimination and violence against migrants, create recognition of the overwhelmingly positive contribution of migrants throughout history, and launch a genuine and open dialogue about the role of migration in contemporary societies. Whether by championing new approaches in communicating about migration in the 2011 edition of IOM's World Migration Report or through our soon-to-be-launched worldwide campaign on the contribution of migrants, IOM rejects scapegoating migrants and favours a balanced, constructive and evidence-based discourse on migration.

### 2. Factor migration into development and broader sectoral planning

In IOM's vision for the future of migration and development, migration is given its rightful place in the post-2015 global development agenda. Crucially, a new global development consensus would leave behind the traditional polarization between "North" and "South" and instead subscribe to the view that migration is relevant for the sustainable, inclusive and equitable growth and development of all countries. A new global partnership for development should therefore include a target towards more cooperative agreements related to human mobility. Such agreements should enable safe, lawful, less costly migration, which ensure the protection of the human rights of migrants and produce positive development outcomes for migrants and countries of origin and destination. At national levels, policymakers must realize that migration matters not only to development planning, but also to social, health and labour market policy and to urban planning, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Enhancing the development outcomes of migration means lowering the human and financial costs of migration and there are concrete ways for doing so: for example, by designing better systems to recognize foreign qualifications and avoid "brain waste" and de-skilling, which particularly affect migrant women, or by reducing remittance transfer fees and the costs and risks associated with recruitment.<sup>4</sup> IOM's "IRIS initiative"

<sup>4</sup> See also suggestions made by SRSO Peter Sutherland in "Migration is development: How migration matters to the post-2015 debate", in *Migration and Development Journal* (2013).

for an international recruitment integrity system aims to tackle some of the exploitative and unfair practices that have become frequent corollaries of international recruitment.

### 3. Protect the human rights of all migrants

Development must not come at the expense of migrants and their rights and well-being. In taking the high road, human rights of migrants and non-discrimination must be a foundational principle, not an addendum, to our policies and frameworks. Realizing the right to health for migrants, for example, is not only an end in itself, but will also enable migrants to participate in and contribute more fully to the societies in which they live while reducing overall health costs. Genuine progress towards a high-road scenario would mean, for example, more contracts issued to migrant workers that conform to human rights and labour standards, more laws that guarantee education for children of migrants irrespective of their or their parents' legal status, and fewer migrants in detention. Particularly, the decriminalization of irregular migrants in law and in practice would represent a step towards improving the lives of millions of migrants and increasing their contributions towards the societies they live in. Pathways to obtain legal status, options for return in dignity, alternatives to detention and access to justice are among some of the measures to reduce the limbo and vulnerability that paralyses the lives of irregular migrants.

### 4. Manage migration in crisis situations

Humanitarian crises, both natural and man-made, raise humanitarian and protection challenges, but also jeopardise development gains. Moreover, there is a clear link between crises and human mobility, but the complexities of that link have not always been fully captured in policies and operations. IOM's new Migration Crisis Operational Framework, approved by IOM Member States last year, proposes to do just that. A high-road scenario would see more linked-up approaches combining humanitarian action, migration management and development. We should, for example, do more to explore the role that migration, diasporas and remittances can play in facilitating post-crisis recovery and adaptation to climate change. More specifically, recent crises in Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and elsewhere have turned into humanitarian disasters not only for the nationals of the affected countries, but also for hundreds of thousands of migrants living and working there. As proposed by SRSO Peter Sutherland, the international community should come together to elaborate a set of actions to protect migrants caught in crises.

### 5. Strengthen the evidence base

Countering misinformation, making the case for migration, and formulating effective policies all have one thing in common: the need for facts. In a high-

road scenario, we would continue to push reliable data and research on migration as well as more systematic evaluations of migration policies and migration and development initiatives. Attaining a more nuanced understanding of migration also calls for new forms of research and data; IOM's 2013 World Migration Report on "Migrant Well-being and Development" asks: What is it like to be a migrant? Using the answers given by 25,000 migrants surveyed in 150 countries by Gallup, it explores the individual human experience of migration and how it affects quality of life and human development.

## 6. Promote policy coherence and institutional development

True policy coherence under a high-road scenario means actively acknowledging migration as a twenty-first century reality through policy levers such as more accessible legal migration channels at all skill levels, multiple-entry visas, portable social security and welfare benefits, measures to promote family unity, and laws permitting multiple nationalities, thus fostering fruitful transnational links that facilitate mobility and exchange. In setting policy priorities, we also need to refocus attention on migration and its development impact among developing countries: too often debates about migration and development tend to overlook the fact that as many migrants move from South to South as move from South to North. We need more innovative initiatives such as the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States' Migration Observatory, which has helped promote a better understanding of the dynamics of South–South migration. Finally, the High-level Dialogue provides an opportunity to strengthen dialogue on migration and extend an invitation to a wider range of actors such as employers and recruiters whose views are not always sufficiently heard.

## Conclusion

What is the risk of the alternative? What would a "low-road scenario" look like? Countries would lose out on important boosters to development that could be gained from migration. Worse, neglecting the migration factor in development plans, labour market policies, climate change adaptation strategies or other areas could jeopardize the attainment of those policies' objectives. Denial of the fact that migration is here to stay and a refusal to face up to the changes globalization brings to all societies are only going to widen the gaps between demand and supply, and between dreams and opportunities that drive migration. And where States choose to erect ever-higher barriers to mobility, they will only fuel the business of unscrupulous brokers, at immense human cost and at the expense of States' ability to govern effectively.

In three words, migration is *inevitable*, in view of the demographic, economic, environmental and other

challenges we face; *necessary* for the vibrancy of our economies and societies; and *desirable* when governed humanely, fairly and in collaboration as a path to opportunity and the realization of human potential. The world is ready to walk the high road on migration governance.

## Further reading

- IOM Position Paper on HLD
- IOM position on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda
- IOM activities and possible "high road scenarios" for the four round-table themes
- IOM World Migration Report 2011: Communicating Effectively about Migration
- IOM World Migration Report 2013: Migrant Well-being and Development
- IOM Migrant Assistance Annual Review 2012: At a Glance
- The IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework
- IOM International Dialogue on Migration 2013: Diaspora Ministerial Conference
- Migrants Caught in Crisis: The IOM Experience in Libya (2012)
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# Progress in EU migration policy since 1999

Cecilia Malmström<sup>1</sup>

Tampere can truly be considered the cradle of the area of freedom, security and justice. It was there in October 1999 that the European Council held a special meeting that set the milestones for the development of a European area of freedom, security and justice.

Fourteen years later, I am very grateful for having had the opportunity as the Commissioner for Home Affairs to have been part of this process over the past few years. One of the areas where I have devoted enormous amounts of time and energy from day one as Commissioner is the creation of the Common European Asylum System within the European Union (EU). And I am very proud to say that about two months ago we finally adopted the Asylum package, one of the cornerstones of the area of freedom security and justice.

It is fair to say that in 1999 not many would have bet that we would get so far in less than 15 years. But it is also fair to say that we still need to do more. When looking back we have made a number of achievements since Tampere in the area of asylum and migration. There have also been challenges that we still face. I will go through some of our highlights as well as look a bit into the future to see where we will need to move to further improve the area.

## Developments in EU migration and asylum policies

### Asylum

Let me start with asylum. Our precious Schengen area, which enables the free movement of persons, means that we also need to have a common asylum system. You cannot have open borders, free movement for citizens, Schengen visas and common rules on immigration, and then not have a common asylum policy. It just wouldn't work. And it didn't work before. The system was already unstable – so we had to fix it.

The Tampere Programme heralded the beginning of the Common European Asylum System. It led to the adoption of several new EU laws concerning the whole asylum process – reception conditions for asylum applicants, rules on who qualifies for refugee status, procedures for asylum applications and so on.

This was a great achievement, but it was only the first step. We were not fully satisfied with the outcome. The situation across EU Member States was still too varied and the levels of protection were still not strong enough.

This is why we embarked in 2008 on a journey to negotiate a revised set of EU asylum laws. And I am so proud that we finally concluded the agreements on these laws earlier this year, despite the difficult financial times.

My strong devotion to the area of asylum is due to the fact that it boils down to the very fundamentals of humanitarian compassion. And this is, and should continue to be, at the core of the EU's values. Of course, we are a union built around free trade, and peace and prosperity for our citizens. We are investing in a legal migration system to increase the attractiveness of the EU as a destination for foreign students and skilled migrants.

But we must remember that Europe is the cradle of democracy. It is our duty to protect those most in need, in respect for our own history and with respect for the world around us. The EU is, and shall continue to be, the global front runner on human rights.

But we cannot just preach to others, telling them how to improve their human rights' record if we ourselves do not lead the world by providing the best area of protection for those fleeing.

Our new asylum package is accompanied by a much greater emphasis on solidarity—sharing the responsibility of receiving people. We have created a new agency – the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) – specifically to assist Member States in implementing EU asylum law and enhance the practical cooperation.

For example, we have designed modules to train asylum case workers to the same standards across the EU; we are also working on sharing country-of-origin information so that case workers can access the most up-to-date information about the source countries to be able to make an informed decision.

In terms of direct solidarity to Member States, we are also assisting Malta through a relocation scheme. Recognized beneficiaries of international protection, based in Malta, may be relocated to other EU Member

<sup>1</sup> Cecilia Malmström is the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs.



States to relieve the pressure on Malta. This is important not only as regards Malta. The pressure today is still very unevenly distributed, and many more Member States could and should take their responsibility.

We are also working on a collective effort to assist Greece with its asylum backlogs and with its border management. Good progress has already been made, but we have still quite a journey ahead before we can be at peace.

Before Tampere, we had almost no common European law on asylum aside from the Dublin Convention. And look where we are now!

Before anything else, our focus will, from now on, be to establish a coherent implementation across the EU so that we are sure to have a solid European Asylum System also in practice.

### **Legal migration**

I would like to move on to migration. Migration is certainly a policy area of growing importance for the EU. It is inextricably linked to the well-being of our societies from different perspectives: economic growth and competitiveness, demographic challenges, social cohesion and cultural diversity. It also plays a big role in our relations with the world, especially with the countries of origin.

