



GCM Civil Society Statement on Launch of MICIC Guidelines

New York, 15 June 2016 – The MICIC (Migrants in Countries in Crisis) Initiative released its Guidelines¹ at a launch event at the United Nations Headquarters this morning. After more than a yearlong consultation process around the globe, the document includes 10 core principles, 15 guidelines organized by Crisis Preparedness, Emergency Response and Post-Crisis Action, and a list of Practices to support the implementation of each Guideline.

In the past year, the Global Coalition on Migration (GCM), in partnership with the MADE (Migration and Development) Civil Society Network, organized a series of six regional civil society consultations², in conjunction with the states' regional consultations for MICIC. These regional civil society consultations took place in Manila (for South, East and South East Asia), Brussels (for Eastern Europe and Central Asia), Dakar (for West and Central Africa), San Jose (for Latin America), Beirut (for the Middle East and North Africa), and Nairobi (for East and Southern Africa). Reports from each consultation were delivered at the corresponding states' consultation, by a civil society rapporteur from the respective region.

This process follows civil society's landmark 5-year, 8-point Action Agenda³ that was presented at the 2013 High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development. Point 3 of this Action Agenda refers specifically to *"...mechanisms to address the assistance and protection needs of migrants stranded in distress beginning with those trapped in situations of war, conflict or disaster..."* GCM and MADE took up that commitment by organizing these regional civil society consultations on MICIC, with the 3 goals of: (i) briefing civil society organizations in each region about MICIC, (ii) extracting inputs from civil society leaders and advocating for those to the MICIC consultation process, and (iii) developing an engagement strategy for civil society to connect with the MICIC initiative.

GCM welcomes the Guidelines for recognizing the importance of civil society as actors and stakeholders in MICIC. At the Guidelines launch event, GCM's International Coordinator Colin Rajah remarked, "as stated in the Guidelines' Introduction chapter on page 3, civil society actors are a critical bridge between governments and migrants. We are migrants

¹ The MICIC Guidelines can be downloaded at:

http://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/document/MICIC_Guidelines_web.pdf.

² For details about the GCM-organized MICIC regional civil society consultations, go to:

<http://GCMigration.org/MICIC>.

³ The Action Agenda can be found at: http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/0261-HDL_The-5-year-Action-Plan-GB-web2.pdf.

impacted directly by crises, responders to crisis situations, and NGOs supporting and advocating for migrants before, during and after crises.”

GCM members had consistently expressed concern about the initiative’s relatively limited scope, to migrants in countries experiencing conflicts or natural disasters. William Gois, GCM’s Chair and Regional Coordinator of Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) highlighted this in the very first regional consultation in Manila, “the crisis experienced by migrants every day create and increase the vulnerabilities experienced in crisis situations.”⁴ It was noted at the launch event today, during U.S. Secretary of State Anne Richard’s comments, that the U.S. has recommended the development of broader guidelines. GCM members welcomed this recommendation and look forward to continue collaborating on these with states and the respective international organizations, as they are developed.

GCM also notes that the MICIC Guidelines seek to complement existing legal frameworks and protection mechanisms. We applaud that the Guidelines’ second principle recognizes that migrants are entitled to human rights regardless of status. GCM also recalls the MICIC cross-cutting theme of the protection of migrants’ rights in ordinary times, not just in times of crisis, as an important element to reduce vulnerabilities experienced by migrants during crises.

As we shift our attention now towards implementation of MICIC, it is important that there will be no gaps in the implementation of these Guidelines. We should ensure that states and all actors and stakeholders move forward with as much commitment, and that adequate resources should be dedicated, particularly for civil society engagement. Now is the time to begin collaborating on how we can implement Guideline 6, relating to establishing “*coordination agreements*”, and the recommended practice of creating “*migrant participation platforms*”.

Sicel’mpilo Shange-Buthane, the Director of Amnesty International South Africa, and civil society rapporteur for the East and Southern Africa regional civil society consultation stated in her report, “we recognize that the responsibility to protect everyone within a state’s borders rests with the concerned state and government. In this regard, civil society is willing to work collaboratively with states and governments... in ensuring the protection of migrants within their territories.”⁵

GCM pledges to continue to lead civil society efforts, both at the global policy-setting level, as well as regionally through its members and partners on the ground, to work with the MICIC Secretariat and the Working Group, to ensure that the MICIC motto of “Save Lives, Increase Protection, Decrease Vulnerability, and Improve Response” is well and truly realized for migrants around the world.

⁴ <http://gcmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/MICIC-Reflections-of-Civil-Society-Manila-Final.pdf>

⁵ <http://gcmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/East-and-Southern-Africa-civil-society-input-Mpilo-presentation.pdf>