



GFMD Thematic Workshop on Migration, Connectivity and Business
29 March 2016
Bangkok
Conference Room 4 (CR-4) 2nd Floor UN Conference Center

Honorable Foreign Secretary Ambassador Md. Shahidul Haque,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

UN Women in its capacity as 2016 Chair of the Global Migration Group (GMG) is pleased to deliver this statement, to be in this region and to be supporting the Global Forum on Migration and Development in expanding the agenda of migration and development and in making sustainable development work for all in the context of migration.

The thematic focus of this workshop could not have been timelier, as this is the first year of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This year, we have the World Humanitarian Summit which has a strong connection with migration as well as the 19 September High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants.



We live in a globalized world characterized by increasing human mobility, migration across borders for reasons other than economic security, ever greater socio-economic and political interactions across diverse sectors and regions, and a world in which regional and global trade agreements are playing an increasing role in connecting people, businesses and states.

Thanks in part to advances in transport, information and communication technologies, there is greater connectivity both in terms of physical connectivity, institutional connectivity and people to people connectivity further facilitated through trade agreements. Households develop networks of inter- and intra-household connections in the context of complex trans-local livelihoods. Connections created by migrants become vehicles for the transfer of both economic and social remittances as well as knowledge, technology and skills through person-to-person exchanges as well as business-to-business transactions.

UN Women's focus as GMG Chair is to engender the migration and development discourse. Migrant men and women are key agents for development and have rights which must be protected.

In my inputs today as GMG Chair, I would like to speak of a few "I"s which resonate with today's remarks by other GMG Members during this morning's GFMD-GMG breakfast meeting:



1. **Inspiration** - The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides inspiration for ensuring our renewed engagement on the multiple facets of human mobility, and to identify factors which hinder the effective governance of migration which would be beneficial for migrants and nations.
2. **Integration** - The integration of migrants in societies and the discussions in this meeting on social connections in line with SDG goal 16 become critical.
3. **Innovation** - There is a need for innovative ways to reduce costs of economic and social costs of migration as well as to reduce transaction costs of remittances.
4. **Investment** - There is urgent need for increased investment, including through public private partnership, on the effective governance of migration.
5. **Indivisibility** - Migration is an integral part of development. A comprehensive approach to migration must be adopted to avoid selectivity and fragmentation in implementation efforts, with the most challenging targets being neglected for political or financial reasons.
6. **Impact** - Migration can be an enabler of equitable, inclusive and sustainable social and economic development that connects and benefits countries of origin, transit and destination. In order to ensure migration has a positive impact, the human rights of both migrant women and men must be respected, protected and fulfilled at every stage of the migration cycle. Women have specific needs and vulnerabilities as they are discriminated even in home countries. The economic empowerment of women, including



migrant women, is important to meet the sustainable development goal 1 of eradicating poverty.

States have the primary responsibility to establish the enabling environment for safe migration and decent work for migrant workers. This includes adequate and enforced regulation of migrant workers' contracts to ensure safety and decent work terms and conditions. In this regard, public-private partnerships are essential and these must be grounded in relevant international norms and standards. Migrant men and women are agents of sustainable development but they are also bearers of human rights which must be protected.

In the Concept Note for this Thematic Meeting, the GFMD highlights the importance of linking connectivity to social, cultural, economic and political inclusion of migrants. This is in line with current discussions within the GMG. In fact, this year the GMG will produce a policy paper on gender, remittances and financial inclusion that will focus on new remittance platforms. We believe they are the key to facilitate diaspora contributions to sustainable development in areas of origin of migrants, particularly through technological skills development, trade and the establishment of new businesses.

The GMG stands ready to support GFMD Member States, the international community, business and the private sector, in close collaboration with other important stakeholders such as trade unions and civil society organizations,



including those representing migrant workers, and migrants themselves in their efforts to foster greater global connectivity and migration for sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda presents a unique opportunity to enhance the connectivity and promote the economic empowerment of all migrants, calling on all stakeholders to work together to ensure that no one is left behind. The GMG is fully committed to contribute to the realization of this ambitious agenda and it underscores the importance of targets and indicators that reaffirm a commitment to people-centered, human rights-based and gender-sensitive approaches to migration.

I would also like to highlight that the Agreed Conclusion adopted on 24 March 2016 by the 60th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), stressed the importance of a Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including two paragraphs on migrant women. The text:

- 1) “The Commission...acknowledges the positive contribution of migrant women workers for inclusive growth and sustainable development (paragraph 10);
- 2) Recognizes the contribution of migrants, including women migrant workers, to sustainable development; acknowledges the need to eliminate violence and discrimination against women migrant workers; and to promote their empowerment including through



international, regional or bilateral cooperation among all stakeholders, in particular countries of origin, transit and destination (Strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks, paragraph i)

In conclusion, let me highlight three key policy directions for labor migration, connectivity, and business:

1. Expanding remote working opportunities
2. Offering more safe and legal pathways for migration
3. Reducing transaction cost of remittances.

Thank you.