Today, we have a high unemployment rate which is of course a tragedy for millions of individuals and for our societies and economies but, at the same time, we also know that there are labour shortages in Europe. Many jobs are, and will remain, unfilled in the future. We are short of people in some sectors – engineering, IT, health, seasonal work in agriculture and tourism – and at the same time there are millions of unemployed.

This is why for the past 10 years we have devoted time to help address these challenges and have considerably developed our acquis on legal migration. Today we have six directives covering different categories of migrants and three other proposals are currently under negotiation.

Let me just say a few words on the directives that are in the process of negotiation. My latest proposal concerns students and researchers and aims at increasing the EU's attractiveness for these categories and thereby our global competitiveness. First of all, we propose to facilitate visa procedures and better link the residence permit and the visa, as well as procedural guarantees in general. Importantly, we have also improved access to the labour market for students, and proposed simplified rules to facilitate intra-EU mobility for both students and researchers.

We are also currently negotiating the directive on intra-corporate transferees (ICTs). I cannot stress enough how crucial this proposal is to bring know-how and innovation to the EU economy, and to make it more competitive and attractive to investors. This piece of legislation truly has the potential to foster EU competitiveness and help economic recovery.

I am confident that we will get an agreement very soon on this proposal. The European Commission will continue to strive for an ambitious text on ICTs, with simple and workable rules on intra-EU mobility, so that these persons may become additional assets for the EU economy.

The same goes for the seasonal workers proposal, where we are at the last stages of negotiations. This proposal is important not only because the EU economies undeniably need seasonal workers, but also because seasonal workers are a particularly vulnerable group of migrants. It is necessary to ensure that they have a secure legal status in order to prevent exploitation and to protect their health and safety.

In conclusion, our work on legal migration shows that much can still be done to improve migration governance and tackle its challenges.

In practice, we need to develop a more holistic and strategic approach if we are to maximize the opportunities that migration offer and at the same time reduce possible future social conflicts. But how is this done?

Firstly, we need to increase synergies between our employment and growth policies and our migration policies. We need to increase migrants' participation in the labour market.

Secondly, it also means making much better use of the skills and talents we already have here in Europe. Migrants and refugees have a pool of untapped skills and talents, and we need to make use of them. This is just common sense and decency in a welcoming society.

While stepping up integration efforts, we should not deny the challenges – people today face a very difficult situation and feel insecure about their own future. This environment breeds fertile ground for xenophobic and populist movements. This requires political courage and leadership, and we all have to stand up against easy solutions and avoid that migrants become the scapegoats in this situation.

The integration process goes two-ways – to be part of the new society, migrants must of course do their part in society like all other citizens, including learning the language. At the same time, governments and other responsible entities have to make sure that migrants

are treated as full members of our society with both the rights and obligations that follow.

We also need to focus on legislation in two ways. On the one hand, we need to give priority to the effective implementation and enforcement of the rules, if not we only have a system on paper. We, the Commission, are ready to play fully our role as guardians of the treaties in that respect. On the other hand, we need to consider whether and how to further develop this *acquis*, in particular as regards legal migration. We need to consider where we could improve even further and find common solutions for the Union. This will indeed be a project for the coming years, following the Stockholm Programme.

But of course legislation is only one aspect. Everybody has a role to play here: politicians, academics, the business sector and the media. We all need to contribute to changing the attitudes. Political leaders need to show the courage to explain why Europe needs migrants and how migration can help our economies without affecting the social cohesion of our societies but on the contrary by reinforcing Europe's richness and cultural diversity. We also need to hear other voices than those of the politicians in this debate, and I am the first one to say that. The business sector plays, for instance, a very important role in explaining the situation of labour shortages. Academics also have an important role to play to help us think outside the box and support policymaking through existing evidence.

### The external dimension: GAMM

Let me complete the picture by mentioning our considerable achievement in reinforcing the external dimension of migration, which is an essential component in the development of a comprehensive immigration policy.

The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) is the overarching framework of the EU's external migration policy, focusing on four objectives: better organize legal migration and foster well-managed mobility; prevent and combat irregular migration, and eradicate trafficking in human beings; maximize the development impact of migration and mobility; and promote international protection.

The EU is currently engaged in structured bilateral dialogues and cooperation on migration and mobility with more than 25 countries, also involving strategic and priority partners further afield (such as India and China), and in seven regional migration dialogue processes involving more than 130 countries.

In this context, let me mention the United Nations General Assembly's second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (New York, 3 and 4 October 2013) as an important occasion for Member States to harness the benefits of migration, address migration challenges, and improve the global governance of migration.

### Conclusion

Fourteen years ago, the EU heads of States and governments met in Tampere and adopted a number of principles that set the course of what has proved to be a very dynamic area.

The European Commission is working to set the political direction for the future. We need a Europe open to the world, a Europe that protects people and gives them the opportunities they deserve.

# Great expectations: Migration, development and the second United Nations High-level Dialogue

Imelda M. Nicolas<sup>1</sup>

Unprecedented in United Nations history, the 2006 High-level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration and Development tackled the politically sensitive issue of migration, with a particular focus on exploring the synergy between the movement of people and development both in the source and destination countries. Although the first HLD ended without offering firm conclusions on the exact nature of this synergy — or with definite policy paths governments can and should take — it established two important facts: that migration has linkages to development and vice versa, and that these linkages are complex and worthy of further exploration and dialogue.

Indeed, following the HLD, the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) has been convened annually to explore the complexity of the migration and development link and to help policymakers, such as myself, in identifying best practices, gaps, and viable policy and programmatic options.

The success of the last six GFMD meetings has been acknowledged by most of those who have participated in them. As a 2012 Assessment of the GFMD Support Unit suggests, the overwhelming majority (80%) of participant States have “great” or “general satisfaction” with the GFMD process. About 150 governments attended the last GFMD meeting held in November 2012 in Mauritius, a testament to the increasingly growing support and appetite for an international dialogue on migration and development issues. The Philippines fully commits to GFMD’s long-term sustainability and to assist in its desire to do and be better from year to year.

This October, the United Nations will once again convene another HLD. Given the success of the GFMD, many governments, including the Philippines, will go to this important gathering in New York with understandably high expectations. Success breeds even more success, and this year’s HLD should take one or more steps farther than its predecessor.

## Two pressing tasks: Looking back, moving forward

As we see it, the most pressing task in this year’s HLD is two-fold: to take stock of what seven years of

international dialogue on migration and development have and have not achieved, and, even more importantly, to chart a more definite future course of action.

Although the confidence and trust on the GFMD process has never been higher than today, there is still much that remains to be done in order to fully translate the progress governments have made inside the confines of the conference halls into real and tangible changes on the ground.

Unfortunately, in far too many places, the challenges migrants and their families face have changed very little since 2006. For instance, the Asia-Pacific region (where the Philippines belongs), which is home to three-fifths of the world’s population, cites that its largest flows of migrants consist of low-skilled, low-wage, temporary migrant workers. A significant number is undocumented while many continue to suffer from abusive and exploitative practices of private recruitment agencies, especially those who are not effectively regulated and monitored. Women, who comprise almost 50 per cent of the region’s labour migration, work primarily in low-skilled occupations where they receive little protection. Furthermore, many of the people from the region continue to cross borders involuntarily due to conflict, natural disasters and other environmental factors. In fact, the region currently hosts the largest number of refugees in the world.

In view of the above situation, during the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the HLD held in Bangkok on 29–31 May this year, the member States of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific stressed that the HLD should “ensure respect for and protection of the rights of all migrants and promote legal and orderly labour migration.”

## Four issue areas ripe for collective action

Truly, leveraging migration for development requires a more enduring and cogent attention in specifically addressing these seemingly intractable challenges that are in many ways not unique to the Asia-Pacific region. Indeed, the second HLD presents a unique opportunity for governments to advance even more aggressively what has already been a constructive, multilateral conversation on international cooperation by developing a more focused and action-oriented agenda for the next five years.

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It is important to demonstrate that the second HLD, as well as the GFMD process that would continue in 2014, are not ends in themselves, but means to an end.

Beyond calls to more effectively engage diasporas for development and to reduce remittance costs, there are other issues that are also ripe for international cooperation but are often overlooked. I would like to highlight four:

***First, it is important to work towards developing a framework for international and/or regional cooperation on assisting migrants caught in crisis.***

Migrants are exposed to various forms of exploitation at all stages of the migration process and this exposure is heightened most especially during times of crisis. For instance, the 2011 Libyan civil war, which led to the displacement of nearly 800,000 migrants within a span of just nine months, dramatically brought into light gaps in existing coordination and funding mechanisms and frameworks, including the different roles governments, international organizations, and the private sector such as employers, recruitment agencies and insurance companies should take. There is currently no international legal framework or mechanism that can comprehensively address the situation of migrants, especially temporary migrant workers caught in conflicts and other crisis situations. This called everyone's attention to the need for further cooperation and coordination on this important issue.

***Second, migration and work experiences often vary for men and women; therefore, it is crucial to collectively address the negative and differential impact of migration on gender, including migration's effect on children and families left behind.***

For a long time, migration observers have been commenting on the increasing feminization of migration worldwide. Within Asia, for instance, women migrant workers are especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse given that many have low levels of education. Female domestic workers are most vulnerable since their work is confined inside the home, which government authorities find hard to monitor. Indeed, a recent study by the Asian Development Bank shows that women migrants from Indonesia and the Philippines, particularly those involved in domestic work, are more likely to have their labour rights violated by employers or recruitment agencies compared with men.

The International Labour Organization Convention No. 189, Decent Work for Domestic Workers, passed in June 2011, set labour standards for domestic workers, underlining their basic rights and principles for their protection. However, to date only eight countries have ratified the Convention, with the Philippines being the second country to have ratified it.

Since exploitative practices occur at all stages of migration — at pre-departure, transit, arrival, stay and return — there is a need for governments to collectively adopt gender-responsive policies and programmes that address the unique vulnerabilities and situations of women migrants. Migration also takes its toll on migrants and their families, in many cases straining the very fabric of the society that sends them. There is a need therefore for both source and host countries to jointly develop programmes that assist families left behind, for instance, by supporting effective and inclusive social services.

