

**International Dialogue on Migration 2017**  
**Setting the Scene – AVM framework**  
**Talking Points**

- Good morning and welcome to this IDM, which addresses a key theme - migrant vulnerabilities - at the core of the Migrant Assistance Division's work.

**The Progression of MAD and its Understanding of Vulnerability**

- We started down this path as a result of our own operational experiences. IOM has a long and well established experience on assisting VOTs.
- It has well established practices for identification of VOTs; grounded in international law (Palermo protocol on trafficking)
- IOM has strong field experience on the matter – case management expertise developed over time
  - To date: IOM has assisted 90,000 trafficked persons
  - In 2015, 1 in 7 persons identified as trafficked, around the world, was assisted by IOM
- IOM relies on existing protection framework to uphold the rights of migrants and to protect specific categories of migrants such as VoTs. However, the main problem is that existing protection frameworks and standards are sometimes difficult to operationalize and are therefore not being fully implemented.
- Over the years, IOM staff saw many migrants who were not trafficked but were nonetheless in need of assistance. People were coming to IOM themselves, or being referred for a number of related issues:
  - Migrant workers in labour disputes
  - Stranded migrants or migrants in other forms of distress
  - Smuggled migrants who had experienced violence, abuse, or exploitation
  - Migrants considered at high risk of trafficking
  - Irregular migrants who have been tortured, raped, subject to kidnap and ransom, etc.
- In 2015-2017, for instance, IOM surveyed over 22,000 migrants who had travelled the Eastern and Central Mediterranean routes. Over a third of individuals interviewed answered positively to one of the indicators of trafficking and other exploitative practices, with many reporting direct experiences of abuse, exploitation and practices which may amount to human trafficking. The findings provide strong evidence of predatory behavior by smugglers and traffickers and the kinds of enabling environments in which trafficking and associated forms of exploitation and abuse thrive along migration routes.
- Through IOM's Migrant Assistance and Protection Program, its partner service organizations, and government stakeholders, approximately 65,000 migrants in vulnerable situations benefitted from direct assistance services in 2016. Beneficiaries included victims of exploitation, violence, and abuse, as well as others in vulnerable situations.
- The challenge we faced was that we had to assist those migrants. In order to do so, we had to better understand the concept of migrant in vulnerable situations, but also understand how existing protection framework could be better applied and operationalized, which are also questions you will delve into during the first panel – *Understanding migrant vulnerability: concepts, drivers, protection framework and gaps* – we look forward to hearing you thoughts and experiences on the matter.

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### Developing a more nuanced understanding on migrants' vulnerabilities

- We have come up with our own approach for analyzing and responding to migrant vulnerabilities because we need it in our own work. It may also contribute to global understandings and policy discussions, and the work of other agencies.
- What we see so far in understandings of vulnerabilities:
  - Two categories
    - Those with legal definitions and specified protections: e.g., refugees, trafficked persons
    - Those who are deemed vulnerable either because of who they are or the situation they are in.
      - Who they are: some essential characteristic: women, children, disabled, etc.
      - The situation they are in: a characteristic of their current circumstance: a displaced person, a person in an irregular status, etc.
- There are three main elements to IOM's approach:
  - Examination of factors at five levels: individual, household, community, structural, and situational
  - Factors are considered to be either risk factors or protective factors. This means that this model does not only look at deficits but also at strengths and capacities that can be mobilized and built upon to improve resilience to risk factors. Panel 5 – *Promoting resilience and agency in support of vulnerable migrants* will give you the opportunity to further discuss risk and protective factors in the context of migration.
  - Vulnerability is seen as a scale, from very vulnerable to not vulnerable, based on the unique interaction of these risk and protective factors at the different levels
- This approach in and of itself does not describe vulnerabilities to what, which is always central. We ourselves have operationalized it to focus on vulnerability to violence, exploitation, abuse, and rights violations.
- We look forward to hearing your thoughts on how to operationalize the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations in the context of the Global Compact on Migration during panel 6 – *Towards a global compact on migration: comprehensive and coordinated initiatives to reduce vulnerability and empower migrants*.

### Next steps?

- International consultation
  - Development of Handbook on Protection and Assistance to Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability and related training curriculum, together with a Group of Experts that includes other UN agencies (OHCHR, ILO, UNODC, UNICEF, UNHCR).
- Development and field testing of operational tools, including the screening tools for the identification and referral of migrants in vulnerable situations
- Evidence and research