

Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative West and Central Africa Regional Civil Society Consultation

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Background

Since 2011, governments and intergovernmental organizations have focused their attention on situations in which migrants are adversely affected by emergencies and disasters that strike their countries of destination or transit. This global focus on what was then referred to as “stranded migrants” emerged in response to the large-scale evacuations of migrants during the Arab Spring uprisings and subsequent natural disasters in Japan (earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster), Thailand (unprecedented flooding), Haiti (earthquake), United States (Hurricane Sandy), among others. These disasters and emergencies exposed significant deficiencies in the policies and procedures of both origin and destination countries in responding to the particular needs of migrants—documented and undocumented—to ensure their safety and to facilitate equitable access to assistance.

The “stranded migrant” concept gained political traction through efforts of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on International Migration, Peter Sutherland, at the 2012 Global Forum on Migration & Development (GFMD), who cited addressing the challenges of “stranded migrants” as a priority. Likewise, global civil society included stranded migrants in its 8-point, 5-year action agenda¹, expanding the concept to include migrants in distress. Point 3 of the action agenda calls for:

...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 the international organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs

¹ http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/0261-HDL_The-5-year-Action-Plan-GB-web2.pdf

and Crime (UNODC), and the consolidation of relevant principles and practices under existing refugee, humanitarian and human rights laws.

The 8-point, 5-year action agenda served as the cornerstone of civil society advocacy at the 2013 UN High Level Dialogue on Migration & Development (UNHLD), and the “stranded migrants” priority was reflected in the UN Secretary General’s report during that process; the situation of stranded migrants was one of eight points of the Secretary General’s action agenda.²

An important outcome of the UNHLD was the establishment of a new state-led initiative to address the plight of stranded migrants, following the narrow interpretation of migrants caught in crisis situations. The newly formed “Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative” (MICIC) is led by the United States and the Philippines with the participation of Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, and the European Commission in partnership with the IOM, the UNHCR, Professor Susan Martin, and UN SRSG Peter Sutherland.³ The MICIC initiative

...aims to complement IOM’s Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF) by establishing principles and guidelines to define the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin and destination, neighboring states, employers, international organizations, and civil society for the purpose of protecting migrants affected by acute-onset crises like civil conflicts, natural disasters, and man-made disasters.⁴

While civil society welcomes the initiative of governments to address the issues affecting migrants caught in crisis situations through the creation and implementation of sound procedural frameworks and response mechanisms, states must recognize that their responsibility extends to *perpetual crises* affecting migrant workers. State-led initiatives must also be in place to address these urgent situations.

Civil Society Consultation Objectives:

- To provide a briefing and orientation for civil society on the MICIC Initiative and activities that form part of the initiative
- To formulate civil society recommendations to the MICIC Initiative on rights-based, migrant-centered response mechanisms
- To develop a collective civil society advocacy strategy on expanding the MICIC framework and its intended Guidelines and Principles

European Civil Society Consultation Organizers

Global Coalition on Migration (GCM) - The GCM members represent regional and international networks of migrant associations, migrants rights organizations and advocates, trade unions, faith groups and academia, covering every region around the world. The concept of the GCM was born out of the collaborations of its initial member organizations around the Global Forum on Migration (GFMD) and the corresponding People’s Global Action on Migration, Development & Human Rights (PGA) processes. (See: www.GCMigration.org.)

Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE) - MADE is a global platform that connects civil society worldwide and strengthens their capacity and role in advocacy and work with governments to promote policies for the well-being of all migrants and their communities. The MADE network has evolved out of years of civil society organizing for the Global Forum on Migration and

² http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/genericdocument/wcms_243383.pdf

³ <http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/MICIC-Concept-Note-Final-2-14-14.pdf>

⁴ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/genericdocument/wcms_243383.pdf

Development (GFMD) and was officially launched during the 2014 GFMD Civil Society Days. (See: www.madenetwork.org.)

Caritas Senegal, which I represent, is the organization that has coordinated MADE Africa. Member of the Confederation Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Senegal is, within it, a focal point of the migration issue. His involvement in this issue, within civil society, in synergy with many actors, is justified by its commitment to the heart of its activities the development of man and of all men, its full growth, and honor paid to her dignity in all circumstances.

In the current context of migration, as it gives itself to see and experience, Caritas naturally the field, not only to reaffirm these principles, but especially to act with others, in the sense of respect for the dignity migrants and global solidarity, lived in a spirit of partnership so that our companies can have the most human of approach

AGENDA

8:30am	Registration <venue>
9:00am	Opening & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome – Caritas Senegal, ICMC• Objectives & Agenda Review - GCM• Introduction of Participants – all
9:30am	MICIC Initiative Introduction & Review <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MICIC Secretariat Presentation – Michele Klein-Solomon (MICIC Secretariat)• Open Discussion – all
11:00am	Coffee Break
11:15am	Civil Society Inputs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Civil Society Inputs from Asia & Eastern European Consultation – Colin Rajah (GCM)• Comments by Rapporteur• Open Discussion – all
12:00pm	Lunch
1:15pm	Roundtable Discussions
3:00pm	Coffee Break
3:15pm	Continue Roundtable Discussions
4:30pm	Roundtable Report-backs & Review Statement to Governments
5:30pm	Wrap-up & Final Comments

6:00pm Close