***Third, it is vital to minimize the economic, social and human costs of migration through informed, evidence-based and data-driven policymaking.***

The call for more and better data to inform policy is not new, and has been consistently made during the first HLD and in every GFMD meeting over the last six years. As a result, there has already been a marked increase in our knowledge on migration and development linkages. As Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Migration, correctly noted in a soon-to-be-published opinion piece at the journal *Migration and Development*, “Today we have far clearer insights” into the effects of migration that would allow us to “build a robust set of policies.” He cited the “data-rich, measurable way to analyse the development effects of migration” particularly on the impact of remittances and how it relates to the original Millennium Development Goals.

Despite obvious progress in this area, however, more definitive and comprehensive studies and research on the negative effects of migration at the national level and particularly on countries of origin are still needed. In many regions of the world, the quality of data on basic stocks and flows, particularly sex-, age- and skill-disaggregated data and data on return and irregular migrants, remain poor, or worse, non-existent. This is particularly true for countries that are not members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Given the paucity in even the most basic of data, the extent to which the departure of migrants actually eased unemployment or resulted in brain drain, or even brain waste, remains highly contested in many countries.

In short, making migration work for development requires an improved understanding, especially with the help of more and better data regarding the downsides of migration. Then policy and appropriate actions to minimize these socioeconomic and psychological costs could be put in place more purposefully and effectively.

**Lastly, governments should also start to put greater effort in jointly lowering recruitment costs for migrants.**

Various research works have shown that one of the largest financial costs migrants incur actually happens even before they migrate. Recruitment costs can be very high, and in some corridors, present a much larger burden to migrants than remittance costs. For instance, the remittance cost between the Middle East and South Asia is the lowest in the world, but the recruitment cost can be astronomical: as much as a year's worth of salary in placement fees in exchange for a three-year work contract.

We also know that recruitment-related abuse happens in all destinations at all skill levels, but low-skilled workers in specific sectors are especially vulnerable. Most disputes over recruitment and contract violations involve migrants in low and unskilled sectors particularly domestic work, construction, garments, agriculture and fishing industries. Field studies show that low-skilled migrants, in general, pay more in placement fees relative to their prospective income.

Needless to say, success in reducing recruitment costs would have a tremendous impact on improving the bottom line of the most vulnerable of migrants, and eventually to the poorer households and communities where they belong.

**Keeping the HLD and GFMD alive: Two caveats**

We have emphasized just four of the many issue areas that the international community could jointly address to maximize migration and development linkages and minimize migration's negative effects. In thinking about these issues, among others, it is important to not lose track of what has worked so far. Much of the success of the first HLD and the GFMD process can be attributed to two things.

First, both dialogues are informal and non-binding, which have allowed for frank and more open discussions among governments on what many would still consider as fairly controversial issues. It is important to keep the same level of informality in future GFMDs and HLDs. However, both processes could provide more opportunities for governments that are interested in collaborating more actively with as many migration stakeholders as possible, at all levels (subnational, national, regional and international). For instance, the GFMD could provide or support a more dynamic platform where governments can find partners, pilot projects, test ideas, and develop and utilize various policy and programmatic tools.

Second, both the HLD and the GFMD are state-led dialogues and clearly, governments' ownership has kept both processes alive and relevant for over half a decade. However, it is also true that the strength of the GFMD lies in particular to its ability to meaningfully engage with non-state actors, such as diaspora communities, migrant organizations, academia and unions. They play invaluable roles, not only in the design of policies and programmes, but also in implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is important to continuously innovate and test ideas (such as the highly successful Common Space) that would allow for truly meaningful interactions between state and non-state actors. A segment that should exert extra effort and should be given greater attention to be engaged more fully in future GFMDs is the private sector, particularly employers and recruitment agencies.

**The 2014 GFMD and Post-2015 Agenda**

Sutherland, in his article on the HLD in the June–July 2013 issue of *Migration Policy Practice*, pointed out that one of the achievable goals of the HLD is for the United Nations member States “to forge a consensus position in incorporating migration into the next iteration of the Millennium Development Goals.”

The Philippines joins him in his call to our fellow member States to ensure that international migration becomes part of the post-2015 global development framework. This will lead to several significant results: from putting international migration at the front and centre of the development discourse and agenda now and thereafter to changing the misperception of migrants from a problem to be solved to a solution to the problem or, as Sutherland puts it: “as agents of positive change rather than as a desperate people fleeing failing States.”

We likewise support the Swedish Government which chairs the GFMD from January 2013 to June 2014, as it sets to achieve its three-fold objectives of a more development-focused, a more dynamic and a more durable forum.

In addition, we commend what Swedish Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje wrote in the February–March 2013 issue of *Migration Policy Practice*: “Sweden is interested in inclusive economic development,” and that it would highlight during its chairmanship the contribution of migration and remittances to education, health, job creation and gender relations. This surely resonates with the Philippine Government's relentless and focused pursuit for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

# Diaspora communities as aid providers

Dennis King and Hermes Grullon<sup>1</sup>

*Diasporas are becoming increasingly influential actors on the international humanitarian stage, often providing assistance in forms and ways that differ from those of the traditional international humanitarian donor community. Diaspora communities are providing direct cash transfers, sending skilled volunteers with local knowledge, and compiling first-hand crisis information from affected populations. New technologies, such as mobile phones, e-banking and social media networks, have facilitated the establishment of virtual connections between the diasporas and the populations affected by disasters in their home countries.*

## Providing aid in new ways

Diaspora philanthropy is not a new phenomenon, but it is evolving into new forms and ways of providing humanitarian assistance (Newland, 2010). First-generation emigrants and their descendants provide remittances and other in-kind assistance to families, friends and citizens back home. Some of these communities have an even longer tradition of mobilizing to raise funds to send back in response to natural disasters and crises in their home countries. Still, other diaspora communities have not yet mobilized to respond to disasters. In the last five years, diaspora communities from Haiti, Libya, Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic, Pakistan and various Asian countries have been significant sources of donations, volunteers and information for humanitarian emergencies in their countries (Migration Information Source, 2010; Hammond, 2012; Ashan, 2013; E. Añonuevo and A. Añonuevo, 2008).

### Personal responsibility: U.S. Department of State staff shares diaspora experience in Haiti earthquake

Many diasporas have an intensely personal connection with their countries of origin or their regions that is often elusive to those of us who exist outside those networks. As a staff member in the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) at the U.S. Department of State, a second-generation American with family ties to the Dominican Republic, explains his involvement in the wake of the Haiti earthquake, one realizes the personal responsibility that permeates from diasporas.

The PRM staff member's mother, who had emigrated from the Dominican Republic to New York, heard from a relative how the January 2010 earthquake was impacting her hometown. In phone conversations with relatives, she learned of the growing waves of Haitians emigrating into her hometown in the Dominican Republic. His mother had told him emphatically: "Dominican Republic and Haiti share one island, the island of Hispaniola, and I cannot sit by and watch them suffer. I may not have much, but I will give what I can." While juggling two jobs in New York City, his mother organized family members, friends and colleagues to send a shipment of basic necessities to Haitians who had fled to her rural town in the Dominican Republic. She continues to this day to send basic necessities to those who are still recovering from the earthquake.

Similarly, the PRM staff member, inspired by his mother's selflessness and family background, organized fundraising and awareness events at his undergraduate institution. To this end, he helped form an ad hoc campus organization called Hope for Haiti, which served as a hub for efforts focused on amelioration of the conditions in Haiti. My colleague's face lit up when he explained the karaoke nights, vigils, documentaries and auctions that he participated in to raise money for Haiti relief efforts. The incomparable passion that exudes from many diasporas, and the profound personal connections to the lives of those afflicted by disasters, can serve as a link among nations that can be leveraged to relieve suffering.

Diaspora communities have direct connections with affected populations and tend to provide their aid outside of established humanitarian assistance channels. Diaspora communities also have the unique ability to be aware of humanitarian needs and the political situation on the ground in areas of conflict through contact with family and friends in their countries of origin. The traditional international humanitarian community and some international organizations recently have made efforts to more effectively engage with diaspora communities and enhance awareness, coordination and action in responding to disasters and humanitarian crises.

## Sending cash and volunteers

With the exception of individuals who work for major humanitarian organizations, diasporas tend to work on the periphery of the international humanitarian system. Diasporas more often channel financial aid directly to family members, friends or hometown civil

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society groups back in their countries of origin, rather than contribute through international organizations. They sometimes distrust or even actively oppose the governments in their home countries. Most of these unconditional cash transfers to affected populations bypass institutional intermediaries with overhead operating costs.

#### **Increasing remittances and emergency aid**

Collecting precise financial tracking information from diasporas is difficult, but the World Bank estimated that these communities sent USD 401 billion in recorded remittances back to their countries of origin in 2012 – an increase compared with an estimated USD 341 billion in 2010 (World Bank, 2012). The Somali diaspora is estimated to contribute between USD 1.3 billion and USD 2 billion per year in remittances back to Somalia, and it is estimated that 10 per cent (USD 130–200 million) is provided for humanitarian relief and development assistance (Hammond, 2012). As another example, Syrian community-based organizations in the United States contributed USD 43 million for humanitarian assistance in 2012, and this is projected to nearly double to USD 83 million in 2013 (Syrian American Medical Society, 2013). Haitian, Pakistani, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Burmese diasporas have also sent significant donations in response primarily to natural disasters in their countries over the past five years (E. Añonuevo and A. Añonuevo, 2008).

International donor aid can take weeks or months to establish large-scale humanitarian programmes. In contrast, diasporas play a significant role in delivering early assistance through e-vouchers and cash transfers that empower the affected communities and can be provided quickly and directly. The affected communities use these direct cash transfers to revitalize local markets, restore family livelihoods and redirect emergency funds based on evolving needs.

In addition to direct disaster donations, diaspora communities are establishing more non-governmental organizations (NGOs), charities and foundations to provide humanitarian assistance back to affected populations in their home countries. For example, Pakistani-Americans created the American Pakistan Foundation at the end of 2009 to raise money for flood relief (Migration Information Source, 2010). The Somali Relief and Development Forum in the United Kingdom is an umbrella organization of Somali-led charities providing relief and development projects throughout Somalia (Ullah, 2013). In 2013, a group of 18 United States-based relief organizations with ties to the Syrian community formed the American Relief Coalition for Syria to provide various forms of humanitarian assistance in response to the Syrian crisis (Syrian American Council, 2013).

