

International Dialogue on Migration 2017
Understanding migrant vulnerabilities: A solution-based approach towards a global compact
that reduces vulnerabilities and empowers migrants
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Session 6 – Towards a global compact on migration: comprehensive and coordinated initiatives to reduce vulnerability and empower migrants

How can international cooperation and coordination efforts to address migrant vulnerability and empower migrants be strengthened?

Presentation of Georgia

Since the very time when states started managing migration, the collective action has always been crucial in building relevant mechanisms, guaranteeing their sustained development and addressing challenges arising. The more complex and developed migratory processes are the stronger co-ordinated action is required. And that concerns all levels - from the deep national to the top global and vice-versa. If this chain is weak at any link, it may cause damage to all system in spite of how effectively organized and managed the mechanisms are at both ends. Thus, the well running co-ordination at a global level does not necessarily mean its perfect combination with national, or international - so-called sub-global - level systems. On the other hand, the fragmented and discordant action at a local level is capable to harm the processes on both - national and global levels.

There is a common consensus over the need for inclusive approaches to the migration management, especially when it comes to the migrants in vulnerable situations. As any other work in migration management, especially at a global basis, the protection and empowering of such migrants starts and entirely depends on a coordination based approach of all actors.

The call for better or even just a coordinated action especially in this regard is more frequently voiced out at practically all relevant international forums and is among others underlined in New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and a Report of UN SRSG Mr. Peter Sutherland.

From the national viewpoint (which we'll review the case from) the above interaction, does have a 3D perspective – local, international and global. All three dimensions are very much interdependent. The local platform, which has an influence on two following dimensions, is indeed complex and in certain extent very much depends on those it can influence on.

The coordination among this troika nowadays does (or should) very much look like a process of a tunnel construction, where two teams are boring from opposite sides (sometimes levels) of the rock towards the common junction point defined with the help of a third team. The project is successful if at the end the tunnel joins at a very point determined and agreed by all.

Given the multidisciplinary nature of modern migration the number of actors both at national and international levels are increasing and their work equally needs to be well co-ordinated.

As practice evidences, the global co-ordination process depends on co-ordination at a national level, where the state must provide an umbrella uniting all relevant (including new) players in migration management: governmental structures, international organizations, civil society, academia, municipalities, ombudsman and naturally migrants who hold keys for the success of global initiatives and their translation for the people.

To realise that, there is a need for a modern, strong, comprehensive, flexible and effective mechanism, capable to run the simultaneous, interlinked and co-ordinated action of all relevant actors - both on central and regional levels – from law enforcement agencies to those dealing with economics, social, labour, health, statistics, regional development and other equally important fields. Our experience showed us that the best platform for that is a commission type mechanism, entrusted to be the main body responsible for the elaboration, planning, co-ordination and implementation of migration policy.

It must bring together political level representatives of all state agencies involved in, influencing on, or linked with migration management. Its architecture must be designed in a way to - cover exclusively all fields of migration at all levels; be most flexible for the modernisation; and capable to adjust its immediate action on the basis of effective co-ordination among all actors. It has to be based on a simple, but effective platform, where the ideas deriving from collective thought are prevailing over the artificial barriers that could be a result of a non-co-ordinated action. To enhance its potential and avoid situations when documents are much progressive than action, the platform should include the relevant international and non-governmental organizations. Thus, the main product produced by this body - the policy - will be the result of a strong synergy between the state agencies (represented at a ministerial level), NGOs, international organisations (as a third team helping in defining the junction point of our tunnel), municipalities (the voice from the local level), migrants themselves and academia (guaranteeing a preliminary and deep analysis of the action to be undertaken).

Such a collective mechanism is capable to: correctly and effectively assign the roles of different players; co-ordinate and increase the co-operation among all (including international) parties; avoid overlaps, parallel action, duplications and by that increase necessary resource mobilisation; and finally, ensure the sustainability of a decision making.

The decision-making should be built upon (and in most cases it will be a push factor for) the trustworthy, high quality migration data, highlighting the actual trends and hidden patterns. This, in modern world can be achieved by the combination of already established policy tools such as Migration Profiles with the newer opportunities provided by the Big Data technologies. Based on the above tools and product it provides us with, it is possible to create a policy vision that can put forward the genuine needs of migrants and a realistic picture of the state's abilities to meet those needs.

Such a system will quell multi or in this case miss-communication of different actors from local level with a global process, thus ensuring that the approach of the state is single and derives from a joint work of all represented on the ground.

On the other hand, this type of action will involve and (to some extent do something which sometimes might not occur outside of states) co-ordinate on the ground the work of relevant international actors and their headquarters - thus shifting the motion to a second, international dimension. The co-ordinated action of those two will have an immense effect – it will send a clear message as a reply on needs identified at a global level (a third dimension), and ensure that voices of all are properly replicated in GCM.

This is something we've already gone through in Georgia and achieved the results. Through the Commission, unifying 12 state, 5 civil society and 7 international organizations, we have created a new migration strategy for 2016-2020. It is the first strategic document and a guideline for the state, which by considering other related strategies and using unified e-data collection system, establishes the basis for the support to regular and fight with irregular migration, development of international protection system in Georgia, strengthening integration and re-integration policies, mainstreaming migration and development, improvement of migration management, enhancement of international co-operation and raising public awareness.

However, this is a flip side of the coin, or in our case of tunnel, but to have a result there is a need for the parallel and in some extent similar action on a global level to guarantee that GCM is based on a multilateral approaches oriented on improving migrants rights and especially those in vulnerable situations.