

Report break-out session 2:

Implementing successful campaigns for social inclusion and against xenophobia and discrimination: achieving summit commitment and 2030 agenda goals

Guiding questions for the session:

- Are campaigns effective tools to combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination against migrants? If so, can you share an example of a campaign that has worked or is working now, in particular on a local or national level?
- Beyond campaigns, what kind of policy actions have been effective or are needed, in your country, regionally and/or globally, including within the Global Compact on Migration?
- What is the role of the GFMD in these campaigns or policy actions?

Moderator:

- Ms. Anna Crowley, Team Manager, International Migration Initiative, Open Society Foundation

Discussion starters:

- Mr. Jose Antunes Fernandes, Member of the board, Ministry of Presidency Council of Ministries, Portugal
- Ms. Khady Sakho Niang, Administrator, FORIM (Forum des Organisations de Solidarité Internationale issues des Migration)
- Mrs. Anu Madgavkar, Partner, McKinsey Global Institute
- Ms. Lariza Dugan, Executive Director, Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)

Rapporteur: Cecile Riallant, Programme Manager of the UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative

Highlights from the session:

The world is increasingly becoming multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious, while at the same time xenophobia and discriminatory public speeches are on the rise. The challenge for policy makers and the civil society everywhere is therefore how to obtain positive outcomes from diversity. Which are the right/effective models, tools and policies to manage diversity and embrace it to achieve social cohesion, while counteracting negative feelings towards migrants?

An important part of the discussions was dedicated to reviewing and sharing information among civil society and government participants on practices for outreaching to the general public through dedicated information campaigns.

As emphasised by Mrs. Anu Madgavkar of McKinsey Global Institute, information campaigns should be fact based and emphasise positive messages around migration, acknowledging that migrants drive global productivity and account for nine per cent of the global GDP. The fact that migration has a very limited impact on employment of local workers and that better integration has substantial economic gains are clear messages which should be disseminated.

The French Diaspora organisation FORIM presented their powerful information campaign aimed at debunking ten myths around migration. It is implemented with a strong and diverse alliance of partners and with the participation of the network of French Cities, Cités Unies. FORIM emphasised that the messaging of this campaign is the result of a collaboration with the CSOs taking part in the civil society days of the GFMD, thereby illustrating the importance of this platform to stimulate joint action. A distinct feature of the campaign is that it does not only target the public opinion and national authorities in the target countries, but also the population in countries of origin. This is done in acknowledgment of the fact that prejudiced ideas around migration also exist in the countries of origin and that information campaigns should have targeted messages throughout the migration cycle.

Several participants emphasised the importance of dedicating extra efforts to reach out to the segments of the population which are the most prone to listen to and adhere to discriminatory discourses and policies. This means listening and responding to the concerns of disenfranchised or vulnerable segments of the population which feel threatened by the economic and societal consequences of globalisation. The risk is high otherwise to only reach out to the converted and to achieve limited impact.

Participants agreed that there is no silver bullet to address this. Diverse opinions were expressed around the need for targeted messaging depending on the audience whereas others recommended to use the mass media through powerful ads or soap operas.

Participants agreed on the key role which should be played by local authorities and most specifically cities for disseminating positive messages around migration. As they are the main recipients of migration and due to their proximity to the local population, cities and local civil society organisations are uniquely placed to engage in targeted messaging on migration. Cities have a vested interest to do so given their specific situation as front-liners in maintaining social cohesion in a context of increased diversity. Many participants also emphasised the convening power of cities which are able to bring critical stakeholders on board, and specifically the private sector.

The experience of CARECEN shows that campaigns can also be very effective to advance policies responsive to migrant needs. One of the distinct features of the SOMOS (we are) campaign is to have a strong advocacy towards municipal authorities and to mobilise migrant voices so they can have impact. The campaign also focused specifically on youth voices of both migrants' children and broader communities. Ms. Dugan also argued that the power of art is critical to bring the experience of migrants forward.

As per the guiding questions for the session, the participants reflected on the elements on which effective policies to secure cohesion and embrace diversity should be based.

The representative of Portugal described a very effective and comprehensive integration model which has been recognised internationally as very successful. The situation in the country is characterised by the fact that migration is not instrumentalised for political purposes, therefore migration is not identified as a problematic issue in public opinions. The practice of Portugal is based on inter-ministerial cooperation. In order to facilitate the integration process and access to public services, the government operates a central line where operators reply in the language of the migrants. The model also relies on intercultural mediators and on close cooperation with local authorities. Special attention is also given to the integration of migrant children within the education system and wider society.

The representative from Australia explained that the country overwhelmingly benefits from having a multicultural society with an important share of the population born overseas. The importance of addressing social cohesion through the creation of a balance of rights and responsibilities was emphasised as well as to strictly enforce provisions for equal opportunities and fight against xenophobia. The government also operates a series of targeted grants to reinforce social cohesion within communities at risk. The Australian model shows that an integrated approach between laws, policies and services deliver tangible results.

The importance of civic integration of migrants was also identified as a determining factor for social cohesion by a number of participants.

The critical role of local authorities and specifically cities was emphasised many times and a holistic practice led by the regional government of Pichincha in Ecuador, looking at facilitating the integration of migrants, at fostering social cohesion and embracing diversity through dedicated festivals, was shared by the UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative. The emphasis was put on the importance of connecting cities together globally to facilitate their empowerment through sharing of good practices. The role played by the Global Mayoral Forum on Human Mobility, Migration and Development with the engagement of the civil society was emphasised in this regard.

The powerful role that cities can play as decision makers for operating social inclusion solutions was also illustrated by the example of the Sanctuary Cities movement in the USA, whereby cities have decided not to engage in law enforcement activities in order to maintain a strict firewall. Indeed, participants pointed out that cities need to provide services and safety to all their residents, irrespective of their legal status. The aspect of public safety for migrants, and their ability to reach out to police forces when victims of crime, was recognised as an essential part of what needs to be looked at to guarantee social cohesion. The experience launched in the Netherlands whereby police officers can be accessed even by migrants in irregular situation was brought up as a good practice by some participants.

The third aspect discussed during the session looked at the role that the GFMD should

play to bring the essential dimension of social inclusion and fight against xenophobia forward.

The critical role of cities having come very strongly from all the discussions, the ability to include their voices and experiences within the GFMD should be looked upon as a critical step moving forward.

Also participants pointed out that the discussions around social inclusion should be rebalanced in future GFMD to also look at how these dynamics play out in the countries of origin of migration. These are essential push factors, which have a pivotal role in migration and development dynamics.