Diaspora communities send relief volunteers, doctors, nurses and engineers, who return to their countries

to assist with the benefit of first-hand knowledge, cultural and language skills, and connections with affected populations and groups. The most actively engaged diaspora communities are usually those that have large percentages of well-educated, highly skilled professionals and entrepreneurs. Haitian-American doctors and nurses flew back to Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake and subsequent cholera epidemic to provide emergency medical care (Migration Information Source, 2010). The Syrian American Medical Society and the British charity Hand in Hand for Syria provide medical personnel and support to augment the limited number of expatriate international NGO and United Nations personnel in Syrian Arab Republic (Ashan, 2013; Syrian American Medical Society, 2013). The organization Worldwide Somali Students and Professionals galvanizes public awareness about humanitarian crises and mobilizes volunteers to do relief work throughout Somalia (WSSP, 2012a and 2012b).

#### **Technology enables, empowers and mobilizes**

The proliferation of new information and communications technologies is the most significant driver of the growing ability of diaspora populations to play an increasing role in humanitarian response activities. Mobile phones, e-banking and social media have revolutionized the ability of emigrants, exiles and entrepreneurs to support and maintain connections with their families, friends and communities of origin. The increased availability and affordability of these new technologies has strengthened the bond and communication between diasporas and their home communities. Social media networks are used to create virtual, borderless communities, advocate and raise awareness about disasters and crises, and solicit and collect funds for humanitarian causes.

#### **Expansion of technology: Improving connectivity to affected populations**

The number of mobile phone accounts has skyrocketed worldwide from 0.7 billion in 2000 to 6.0 billion in 2011, of which 4.6 billion are being used in developing countries (World Bank, 2012). In 2012, the number of Internet users was reported at over 2.4 billion (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2012). Internet access is at the lowest percentage in Africa (15.6% of population), but availability is increasing there and worldwide. Though usage is most prevalent among urban youth, Internet cafes are increasingly common in camps and settlements for refugees and internally displaced persons. Crisis-affected populations are using these new tools and platforms to get messages and information out to the world and receive external support, sometimes causing repressive regimes to shut down wireless phone and Internet access within their borders.

Diasporas have long used wire transfers to send remittances back home, but the proliferation of mobile phones, online banking services and digital currency have greatly facilitated the transfer of funds for humanitarian and development purposes (Smith, 2012). In addition to unconditional electronic cash transfers, diaspora NGOs are dispersing e-vouchers to enable affected families and civil society groups to buy food, pay rents, purchase shelter materials and household goods, and pay for medical/health care (McHattie, 2012; Ridsel, 2012).

New technology also enables faster reporting on disasters and crises worldwide from the affected people themselves. With the decreased presence of international humanitarian personnel in many hotspots around the world, text messaging and other forms of citizen or crowd-sourced reporting have become a new source of real-time information on crises for the international community (Wall, 2011). Diasporas play an important role as translators and compilers of crowd-sourced reporting from the affected populations. A group of current and former residents from Kenya developed Ushahidi (Swahili for “witness testimony”), an open source software used to track and map citizen-reported violent incidents that followed Kenya’s disputed 2007 presidential elections. Ushahidi has subsequently been used to report and map crowd-sourced information after the Haiti earthquake, Pakistan flooding, the Syrian Arab Republic conflict and other crises, based on reporting from affected citizens (Ushahidi, 2013). The United Nations and Western news media use and cite several diaspora groups that collect, translate, compile and de-conflict reporting on the increasing number of casualties from the Syrian conflict from Syrians using social media as their primary source of information (Price, Linger and Ball, 2012).

In conclusion, diaspora groups have long been a source of direct humanitarian assistance and outpourings of concern for their friends and relatives in their countries of origin. Assistance can range from basic gestures of in-kind donations and individual cash transfers to family to more organized approaches through fundraisers and the establishment of diaspora NGOs. Use of technology by diasporas to report on disaster and other crises can play a significant role in informing a broader humanitarian response. Advances in technology in sending remittances and informing the public on local conditions have also increased the reach and influence of diasporas in humanitarian response (Omata, 2011). The international community can benefit from engaging with diasporas early in crisis response to identify needs and gain insights about crisis situations on the ground.

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# The value of regional consultative processes on migration as a vehicle for promoting dialogue and cooperation among countries with shared interests and challenges

Jose-Ivan Davalos<sup>1</sup>

**W**ith the theme “Defining the Place of RCPs in a Changing International Migration Landscape,” the Fourth Global Meeting of Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) on Migration Chairs and Secretariats took place in Lima, Peru, on 22–23 May 2013. As with previous meetings, this fourth such gathering encouraged active dialogue among participants and sharing of experiences on the value and benefits of cooperation and dialogue on migration.

The meeting also provided a valuable platform for reflection on potential synergies with other processes and forums that deal with migration at the global and interregional levels, and took account of the forthcoming United Nations High-level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration and Development, to be convened on 3–4 October 2013.

Against this backdrop, representatives of RCP Chairs and Secretariats,<sup>2</sup> regional bodies<sup>3</sup> and interregional forums (IRFs) that address migration, alongside experts from the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), focused their interventions on the need to ensure that the regional perspectives, as well as the role of the RCPs and IRFs, are explicitly recognized in the United Nations Secretary-General’s report to the HLD.

The dialogue was further enriched with the participation of representatives of past, present and future chairing governments of the Global Forum on Migration Development (GFMD) and a representative

of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration and Development. The conference was chaired by the Government of Peru, with secretariat support from IOM.

It is precisely this combination of forces that best demonstrates the added value of RCPs and of global RCP meetings and forums that make possible interaction across regions. Increasingly, there is an understanding that States cannot address the challenges of global migration unilaterally, but that migration governance can only be achieved through regional- and global-level cooperation, with a holistic and multidimensional approach based on three pillars: 1) recognition and full respect of human rights of migrants; 2) the use of the opportunities offered by migration to boost development, both at national and community levels, in order to enhance local economies; and 3) the recognition of the positive impact of cultural exchange.

## A little history of the RCPs

RCPs provide a forum for governments and other stakeholders for non-binding exchange of views about their respective positions and priorities on migration and for the identification of migration issues of common interest among participating countries. Through sustained dialogue, RCPs allow States to better understand each other’s perspectives and needs, and serve to build confidence in inter-State dialogue and in the value of information sharing, cooperation and collaborative approaches on migration issues.

While RCPs are non-binding and not intended to have a normative impact, there is evidence of their contribution to migration policy. For example, as a result of their participation in RCPs, certain States have reviewed, created and/or amended migration-related legislation. In several cases, participation in RCPs has also promoted regional coherence in migration policy.

The exchange of information and good practices between RCPs has greatly increased over the past several years. In 2005, IOM and the former Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) hosted the First Global RCP Meeting, bringing together the chairing governments and secretariats of nine RCPs in Geneva, Switzerland. At this meeting, participants agreed on the value of such interactions and emphasized the importance of holding more meetings of this nature more regularly.

<sup>1</sup> Jose-Ivan Davalos is Chief of IOM’s Mission in Peru.

<sup>2</sup> Abu Dhabi Dialogue; Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime; Budapest Process; Colombo Process; IGAD-RCP; Inter-Governmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC); Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM); Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA); Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA); Puebla Process; Prague Process; South American Conference on migration (SACM); and 5+5 Dialogue (Regional Ministerial Conference on Migration in the Western Mediterranean). Representatives of two dialogue processes that are yet to be formalized – the Almaty Process and the Migration Dialogue for Central African States (MIDCAS) – also participated.

<sup>3</sup> European Union (EU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), League of Arab States, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), the Organization of American States (OAS).

The Second Global RCP Meeting was hosted by the Royal Thai Government in collaboration with IOM in 2009. The meeting brought together some 60 participants representing 13 RCPs. In follow up to one of the key recommendations of the meeting, IOM launched a comprehensive section dedicated to RCPs on its website. A second recommendation of this 2009 meeting was that Global RCP Meetings be held on a biennial basis.

The Third Global RCP Meeting was hosted by the Government of Botswana in collaboration with IOM in 2011 under the broad theme “Enhancing Cooperation on Migration through Dialogue and Capacity-Building”. The meeting was attended by some 75 representatives of chairing governments and secretariats of RCPs. Participants exchanged views on the interaction of RCPs with complementary mechanisms for international cooperation on migration at the regional level, as well as the relationship with the GFMD and expectations for the upcoming 2013 HLD.

This year, the Fourth Global RCP Meeting brought together 60 participants, representatives of chairing governments and secretariats of 13 RCPs, who had the opportunity to deliberate on the four roundtable themes of the upcoming HLD – mainstreaming migration into development frameworks, protection of migrants rights, multi-stakeholder coherence and cooperation, and regional and global labour mobility – and shared important regional perspectives and lessons learned with respect to each.

Key issues that the participants mentioned in the conference during breakout sessions were the following:

- Migration has become a more significant global policy domain and is relevant to nearly all States in all regions.
- There is a need for continued engagement at the local, national, regional and interregional levels to improve migration outcomes for both migrants and States.
- There are huge potential benefits in expanding and sustaining cross-regional interaction and of advancing engagement with global-level dialogues such as the GFMD, the HLD and the IOM International Dialogue on Migration (IDM).
- Further, RCPs and IRFs can play an important role in preparing for GFMD and HLD deliberations and taking forward outcomes at the regional level, to the extent relevant.
- There is a need to support the ongoing efforts at the global level to define a post-2015 development agenda, and the emerging understanding of the relevance of migration to all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – as well as to conflicts and disaster situations, and therefore its potential relevance to several aspects of the emerging agenda.

Additionally, participants acknowledged the role of IOM as the global lead agency on migration and in particular its efforts to promote, facilitate and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration as well as the support it has provided to RCPs and other forums for migration dialogue and cooperation.

