

## Migration and Sustainable Development Goals

### A Post-2015 Call to Action

#### Introduction

On 25-27 September 2015, the General Assembly of the UN will be adopting a new framework for sustainable development goals and targets to replace the set of eight "Millennium Development Goals" (MDGs) that expire this year. A new policy framework with universal goals, covering all countries and all populations - including the 232 million migrants, their families and communities. A framework that is both inspirational and ambitious in tackling the root causes of poverty, human rights abuses, exclusion, inequality, and fragility. What will the framework look like as compared to the current MDGs? What will it mean for poor and vulnerable people all over the world? And what will it mean for migration and migrants themselves? How can it bring about integral human development and protection of human rights for all?

The eight MDGs (see table 1), which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, form a blueprint agreed to in 2000 by all the world's countries and all leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest. However, the MDGs completely ignored the position of migrants and the inter-linkages between development, human rights and migration.

The first seven goals have been targeting the developing world; with success in some areas, in some developing countries. For example, the number of people dying from malaria has fallen dramatically since 2000 and malaria cases are also steadily declining. Since 2000, the malaria mortality rate decreased by 47% worldwide and by 54% in Africa - where about 90% of malaria deaths occur.

But a lot remains to be done. Some 800 million people go to bed hungry every day. Others lack shelter or protection. And not only in the poorest and most fragile regions and nations. It is finally

recognized that poverty and inequality are not only a problem in developing countries of the Global South. They are now seen as universal phenomena.

Table 1: The eight MDGs



#### From MDGs to SDGs

In June 2012, governments and other stakeholders at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) decided to establish an Open Working Group (OWG) of the United Nations General Assembly to organize a process to propose a new set of goals to replace the MDGs. In July 2014, the [OWG presented 17 'goals' accompanied by 169 targets](#) to measure progress (see table 2).

As with the original MDGs, specific indicators will be developed and adopted following the goals and targets.

Between January and September, governments are negotiating the proposed goals and targets, focusing mostly on the OWG goals and targets but other proposals will also be considered. The UN General Assembly will adopt the final goals and targets for these next 15 years at the Special Summit on Sustainable Development, in New York, 25-27 September.

Table 2: The proposed 17 goals by the OWG

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

## Why migration matters!

Why are migrants and migration important to development, and why should the new SDGs include explicit references to migrants and migration?

- *Demographically*, a billion people live and work outside the place of their birth. Migrants in a mobile world are everywhere, move everywhere, contributing in manifold ways to development everywhere.
- *Economically*, migrants and the diaspora work and create jobs. For example migrants currently start 1 in 7 companies currently in the US and UK for example. Migrants send half a trillion dollars a year in remittances to their families and communities of origin—more than three times official development assistance. But migrants spend and save another four times that amount in their countries of residence.
- *Socially*, as human rights and diversity are not only positive in themselves but overwhelmingly positive for sustainable human development.
- *Universally*, whereas the MDGs predominantly targeted 'poor' countries, the SDGs concern all (home, transit and destination) countries. It is about a common effort for the global wellbeing of current and future generations. And if the SDGs are to be truly universal then migrants should be included too, whether is about access to education, health care, decent work, human security, etc. etc.



## The Stockholm Agenda

Since June 2014, 309 civil society organizations and networks around the world signed the "[Stockholm Agenda on the inclusion of Migrants and Migration in post-2015 global and national development agendas](#)".

The Stockholm Agenda emerged from the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and parallel civil society processes in Sweden in 2014. It is a set of 9 migration-related goals and 21 related targets that contribute to development of countries where migrants and their families were born or reside. Civil society organizations and networks advocated the Stockholm Agenda actively to governments during the Open-ended Working Group process and also to regional and other intergovernmental agencies and leaders, including UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. This has resulted in a number of references in the final Outcome Document of the Open-ended Working Group, presented on 19 July (see table 3).

Table 3: The OWG goals and targets with migrants and migration

- Target 4b (under Goal 4 on Education) includes reference to expanding number of scholarships from developing countries, in higher education;
- Target 5.2 (under Goal 5 on Gender Equality) refers to women and girls' trafficking and other forms of exploitation;
- Target 8.8 (under Goal 8 on Economic Growth) refers to rights of all workers, including migrant workers and particularly women migrants;
- Target 10.7 (under Goal 10 on Inequality) calls for the facilitation of orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration – including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies;
- Target 10-10c (also under Goal 10) refers to the reduction in transaction costs of remittances and specifically addressing corridors with very high costs. It specifies the reduction to less than 3% of transaction costs, and elimination of remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%;
- Target 16.2 (under Goal 16 on Peaceful and Inclusive Societies) refers to combating child trafficking. It calls for ending exploitation, abuse, trafficking and all forms of violence against children;
- Target 17.18 (also under Goal 17) and chapeau text par. 17 refer to data disaggregation, including by migratory status.

