

Launch of Migrants in Countries of Crisis (MICIC)  
Geneva, 27 June 2016

*Check against delivery*

### **Guidelines to protect Migrants in Countries in Crisis**

*Real world signs, substance and inspiration for the 19 September UN Summit*

John K. Bingham, Head of Policy, ICMC

**Excellencies, partners:** we greet MICIC warmly. We congratulate and thank the United States and the Philippines for your leadership, the European Union for the support, and the International Organization for Migration and International Centre for Migration Policy Development for the hard organizing work these past 18 months.

**We greet MICIC as a sign:** that we hear the “cry” in “crisis”.

... a sign that we can act decisively, in practical, inclusive ways. And a sign that we can do it with *speed*.

ICMC was on the ground working on borders in Tunisia and Egypt when Gaddafi fell, and hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees were stranded, targeted, running for their lives—none with a label on their foreheads saying “migrant” or “refugee”.

We were at the High Level Dialogue in 2013<sup>1</sup>, when leadership by Peter Sutherland, states, the international agencies and civil society demonstrated total convergence on the real world need to organize better responses, in real time, including points 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of civil society’s *5-year 8-point Plan of action for Collaboration with governments*<sup>2</sup>.

In MICIC, the decision was made early on to include civil society in the consultations process—another smart sign. Together with the Global Coalition on Migration, ICMC’s migration and development civil society network (“MADE”) served as co-organizer of 6 regional consultations of civil society on MICIC since last February, involving migrants, diaspora, NGOs, trade unions; advocates and practitioners in migrant rights and refugee protection from some 60 countries. These comments join those of our Global Coalition partner Colin Rajah at the MICIC launch in New York.



### **Substance**

Our consultations focused on “case studies” of the first kind: more than evidence-based, they are “lived experience”. Demonstrating again a strong convergence of perspective, each civil society consultation along the way endorsed and built on what the prior one had recommended.

<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, 2013,  
<http://www.un.org/en/ga/68/meetings/migration/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/0261-HDL\\_The-5-year-Action-Plan-GB-web2.pdf](http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/0261-HDL_The-5-year-Action-Plan-GB-web2.pdf)

- In **South, Southeast and East Asia**, civil society emphasized *protecting migrant rights in ordinary times is the best way to protect migrants in times of crisis*. Glad to see that emphasis again and again in the MICIC guidelines.
- In **Central Asia and East Europe**: *“Migrants are actors in crisis situations”*: not just victims, but first-responders in efforts to protect themselves, their families and others. *“There must be better recognition of the diasporas’ role”*; e.g., in the Haiti and Nepal earthquakes; the Mali conflict and Ebola crisis. We are partners in protection. Glad to see that emphasis again and again in the MICIC guidelines.
- In **West and Central Africa**: *“The management of returnees requires real thought, because of their vulnerabilities. It should include appropriate accompaniment procedures to their final destination, and their effective integration back to their communities.”* Glad to see that emphasis also in the MICIC guidelines—though much more is needed.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean** emphasized *“promoting family reunification and regularization programmes after an emergency has occurred”*, and presented a list of 9 concrete, multi-actor “good practices.” One of MICIC’s primary objectives was to collect and present such examples to inspire; good job MICIC.
- In the **Middle East and North Africa**: *“We need to look at the conditions of all refugees that have been displaced by civil war and ongoing political crisis, as well as migrants who have been significantly affected by the current economic crisis in the region.”* One of MICIC’s first decisions was to look at *all* non-citizens, real-world, and then work out appropriate considerations with UNHCR and other agencies with specific protection mandates; good job MICIC.
- **Finally in East and Southern Africa**: An important role of civil society is to *“alert authorities in case they are not aware, help mobilize resources, outreach and information to migrant communities. In some of the natural disaster or conflict areas, it is civil society NGOs that have provided support.”* Glad to see that emphasis also in the MICIC guidelines.

**Across the board, the civil society consultations also said:** take the *next steps* too. First with **implementation**, But also to re-link global response to **vulnerability**, of all migrants. This means going beyond MICIC’s current attention only to crises of conflict and natural disaster, to the *range* of crises, displacement and suffering that are also in states’ interests to address, including the awful crises of migrants in transit—on boats, in deserts, etc. And most specifically: re-linking to address the **causes** of vulnerability.

#### Close: Inspiration for the UN Summit 19 September

Last week came to quite a dramatic close in this region of the world.

One reading is that the lesson is: either we learn how to better cooperate, *decisively* or we divide and fall apart, and our values with us. This may be especially true on migration issues at the moment.

**MICIC shows:** decisive cooperation can be done, *and this is one way to get it done*.

**For the September 19 Summit**, 22 of the biggest civil society networks active with refugees and migrants around the world came together **last week** on a set of baseline, starting points.<sup>3</sup> Our baseline is the 3 pillars of the Secretary-General’s report for the Summit<sup>4</sup>, *plus* an all-actor campaign dead-set against xenophobia and for inclusion. Our starting points make explicit reference to *“Taking inspiration from MICIC...”*.

**Today** in New York, the “zero draft” of the Outcome document is being released. We hope and will work so that the Outcome will be not a noun, but a verb: *“launch”*.

**Partners and colleagues:** there are news reports today of Pope Francis referring to choices in this region as opportunities to *“jump start things”*, even to *“re-create”*. Like the MICIC process that emerged from the General Assembly’s High-level Dialogue in 2013, may this year’s Summit and its Outcome launch—jump-start, re-create—action of *this* kind. **Real world. In real time.**

Thank you.

<sup>3</sup> A new deal for Refugees, Migrants and societies: Civil society starting points for the Outcome of the UN Summit on Addressing large movements of Refugees and Migrants, <http://www.madenetwork.org/>

<sup>4</sup> Pillar 1 on protection of all vulnerable migrants; Pillar 2 on responsibility-sharing for refugees, and Pillar 3 on safe, orderly and regular migration. In safety and dignity: Addressing large movements of Refugees and Migrants, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1611262.pdf>