Further, in a consensus document drafted after two days of intense work, the participants expressed the wish to draw to the attention of the Secretary-General and the United Nations General Assembly the following key conclusions:

- 1) RCPs on migration and emerging IRFs on migration are critical pieces of the global institutional architecture on migration, and an important means for fostering dialogue and cooperation among States with common migration interests and challenges. Their impacts go well beyond information exchange and are now directly impacting policy, practice, capacity and cooperation.
- 2) There are important benefits in expanding engagement at the regional and interregional levels, including and within regional economic, trade and development entities, and advancing interaction between these two levels and the global migration dialogue processes with a view to improving outcomes for both migrants and states.
- 3) RCPs and IRFs have an essential role to play in contributing to deliberations at the global level such as the GFMD and the HLD on International Migration and Development.
- 4) RCPs and IRFs often have an important role to play in fostering productive linkages between migration and development, as well as in enhancing the protection of human rights of migrants, in particular of those in vulnerable situations.
- 5) Deepening the evidence base, information exchange and the sharing of lessons learned, particularly on enhancing the benefits of migration for human and societal development, constitute important next steps in this field.

The upcoming Second HLD on Migration and Development presents a good opportunity to ensure that migration issues will be considered in the post-2015 development agenda, a topic that is already being under discussion.

### RCPs in the Peruvian context

For Peru, migration issues are of great importance since it has been estimated that approximately 3 million Peruvians (10% of its population) are currently residing abroad. While Peru has been – at least in the latter

part of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century – a country of emigrants, the recent macroeconomic growth that the country is experiencing is attracting immigrants as well as the return of some Peruvians. Taken these factors into consideration, the Government of Peru has been developing important initiatives in order to improve migration management in the country such as the creation of an Inter-sectoral Roundtable for Migration Management, a specific law to meet the needs of Peruvian returnees and the improvement of consular services.

At the regional level, Peru is a full member of the Andean Community of Nations (Comunidad Andina, CAN) and the Union of South American Nations (Unión de Naciones Suramericanas, UNASUR). Both of these regional processes were present and were represented at the Fourth Global RCP Meeting. While they differ in some aspects, both regional processes aim at the construction of an Andean and South American citizenship, respectively, through migration dynamics, primarily labour migration and residency.

CAN member countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) have developed a very interesting and binding supranational normative framework that seeks to promote their socioeconomic integration. In this respect, the integration process is closely linked to the growth of migration dynamics that will allow the free movement of citizens of these countries within the Andean territorial space. In addition, CAN has developed a consular mechanism of cooperation in order to provide consular assistance to Andean citizens in third countries in the event that there is no consular representation of the Andean citizen's country of origin. While it is true that the implementation of this normative framework has not been an easy process, it could serve as an example for other integration processes as well as the construction of UNASUR.

In this respect, it is worthy to note the mandate of the Heads of State of South America – who gathered in Lima last November in the Sixth Summit of UNASUR – with

the purpose of beginning the construction of the South American citizenship through its migration dynamics (for more information, please see UNASUR/CJEG/Decision/N°8/2012). According to this mandate, the Pro Tempore Presidency of UNASUR (now in charge of Peru) is coordinating with other South American States to identify the different dimensions and components of the South American citizenship. This will help in the elaboration of a road map to ensure all citizens of the region the right to free movement, a temporary and then permanent residence, national treatment in the workplace, access to health services, social security, and recognition of studies and degrees, among others.

To conclude, it is worth noting that consultation mechanisms on migration at the regional and interregional levels, like the RCPs, provide States with the means and tools to promote dialogue and cooperation among countries with shared interests and challenges related to migration issues. These consultation mechanisms provide a starting point for future cooperation among countries which may take the form of bilateral, subregional and regional agreements, to name some examples. As we know, migration issues are becoming of growing interest and there is a growing consensus of their integral importance in regional and interregional integration processes, as it has been the case with both CAN and UNASUR. With the proximity of the Second HLD on International Migration and Development, the Fourth Global RCP Meeting held in Peru took a particular dynamic since it provided a space for the representatives of RCPs to discuss the place of RCPs in a changing international migration landscape and how migration issues can be placed in the post-2015 development agenda. In a globalized world, migration has become an important and growing component of the twentieth century, especially taking into consideration the bilateral and regional agreements among countries to facilitate the movement of peoples. In this respect, RCPs provide a meaningful space for countries to discuss and agree on migration issues that are becoming an integral part of every country in the world.

# Converging for a single outcome: A five-year action plan for collaboration of civil society and states on international migration and development

John K. Bingham<sup>1</sup>

## A dialogue seven years in the making

“We have been preparing for this High-level Dialogue for seven years,” one of the government participants said during a briefing that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized in Geneva on 3 July 2013, just two weeks before the civil society Hearings of the High-level Dialogue (HLD) at the United Nations headquarters in New York. “We have the opportunity to develop a coherent strategy”, to “pick up speed”, with “substance over process,” emphasized other participants.

Indeed, it has been a busy seven years since the first United Nations HLD on International Migration and Development in 2006. Consider the multiplication of effort during that period just in regional and international processes that discuss important issues of migration, including development. Over and beyond the increasingly regular meetings of regional consultative processes in virtually every region of the world, IOM’s acclaimed series of biannual International Dialogues on Migration, the annual High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the expansion of the Global Migration Group (GMG) from 6 to the current 16 United Nations and international agencies, there have been six annual meetings of States and civil society in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), each animated by “before, during and after” activities of States and civil society, including civil society’s annual international convening of the People’s Global Action on Migration, Development and Human Rights, three World Social Forums on Migration, and the Conversations on the Global Governance of Migration organized by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), with support from the Government of Switzerland.

In short, seven years of forums and working groups, roundtables and experts sessions, and consultations and conversations.

## A range of changes and impact

Seven years of growing confidence, collaboration and impact – at times, growing slowly, but in many cases surprising both skeptics and believers. In his article in the preceding edition of *Migration Policy Practice* (Volume III, Number 3, June–July 2013, p. 3), the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Migration Peter Sutherland described a range of changes over the seven years of the Global Forum. Though virtually no one thought it would ever happen, over 150 countries have come together each year at the Global Forum – consistently – together with another 200 leaders of civil society from around the world and the full spectrum of international and regional bodies that deal with migration. Directly affecting the lives of migrants and their families everywhere, as well as the countries to and from which they migrate, the work of Governments, civil society and international organizations in and around the Global Forum contributed greatly to an almost 50 per cent drop in the cost of sending remittances, the milestone adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, and tangible improvements in a number of national laws and policies regarding migrants and development, including child protection, labour migration and essential data collection. Also important, as 2014 GFMD Chair Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje noted in *Migration Policy Practice* February–April 2013 issue (Volume III, Number 1, p. 3), “efforts have included mainstreaming migration into development policies, with the ultimate goal of including migration in broader national development planning processes and in the formulation of country strategies for bilateral development cooperation.”

So seven years of building – building relationships and trust among States and with civil society and other actors, and building a culture and habits of mature, results-oriented exchange of perspectives and possibilities for action, on practice as well as in policy.

Manifestly, seven years of considerable investment. As it bridges into and charges these next years, the 2013 HLD offers the moment to move from talk to action, to “convert on the investment” of the past seven years.

## From collaboration to collabor-action

And it is none too soon, for the 215 million international migrants and their families and countries, and for the

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world. The world of human mobility and development itself has changed greatly in the same seven years. Over that period, it has become clear that nearly every country on the planet is either origin or destination of significant numbers of people on the move, with many countries both. Steady improvements in the collection of data underscore the role that unprecedented demographic trends have in driving – and in a growing number of recent cases reversing – migration, most notoriously negative fertility rates, longer lives and shrinking native working-age populations in the richer countries and the opposite in lower-income countries. Almost counter-intuitively, but thanks to such demographic and labour/skills imbalances, one of the longest and deepest global financial and employment crises in modern history has done little to change the national interest and employer need in many countries for more workers as well as the need of workers in other countries for jobs. Earnings and other financial transfers that international migrants send “home” to their families and countries of origin are now nearly half a trillion US dollars a year which, just counting formally reported remittances, is already more than three times the official development assistance. And the first set of Millennium Development Goals – the world’s premier effort to cooperate to eradicate poverty and meet other development challenges – is up for renewal in 2015, possibly in a very different form, to be known as the post-2015 development agenda.

In this period of change and challenge then, perhaps it is no surprise that hesitation, low expectations and pre-occupation with States’ members-only meetings in the early Global Forum years has turned increasingly to approaches significantly more inclusive of civil society and, among both States and civil society, a shared hunger for more results from the discussions: an explicit orientation to frame action that is both achievable and measurable, with benchmarks.

Like Sutherland, Ambassador Åkerman Börje and so many of the United Nations and government leaders that have been active in these GFMD, post-2015 development and other processes, civil society actors around the world are eager to move, together with States, from process to substance, and from cross-talk to collaboration, on common ground that exists and on change that is needed.

“In October this year,” writes Sutherland in his article cited previously, “after seven years of intensifying international engagement, the 192 United Nations Member States will convene again to discuss migration. This time, the summit must produce more than new processes like the Global Forum and the GMG. It should deliver an action-oriented agenda for how to create a safer, more transparent system of international mobility that protects the rights of migrants, serves shared economic interests, quells public anxieties about migration, and helps cast migrants less as scapegoats and more as vital members of our communities.”

## Taking the High-level Dialogue seriously: Proposing a five-year collaboration with states

In that direction, civil society has stepped up and raised its own game. In preparation for this year’s HLD, civil society has proposed a five-year action plan, with benchmarks, for collaboration with governments on eight issues that are at the heart of some of the most important dynamics of migration and development today. The five-year plan is available in English, French and Spanish at <http://hldcivilsociety.org/five-year-action-agenda/>.

As presented later in this article, the issues are familiar to all engaged in the GFMD, in both its states and civil society components. Moreover, many of the issues have been the subject of concrete – and frequently quite similar – recommendations by States and civil society in those processes.

Meeting two weeks back-to-back during the civil society working sessions of the GFMD in Mauritius and the World Social Forum on Migration in the Philippines in November 2012, hundreds of civil society leaders from around the world developed and agreed on this action plan. The breakthrough in civil society’s thinking, and the heart of the whole plan, are the key words “five-year” and “collaboration”.

The driving force – and achievement – of these civil society working sessions, in a nutshell, is the unprecedented convergence of global civil society around this approach. “Convergence” here does not mean perfect consensus but clear common ground and imperatives among various civil society actors around the world.

In fact, convergence among leading migration and development actors surged around the five-year plan, with a particular commitment to taking the following approach:

- Avoiding “cliff-walking” at the HLD, that is, expecting that every decision can be made or will be ready to be considered during the HLD meetings on 3 and 4 October;
- Seeking shared commitment instead as a firm outcome of the HLD;
- Seeking one outcome from the HLD: a five-year collaboration between civil society and States on a defined set of issues (i.e. not 20 or 30).