Six months later, on 4 December, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon presented a Synthesis Report titled "[The Road to Dignity by 2030](#)".

The report does not propose new goals or targets or even changes to those that the OWG proposed. Instead, the report presents the Secretary-General's views in broad strokes, to "kick-start" the

government negotiations. Notably, he highlights migration in several places (see table 4).

Table 4: The UNSG's references to migrants and migration

- Par. 30 recognizes that new demographic trends are changing the world, and one of these is that we are a mobile world, with 232 million migrants and almost one billion including internally displaced people (IDPs)--trends which will have direct impacts on the SDGs.
- Par. 46 recognizes that more and better data are required, including disaggregation of information by migratory status.
- Par. 51 recognizes that there is a general consensus that no one is to be left behind, with specific reference to migrants, refugees and displaced persons, vulnerable groups and minorities.
- Par. 68 (under "Framing the New Agenda") insists again that the Agenda must not exclude migrants, refugees, displaced persons, or persons affected by conflict and occupation.
- Par. 72 insists that a strong, inclusive and transformative economy --one of the six UNSG priorities - requires ensuring that all people, including migrants, have decent employment, social protection, and access to financial services.
- Par. 117 (under "Financing for the Future") strongly calls for the intensification of efforts to reduce costs on the transfer of remittances in a manner that fully respects migrant rights.

### What are important events in 2015?

This year will be crucial for our continued efforts of integrating migrants and migration into the post-2015 SDG framework. Every month, [Post-2015 negotiating sessions](#) are held at the UN in New York:

- 19-21 January
- 17-20 February
- 23-27 March
- 20-24 April
- 18-22 May
- 22-25 June
- 20-24 and 27-31 July
- 28-30 September, UNGA meeting

In addition, the President of the UNGA is organizing thematic events on Means of Implementation (February), Gender (March), Peace (April-May) and Climate Change (June).

These negotiations coincide with the final stages of ongoing negotiations on development finance (the Monterrey [Financing for Development](#) process), culminating in the Addis Ababa Summit, on 13-16 July. This summit will discuss the Means of Implementation, and hence the funding for SDG policies and programs. In addition, the ongoing climate change negotiations will impact the outcome and implementation of the new SDG framework.



## What can you do? Why start now?

Between January and July, a lot needs to be done to mobilize support for integrating migrants and migration into the new SDG framework. A framework of goals and targets that reflect migrants and migration as transformative actors in human and economic development. **What can you do? Why start now?**

1. Your government is part of the SDG negotiations. Approach your minister or deputy and ask to speak with someone who is involved in your government's work on the SDGs. Find out about their priorities, and how migrants and migration link. Also, contact members of parliament and discuss how parliaments can monitor and influence the negotiations. Among the 193 UN member states, 70 were represented in the OWG process, and about 30 of them are reported for having supported our agenda in one way or another. Support our allies!
2. Ask your government for access to migration data, and develop a shadow report of your country's performance with regard to policies and practices of migration and development. Use that shadow report to influence the governments SDG negotiating positions.
3. The new SDG policy framework will need to be implemented at national level. Ask how your government will do this and what changes to national policies will be necessary. Also ask how your government will ensure that national policies will be made coherent in their positive impact on human development abroad (policy

coherence for development), making migration an option rather than a necessity.

4. The upcoming SDG goals and targets will be complemented by indicators necessary to measure progress in implementation. This is a technical but crucial exercise: what indicators will be chosen, and are these adequate for measurement? Ask your government what indicators will be used for measuring migration-related targets.
5. Join the MADE working group on Global Governance of Migration & Development, which is coordinating lobbying efforts and sharing updates from governments positions and CSO lobbying efforts from around the world. This working group is also developing advocacy tools for civil society, designed for use for national and regional lobbying. For more information, see our contacts below this paper.
6. By now, 311 civil society organizations and networks around the world have signed the above mentioned "*Stockholm Agenda*". If you have not joined this campaign yet, then please sign up today!
7. Join other civil society debates on the SDGs and advocate for the inclusion of migrants in national CSO lobbying activities.

Take Action Now!



**MADE**

Migration and Development  
Civil Society Network

## More information?

For more detailed information, please visit the MADE network at [www.madenetwork.org](http://www.madenetwork.org), or write to [info@madenetwork.org](mailto:info@madenetwork.org) or [bvd@cordaid.nl](mailto:bvd@cordaid.nl)

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