



Side Event to the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM)

Migration and rural development: Fostering transnational partnership

26th March 13:15 – 14:30, Conference Room 7, UN Headquarters, New York

Summary of key messages

On 26 March 2018, the governments of Germany and Morocco, co-chairs of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, and the Global Migration Group convened a side event to International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) titled “Migration and rural development: Fostering transnational partnership”.

The following is a summary of the key messages arising from this event:

The links between agriculture and rural development and migration are complex and must be addressed holistically and through strong partnerships

- A whole-of-government, whole-of-society and whole-of-UN approach is needed to address these links effectively.
- No single actor can address the risks of increased poverty, protracted displacement, and other related challenges that compel people to leave rural areas alone. Strengthening dialogue and coordination between stakeholders is key.
- Partnerships are needed to address the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave rural areas; to promote sustainable livelihood opportunities; and facilitate productive investment of remittances in agriculture and rural areas.
- Transnational partnerships between central and local governments, civil society and diaspora organizations have improved the living conditions of millions of people. In several countries, diaspora associations have already set up, in partnership with public authorities, successful rural infrastructure projects aimed at providing electrification and water for human consumption and agriculture.
- Traffickers that abuse of people’s right to migrate from rural areas must be fought through international cooperation and transnational partnerships involving government, civil society and the private sector

Migration has a strong agriculture and rural dimension, and it is a key determinant of sustainable development in rural areas

- Three-quarters of the world’s poor and hungry live in rural areas. Agriculture and rural development also matter because hunger is on the rise for the first time in ten years

- Around 40% of international remittances are sent to rural areas, indicating that an important share of the world's migrants come from there. The productive use of remittances and the transfer of knowledge from migrants are key for rural development in their areas of origin
- An environmental dimension must be integrated in the analysis of migration and policy interventions must consider the adverse effects of climate change, because of their influence on the relationship between agricultural and rural development and human mobility.

Addressing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country is key to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration

- Rural poverty, food insecurity, lack of decent employment, and the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are among the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave rural areas of origin
- One pathway to address these adverse drivers and structural factors is the promotion of increased investments in food security, climate change adaptation, agricultural and rural development, as well as employment creation and entrepreneurship development, particularly for rural youth
- By investing in rural development, the international community can also harness the positive impact of migration and mitigate migration-related risks

Migration can be a positive adaptation strategy that reduces exposure to immediate threats and helps diversify rural household incomes

- Migrants are development actors that contribute to economic growth and improved food security both in their countries of origin and destination
- Migration is often part of successful strategies implemented by rural households to adapt to climate change
- Seasonal migration is reviving rural areas which were depopulating: farms are returning to full employment, and seasonal migrants are contributing to the development of host communities, but also to their communities of origin
- Labor migration schemes targeting agricultural/rural migrant workers and information campaigns on their opportunities and rights are key to promote safe, orderly and regular migration from rural areas. Schemes should be designed in ways that address vulnerabilities of women and youth, support integration and reintegration of rural migrant workers in communities of origin and destination, ensure their health and safety and access to social services, and allow for longer-term improvement of lives and livelihoods of migrant workers and their families.