Between December and April this year, over 100 national, regional and international civil society organizations submitted the action plan to the United Nations Second Committee, United Nations Member States and in various processes in and outside the United Nations, as a proposal for an explicit outcome at the HLD. This included the United Nations Coordination

meeting, the GFMD Friends of the Forum and the Commission on Population and Development. (The names of the organizations are presented on the plan at the website on page 14.)

### Convergence moving forward

The five-year plan has been at the heart of much of civil society's worldwide preparation for the HLD, for advocacy in general, in the "Informal Interactive Hearings" with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society and the private sector at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 15 July and towards the HLD itself on 3 and 4 October. In the run-up to the hearings, leaders of NGOs, trade unions, migrant and diaspora associations, academia and the private sector organized 21 meetings around the world in preparation for the HLD, including:

- Regional consultations in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Canada–United States, Europe, South America and West Asia (a consolidated report of messages and recommendations of these meetings is available from their organizer, the Global Coalition on Migration, at <http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Consolidated-Global-Report-from-Regional-Consultations.pdf>);
- National consultations in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mexico, Nepal, South Korea, Thailand and the United Kingdom;
- Thematic consultations in the Netherlands (European Diaspora Conference), Switzerland (Joint Reflections on Migration and Development), Germany and Switzerland (Regional Diaspora and Development Roundtable) and the United States with support from Mexico (Fourth International Forum on Migration and Peace).

All told, some 600 civil society actors worldwide participated in these consultations and meetings ahead of and specifically linked to the HLD. (A full list of these events and organizers is available at <http://hldcivilsociety.org/activities/>.) Representatives from these meetings were then brought together with other civil society migration and development leaders who had come to New York for two full days of preparatory meetings on the Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding the hearings.

At the recommendation of civil society leaders and networks around the world, and at the invitation of the Office of the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the ICMC organized the programme of the hearings, working closely with a 31-member international Civil Society Steering Committee for the HLD and with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The programmes for the weekend of preparatory meetings and the hearings were directly linked, with the five-year action plan as the explicit blueprint for both.

At the hearings, 400 representatives of grass-roots, regional and international civil society organizations presented their experience and recommendations on the eight points of the five-year plan to 100 governments, the European Union, and United Nations and other intergovernmental agencies. About half of the organizations were migrant or migrant led; many of the speakers were migrants themselves. In addition to 49 speakers from diaspora and migrant organizations, human rights and development groups, labour organizations, and the private sector, representatives of the Governments of Australia, Bangladesh, Israel, Mexico, the Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States as well as the European Union and IOM took the floor. (The full programme and list of presenters is available at <http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Final-Programme-Interactive-Hearings-15-July.pdf>.)

In his opening address at the hearings, Sutherland commended civil society for the seriousness of its engagement and in particular for proposing the five-year, eight-point collaboration with governments. "Today civil society is becoming a true partner. Civil society has upped its game, offering a focused, smart and practical agenda drawing on profound field experience, focusing on action rather than rhetoric." Civil society's work on the ground and its proposal to governments speak loudly to a determination to come together and commit together so that the coming HLD, as Sutherland put it, does "not lead to just a sterile debate without practical solutions."

### The five-year, eight-point action plan

As a distinct outcome of the HLD, civil society proposes to collaborate with States during the next five years for measurable progress on the following eight points, two points each corresponding to the four HLD Roundtables as indicated:

- Corresponding most directly to HLD Roundtable 1, focusing on development issues
  1. Integration of migration into the post-2015 development agenda to address not only the contributions that migrants make to development in countries of origin and destination, but also the possibilities for better policy planning and coherence that can make migration more genuinely a choice and not a necessity, and greater gain than drain. This development agenda would work to affirm both the right to migrate and the right to remain at home with decent work and human security. As such, it links migration to United Nations development concerns regarding poverty, health, gender equality, financing for development and sustainable development, and to future development goals.

2. Models and frameworks that facilitate the engagement of diaspora and migrant associations as entrepreneurs, social investors, policy advocates and partners in setting and achieving priorities for the full range of human development in countries of origin, heritage and destination.<sup>2</sup>
- Corresponding most directly to HLD Roundtable 2, focusing on the rights of migrants
3. Reliable, multi-actor mechanisms to address the assistance and protection needs of migrants stranded in distress, beginning with those trapped in situations of war, conflict or disaster (natural or man-made) but with the same logic and urgency with respect to migrant victims of violence or trauma in transit. This should include specific attention to egregious gaps in protection and assistance for migrant women who are raped, and the thousands of children that are unaccompanied and abused along the major migration corridors in every region of the world. Benchmarks could include further work and multi-stakeholder capacity-building on frameworks developed by agencies with such responsibilities including IOM, UNHCR and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the consolidation of relevant principles and practices under existing refugee, humanitarian and human rights laws.
  4. Models and frameworks that address the needs and rights of migrant women in their specificity, including policies and programmes that enable women workers to have the choice whether to migrate or remain in home countries, and legislation that enables migrant women, regardless of status, to have access to basic services, recourse to the justice system, and protection against all forms of violence. The rights of migrant women should be addressed as a separate goal and also seen as a cross-cutting concern in all of the seven goals. In addition, mechanisms should consider the best interests of children in the context of migration, including their rights.
- Corresponding most directly to HLD Roundtable 3, focusing on partnerships
5. Benchmarks for promoting the exchange of good practices and enactment and implementation of national legislation to comply with the full range of provisions in international conventions

<sup>2</sup> This point was added to the original five-year plan in early 2013. The reference to “countries of heritage” conveys the fact that second- or third-generation family members are increasingly recognized as part of and active within diaspora communities and associations in the countries to which their parents or grandparents migrated.

that pertain to migrants even outside the labour sphere, with particular concern for rights in the context of enforcement policies, rights to basic social protection and due process.

6. Redefinition of the interaction of international mechanisms of migrants’ rights protection, which recognizes the roles of the GFMD and the GMG, albeit limited, revives emphasis of the distinct mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for worker protection, and more coherently, aligns protection activity of agencies including ILO, IOM, UNHCR, OHCHR and UNODC. This would be in the context of the United Nations normative framework, and involve a thorough evaluation of the GFMD process, including questions of accountability, transparency, inclusiveness and outcomes. A goal would be to institutionalize the participation of civil society in future governance mechanisms.
- Corresponding most directly to HLD Roundtable 4, focusing on labour mobility
7. Identification or creation, and implementation, of effective standards and mechanisms to regulate the migrant labour recruitment industry, an outcome that civil society is convinced is within reach, thanks to a growing convergence towards reform among countries of origin, transit and destination, and among private sector actors and funders as well as NGOs, trade unions and migrants themselves. Benchmarks could include a global synthesis of existing recruitment problems and solutions, national or transnational; a global convening of legitimate private recruitment actors; and development of a compact on reducing abuses in the recruitment field.
  8. Mechanisms to guarantee labour rights for migrant workers equal to the rights of nationals, including the rights to equal pay and working conditions, to form and organize in trade unions, to ensure portability of pensions, and to have paths to citizenship for migrant workers and their families. This recognizes the long-term needs of many nations for migrant workers, while guaranteeing human security and rights to those workers to meet economic, demographic and development needs while affirming the States’ role to protect the rights of all workers. Benchmarks could include addressing the movement of peoples in the global trade agenda and national progress in complying with the worker-related international conventions, in particular ratification and implementation of the United Nations Migrant Workers Convention and the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers.



Of course, civil society recognizes the central role of States in legislating and implementing effective policy regarding migration, development and human rights, and the non-derogable obligation of States to protect the rights of migrants. In turn, civil society stands ready to support the five-year plan as both advocates and partners.

### Collaboration for the common good

What civil society asks of the HLD is a firm commitment of governments to work together with civil society these next five years to figure out how to better connect practical tools – many of which exist, to roll up the sleeves together, and to cooperate more directly on some of the genuine promise and hard questions in migration today. Such questions include how to regulate private agencies that recruit, place and often abuse foreign workers; how to better respond to boat people and other migrants

seriously hurt or traumatized in migration journeys (many at the hands of human traffickers, smugglers and other criminals); how to set and achieve global goals for development that provide countries and people decent work at home and other alternatives to forced migration; how to build and strengthen rights-based systems for legal labour migration and working conditions; and how to further promote the positive engagement of migrants and diaspora communities in countries to and from which they have migrated.

Recognizing the complexity, urgency and opportunities in migration and development today, this means focusing first on the human rights of migrants – on basic fairness, on development that is fully human and sustainable as well as economic, and on social protection, all of which combine to promote the common good of our families, communities, countries and world.

# Diaspora capital: Why diaspora matters for policy and practice

Kingsley Aikins and Dr. Martin Russell<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*In establishing the Global Diaspora Forum (GDF) in 2011, then United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted the significance of diaspora potential and made it central to her 21st Century Statecraft. Following the success of the GDF, the European Strand of the Global Diaspora Forum, the first co-hosting of the GDF, took place in Dublin, Ireland, in May 2013. Diaspora Matters, a Dublin-based global consultancy company that advises Governments, organizations and companies on how to develop and implement strategies for connecting with their diasporas, acted as the key knowledge partner for the European Strand. Here, Kingsley Aikins, CEO of Diaspora Matters, and Dr. Martin Russell, Associate of Diaspora Matters, look at the dynamics that are shaping diaspora policy and practice in the networked age.*

*The article explores the rationale for developing diaspora engagement as an essential contributor to ongoing migration policies and practices. Through a critical assessment of the challenges facing diaspora engagement and the Irish experience, they illustrate some key methodological frameworks and tools for policymakers and practitioners as the influence of "diaspora capital" continues to emerge on the networked global agenda.*

## Introduction

Today, as we all know, the world is more globalized, interconnected and interdependent than ever before. The ongoing global economic crisis shows it is no longer possible for any nation State to be considered an "island," nor is it possible to be immune from the ebbs and flows of global economics. To be in a position to fully leverage the advantages of interdependence, countries, companies and organizations are now looking at creating, developing and engaging complex networks of people to generate social, cultural and economic benefits. Diasporas constitute obvious collectives of

people through which networks can be created and individuals mobilized for mutual benefit. Diaspora capital is now taking its place alongside human, financial and social capital in the policy and practice dialogues shaping the twenty-first century. Despite migration and, by extension, diaspora remaining deeply contested, the emergence of diaspora capital should not go unnoticed. While in its early stages, diaspora capital can be defined as the overseas resources available to a country, region, city, organization or place that is made up of people, connections, networks, money, ideas, attitudes and concerns of those with an ancestral or affinity-based interest in their home country.

Traditionally, we looked at diasporas through the looking glass of remittances and financial flows which, now, is to take a myopic view. Diasporas are influential bridges to knowledge, expertise, resources and markets for countries of origin. With 215 million people living in a country other than the one they were born in (a number estimated by the World Bank to soar to 450 million by 2050), then the potential is clear. The emergence of the "networked world" concept plays into the strengths of diaspora-home country engagements with the key to success being the development of effective global networks echoing Anne-Marie Slaughter's contention that, in the networked age, the measure of power is connectedness. As a result, enduring notions of "community" are being redefined. Networks are being built and enhanced based on interest rather than location, and diasporas are becoming important "conduits" in global markets. They are facilitating the two-way flow of capital, and that capital presents itself in many forms – human, social, intellectual, political, cultural and financial.

In the old days, migration was final, brutal and sad and, in many cases today, it still is. However, now, for possibly the first time in history, absence no longer automatically equals exile, and geography no longer dictates identity. People are leading "hyphenated" lives and living "here and there". Brain drain can become brain gain and brain exchange. There is a strong circularity to much movement between countries with people coming and going as never before.

This transformation in movements of individuals and capitals indicate that the significance of diaspora to migration is strengthening. Diaspora and migration are related but are not identical or interchangeable.

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Diaspora tends to be a broader concept with strong subtleties in what is deemed diasporic from the multiple stakeholders involved in the engagement process. For example, at the European Strand of the GDF in May 2013, Joe Hackett, Director of the Irish Abroad Unit at the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, noted that Ireland has an “inclusive approach to its diaspora, if you are Irish, if you feel Irish, if you feel connected to Ireland then, as far as we are concerned, you are Irish.” This statement encapsulates the slight variations within diaspora that have complicated and hindered progressive discussions on shaping and incorporating diaspora-specific policies and practices in the long-term migration agenda as it remains quite difficult to define. However, due to the proliferation of discussions and insights emerging on diaspora matters, such uncertainties are no longer a viable obstacle in complementing migration policy and practice with diaspora-infused policies and initiatives. With the recent International Organization for Migration (IOM) Diaspora Ministerial Conference, the platforms of cooperation and knowledge transfer on diaspora matters are reaching new heights. These new potentials of diaspora, meanwhile, will require further assessment and training in order to secure their place at the policy table. They should not be taken for granted as a natural progression in the networked twenty-first century and effective diaspora engagement, from a policy or practice perspective, requires a concise methodology. Broadly, this method is preoccupied with one question: How does diaspora engagement work?

### Answering the “how” question

The 3E (engage, enable, empower) strategy developed by IOM is an important development in the functional dimensions of effective and sustainable diaspora engagement. Functionality is focused upon the progression of an agreed operational outline that is derived from negotiations of expected outcomes, development of programmes, and measurement. Measurement will, in turn, chart the changing capabilities and expectations as respective policies and practices evolve. Furthermore, due to the intricate historical and contemporary configurations that shape diaspora engagements, there can be moments of disconnect between policy and practice. Within functional frameworks, there is an emerging desire and need to advance a methodology that allows policymakers and practitioners to work through such disconnects. These methods must also be responsive to the changing dynamics and demands of our time. Therefore, in conjunction with previous work from *Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit*,<sup>2</sup> launched at the GDF in 2011, and from the recent European Strand of the Global Diaspora Forum, the following is a brief overview of our method for diaspora engagement.

<sup>2</sup> *Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit* can be downloaded at [www.diasporamatters.com](http://www.diasporamatters.com).

### Research

In this phase it is about getting to know who the diaspora are, where they are and what they do. They need to be mapped, their histories learned, individuals and organizations identified, and profiles built. It is all about what people “can” do rather than what they “will” do. The research phase includes a strategic identification and charting of diasporic capacities and propensities for engagement.

### Cultivation

Diaspora engagement evolves over time. Initially, it is often impulsive, yet through effective process, it gradually becomes habitual, thoughtful, strategic and, ultimately, inspirational. Cultivation is mainly about having conversations with and listening and getting to know diaspora members on a number of different levels. Through this process, you can learn about diaspora members’ concerns, interests and hopes for the future of their homeland. This will facilitate the identification of what goals and objectives they have and perhaps what legacy they might like to leave in their diasporic engagement. Trust is a core ingredient, and it can be built and developed by cultivating two-way partnerships and a sense of collaboration.

### Solicitation

In order for diaspora engagement to be effective, there should be “asks and tasks”. Key diaspora members need to be engaged in small groups with specific projects over a limited period of time. Diaspora initiatives have a habit of being like fireworks with spectacular launches, but they often fizzle out and fade away for lack of resources and energy. General evangelical exhortations to the diaspora, while sounding good, do not lead to action. The solicitation step, through “asks and tasks”, is important in focusing the engagement process for diaspora members, and it provides a crucial stake for diaspora members in their engagement with their homeland.

### Stewardship

Stewardship is a bit like after-sales service and comes after somebody has made a commitment to support their home country. It is centred on transforming one-off transactional relationships into long-term sustainable ones. The greatest error is to take support for granted and the biggest reason people do not continue to support is an attitude of indifference. Focusing on diaspora retention is important because once people start supporting an organization or a project, they will continue to do so until treated badly. In light of this, rewards and recognition for diaspora members and involvement are important.

Through this method, diaspora policymakers and practitioners can work collectively towards sustainable endeavours that meet the agreed aims and expectations. Therefore, it is important to identify some key policies and practices that have worked this methodology into their approaches. Below we showcase some of the leading diaspora engagement platforms in Ireland and subsequently identify some key tools for policymakers and practitioners that are designed to further engage, enable and empower the constituents of effective diaspora engagement.

### **The Irish experience: Ireland and diaspora engagement**

Ireland is a country with a long history of diaspora engagement. It also has an interesting diaspora engagement model which is partly public and partly private. In recent years, Ireland has witnessed a proliferation of interest and innovative initiatives, which are increasingly attracting attention from other countries. Among dozens of initiatives, the following five are particularly noteworthy.

#### **1. The Gathering**

In May 2012, the Government announced that 2013 would be designated the Year of the Gathering when Ireland would invite its diaspora home. Although government-facilitated through Tourism Ireland, the gathering has turned out to be a significant success with future growth expected in the coming months. The reason it has been so successful is that it has become deep-rooted at a local level and over 4,000 events have been planned to date. Towns and villages across the country have responded enthusiastically and tens of thousands of people have been engaged. It is a good example of “democratizing diaspora,” and its legacy will be the thousands of new relationships and networks that have been formed at a local level. The success of The Gathering can be traced to the collaborative impact of government facilitation with the authentic entry point for individuals at home and abroad. Importantly, this holds transferable lessons for other diaspora engagement elsewhere as it creates new insights on the configurations of stake-holding and public-private partnership.

#### **2. Connect Ireland**

Connect Ireland is an example of diaspora direct investment (DDI) in action. Its objective is to mobilize the diaspora to create jobs in Ireland. The unique aspect to this platform is that financial rewards will be paid to people in the diaspora, or the “connectors”, if they facilitate introductions that result in companies setting up in Ireland. The vision of the founder and funder, Terry Clune, was to network with established and emerging diaspora networks. Through its innovative incentivization

model, Connect Ireland has achieved notable success in attracting DDI into Ireland and is continuing to grow. Connect Ireland remains an important representation of how innovative change and alterations to established landscapes, in this case foreign direct investment, can be brought about by diaspora components.

#### **3. Ireland Reaching Out**

The Ireland Reaching Out programme works through a reverse genealogy approach delivered by volunteers at town-land, village and parish levels throughout Ireland. The programme focuses on identifying those who have left an area and tracing both those individuals and their descendants worldwide. It connects and mobilizes with diaspora by reversing the agency of engagement between diaspora and home. Ireland Reaching Out transforms the traditional expectation of diaspora-led engagement by identifying and incorporating localities in the country of origin as the instrument of engagement. It is a good example of how diaspora volunteerism can deliver sustainable impacts in multiple sectors at local and national levels, as their work has resulted in significant advances in local economies and national knowledge on the changing dynamics of Irish emigration.

#### **4. The Ireland Funds**

The Ireland Funds was established in 1976. The Ireland Funds, now active in 39 cities in 13 countries, is one of the world’s premier diaspora philanthropy organizations and has generated over USD 450 million, which has been contributed to 1,200 not-for-profit organizations throughout the island of Ireland at no cost to the Irish taxpayers or Government. Over 40,000 people attend more than 100 events annually and The Ireland Funds has developed a vibrant Young Leaders programme. They have philanthropically introduced many diaspora members to Ireland who have subsequently interacted with Ireland in other sectors. They have shown that philanthropy can be an effective portal to further engagement. This cross-sectional dimension to diaspora philanthropy illustrates the effective work that diaspora engagement can achieve as a capacity-builder. Interestingly, this capacity-building dimension is factored through various forms of networks and partnerships. As such, sectorised diaspora engagement clarifies the importance of learning comparative sectional skills. A key dimension in this endeavour will be the continued training of policymakers and practitioners on the evolving parameters and dimensions of diaspora engagement.

#### **5. Irish International Diaspora Centre Trust**

The Irish International Diaspora Centre (IIDC) Trust has set itself the objective of building a world-class diaspora centre in Dublin along the lines of the Sydney Opera

House or the Guggenheim Building in Bilbao. The centre will combine technology, entertainment and culture to celebrate the achievements of the Irish diaspora. Through interactive forums and media, visitors to the centre will be able to explore the foundations of the Irish diaspora and the centre will serve as a hub of academic and scientific research.

These examples are representative of the innovation happening today in the diaspora space in Ireland. They reinforce that diaspora is about place rather than just country, and there is no “one size fits all” strategy. At a government level, the focus has intensified and 2013 will see the holding of the third Global Irish Economic Forum, which will be attended by 300 leading CEOs from the Irish diaspora. The Government has also established the Global Irish Network (GIN), which meets on a regular basis throughout the year in various countries around the world.

Ireland is a strong example of a country that recognizes the power and potential of its diaspora and understands that this is a resource to be researched, cultivated, solicited and stewarded in a comprehensive and strategic way. It also appreciates that it is as much about giving to the diaspora as getting from the diaspora. Consequently, the Irish experiences and the methodologies described above collectively offer some informative tools and instruments in understanding how to make diaspora engagement work. These tools and instruments are useful in probing at the boundaries of how effective diaspora engagement has emerged as a leading component of “smart power” in the networked age.

## Lessons and tools

### Lessons

#### A) No “one size fits all” strategy

Every diaspora is different. These differences can focus on core issues such as history, culture and identity. Furthermore, they can be based upon confines of capacity and propensity. The “no one size fits all” lesson must be factored into by policymakers and practitioners. How a country, city or organization defines who and what is part of their respective diaspora will shape their respective policies and practices. The differences between diasporas need to be identified and structured into the development and delivery of engagement.

#### B) The role of government: Facilitation

One of the most difficult components of effective diaspora engagement remains the role of government. Given the multiple approaches adopted by varying countries, it is difficult to prescribe any singular coherent policy programme for a government in terms of shaping its role in diaspora engagement. On the one hand, a government can adopt an implementer role. This

locates the government as a central force in creating and accomplishing diaspora engagement. A government can also adopt a facilitator role, which encourages and develops multilayered networks with diaspora members and groups.

The government is then drawn into a more consistent, coherent and communicable engagement with the diaspora. As such, the diaspora is given more “face time” with the government within the strategy. The facilitation approach works efficiently within the networked mode of engagement of the twenty-first century, as it multiplies the agents and stakeholders in the engagement process. Initiatives such as The Gathering and Connect Ireland are clear representatives of the benefits that can occur through the facilitation approach, as diaspora individuals and institutions acquire a stake within the engagement, which, in turn, dilutes any differences on expected aims or outcomes as it enables sufficient negotiation contact points between stakeholders.

#### C) Mutually beneficial

Diaspora policies and practices are a two-way street. Effective engagements are pivoted upon an appreciation that such engagement must be of benefit to all stakeholders. An amalgamation of the first two lessons enables stakeholders and partners to identify ways to ensure that diaspora policies and practices are mutually beneficial. Another key dimension to this is the ability to segment diaspora engagement. “Segmentation” refers to the process of working within categories of diasporas to ensure that the most effective segments of diaspora are matched to the type of engagement being pursued.

### Tools

#### A) Collaboration as networked momentum

Given effective diaspora engagement is emerging through collaborative efforts, collaboration is reflected as a key driver in the networked momentum of diaspora engagement. It adds an important operationally bound focus to diaspora engagement. For example, collaborative efforts between governments and diaspora communities in areas such as diaspora entrepreneurship, job creation and culture/tourism economies continue to illustrate how collaboration reduces friction in public-private partnerships in diaspora strategies. The growing appeals of collaboration signpost the strengths of facilitation as the central process of engagement.

#### B) Diaspora Efficiency Modelling: Measurability and capital harmonization

Capital harmonization is a fresh but logical approach in developing diaspora engagement. The concept of diaspora capital, introduced earlier, is an important context to this framework. Its emergence as a legitimate extension of social, human and financial capital is important in that we develop new ways of measuring and harmonizing such capital. We contend that there

exist forms of the Diaspora Efficiency Modelling (DEM) that are a central component of effective and strategic planning on existing and emerging policies and practices. The non-competitive nature of diaspora engagement promises great potential for DEM, as it pushes a culture of knowledge and information exchange between governments, multilateral organizations, academia and other key stakeholders.

### **C) Sustainability: Connecting to impact and change**

An issue that will filter through many diaspora policies or practices is the impact question. This question is focused on the “deliverability” aspect of diaspora engagement. Essentially, these issues are complex and uncertain as diasporas, by their very nature, change. Diasporas are never static, and connecting to that fluidity is an important step in mapping impact. Secondly, the impact question is relative to the context from which it is induced. Therefore, the impact question can be reduced to not only the concept of deliverability but also sustainability. Being open to change may be critically important in achieving sustainable engagement.

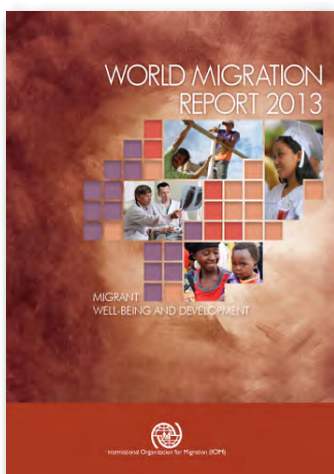
### **Conclusion: The challenges ahead**

Diaspora development, which was once the preserve of only a few countries such as Israel, India and China, has now gone mainstream and dozens of countries

are introducing policies and programmes. Also, the countries that suffered the most from emigration are now in a position to benefit the most. Yet, in this littering of potential, uncertainties on how to proceed remain. In some ways, the question of making diaspora engagement work seems as baffling as it was when the interest in diaspora resurfaced in recent decades. Perhaps a good starting point is to identify and admit that diaspora engagement is not easy – for policymakers or practitioners alike. The simple reality remains that there are more failures than successes in diaspora engagement. Yet, the number of fora, conferences, policy papers, academic treatises and general commentaries on diaspora engagement is growing daily. It seems policymakers and practitioners alike continue to be fascinated with diaspora.

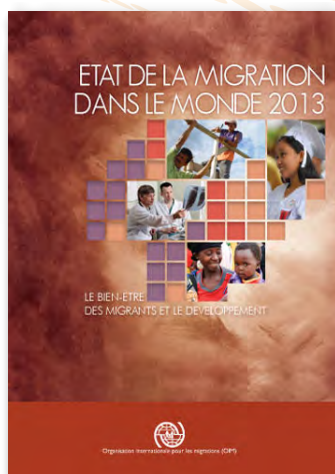
The potentials of diaspora capital are valuable because they are non-competitive. With this spirit of cooperation and exchange, we can begin to assertively build capacity and sustainability for diaspora policies and practices. It was noted at the GDF that the two pillars of diaspora engagement remain policymakers and practitioners. The answer to the question posed earlier lies within those pillars. A strong place to start is to research, cultivate, solicit and steward. We are all aware that diaspora matters, yet the potentials of diaspora capital remain unrealized; let’s realize them together.

# Publications



## World Migration Report 2013 – Migrant Well-being and Development

2013/220 pages  
ISBN 978-92-9068-668-2  
ISSN 1561-5502  
[English](#)  
USD 40.00



## Etat de la migration dans le monde 2013 : Le bien-être des migrants et le développement

2013/220 pages  
ISBN 978-92-9068-669-9  
ISSN 1561-5502  
[French](#)  
USD 40.00



## Informe sobre las Migraciones en el Mundo 2013 – El Bienestar de los Migrantes y el Desarrollo

2013/220 pages  
ISBN 978-92-9068-670-5  
ISSN 1561-5502  
[Spanish](#)  
USD 40.00

In 2013, a second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) will be held, presenting the international community with a critical opportunity to focus its attention on how to make migration work for development and poverty reduction. The HLD takes place at an important time, as the international community is seeking to formulate a new agenda for global development as we approach the target year of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015.

The World Migration Report 2013 contributes to the global debate on migration and development in three ways: First, the focus of the report is on the migrant, and on how migration affects a person's well-being. Many reports on migration and development focus on the impact of remittances: the money that migrants send back home. This report takes a different approach, exploring how migration affects a person's quality of life and their human development across a broad range of dimensions. Second, the report draws upon the findings of a unique source of data – the Gallup World Poll surveys, conducted in more than 150 countries, to assess the well-being of migrants worldwide for the first time. Third, the report sheds new light on how migrants rate their lives, whether they live in a high-income country in the North, or a low

or middle income country in the South. Traditionally the focus has been on those migrating from lower income countries to more affluent ones; this report considers movements in all four migration pathways and their implications for development i.e. migration from the South to North, between countries of the South or between countries of the North, as well as movements from the North to the South.

The first three chapters of the World Migration Report 2013 provide an introduction to the chosen theme 'Migrant Well-being and Development', present the current global migration situation across four migration pathways and review existing research on the emerging field of happiness and subjective well-being.

Chapter four presents original findings on migrant well-being from the Gallup World Poll, looking at outcomes on six core dimensions of well-being across the four migration pathways.

The final part draws conclusions and makes recommendations for future initiatives to monitor migrant well-being and the impact of migration on development, with reference to the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 global development framework.



### Migration and the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda

2013/144 pages

ISBN 978-92-9068-681-1

English

USD 20.00

As the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) nears in 2015, the international community is faced with both the challenge and the opportunity of formulating the next global development agenda. Although migration was not factored into the MDGs, it plays an integral role in the most crucial development questions facing the world today, including: how to generate inclusive growth and create employment for a growing world population; how to manage new global risks, such as vulnerability to shocks and disasters, and adaptation to climate change; and how to mobilize financing for development in a world of decreasing aid budgets.

Migration and the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda gathers together recent research findings outlining the links between migration and development and proposing how migration can best be factored into the future development framework, offering a timely contribution to the argument for migration's inclusion in the coming development agenda.



### International Migration and Development: Contributions and Recommendations of the International System

2013/414 pages

English

Available for [PDF download](#)

This publication has been prepared by the UN system organizations and related international entities as input to the second UN General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development on 3 and 4 October 2013.

The individual chapters illustrate the work undertaken by the various contributors in support of migrants, their families, and societies touched by migration. The agency chapters draw the attention of policymakers and practitioners to tools, guides and good practices in the area of international migration and development.

The book also offers some unique insights into the growing coherence of action among these key international players in the migration field. The collaboration among the agencies represented in this book reflects ongoing efforts to advance global understanding and inter-agency cooperation on migration. The book thus helps to fill a gap in knowledge about the “international system” around migration.

This is a publication of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, coordinated by UNFPA and IOM, in collaboration with the Global Migration Group and other members of the Chief Executives Board, as well as the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants and the NGO Committee on Migration. The book includes a preface by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.