

By Migrants, For Migrants: Advocating for migrants' meaningful participation in IMRF and the GCM processes

Side-Event at the International Migration Review Forum
17 May, 1:30-2:30pm, Hybrid

Background

In 2022, nearly four years after the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), governments, stakeholders and the United Nations system will meet to discuss the successes and challenges of implementing this landmark cooperative framework. The first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) is being held under the auspices of the General Assembly, chaired by the President of the General Assembly, at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York from 17-20 May 2022, with a preparatory stakeholder hearing taking place on 16 May.

A series of IMRF side-events will be organized in the margins of the IMRF. They will provide an opportunity to discuss good practices, challenges and recommendations to further the implementation of the GCM. Side-events will take place on 16-20 May 2022.

Description of the Side-event

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) contains a promise of participatory processes expressed in its emphasis on a people-centred, human rights based and whole-of-society approach to migration policy. Migrants are among the key stakeholders, and their meaningful participation in shaping the policies that impact them the most is not only a matter of principle, but could contribute to laws and policies which are more effective in advancing human rights of migrants and achieving migration justice. Meaningful participation as a redistribution of power and accountability is key to countering the power imbalance between migrants and governments, employers and the private sector.

However, systemic barriers to meaningful participation of migrants and refugees remain strong. This is reflected in the lack of migrants' voices and representation throughout the GCM implementation and review processes. Migrants' participation is often limited to ad hoc consultation which failed to effectively inform or influence policy discussions and decision making. In many countries, the right to freedom of association of migrants and their advocates are not recognised and protected in law and in practice. Recent trends show that some migrants have been stripped their right to freedom of association, which has prevented them from effectively exercising their fundamental rights and participating in the discussions on policies that would shape their lives.

Despite all of the challenges hindering migrants participation, migrants, advocates, groups, and organisations are constantly putting in great effort to overcome the gaps and hurdles, creating various engagement opportunities to amplify migrants' voices in the process. From the 2016 UN High Level Summit on Refugees and Migrants, through the drafting and adoption of GCM, until the regional processes and in this very first IMRF, many migrants and their communities organised national and regional consultations, produced migrants

spotlight reports, documentary films, position papers to present their lived experiences, priority issues, concerns, and recommendations.

This IMRF side event aims to provide an opportunity for collective reflection on means to include migrants in global processes that concern them. By recognising the constraints and limitations, various actors (migrants, civil society, government, UN experts) bring their insights and promising practices in meaningful participation, which could provide concrete recommendations for the IMRF and the forthcoming GCM processes in creating an enabling environment for migrants' participation.

The IMRF represents an important space and process to review and evaluate the progress and implementation of the GCM. This review process would not be full and complete without the voices and inputs of the migrant communities. "Nothing about migrants without migrants." - To make it meaningful, migrants' participation should be substantial rather than symbolic, and immediate efforts should be made to deliver the most participatory process possible. This side event will also be a showcase to demonstrate the grassroots migrants' effort in their engagement with the GCM processes at all levels.

Format

Interpretation will be provided in Spanish.

Register here.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIsf-CqqjooHdKzg8pYZ-AribMLFxm1q27a>

Suggested agenda

Date 17 May 2022 Time: 1:30 -2:30 pm (New York) 7:30-8:30 pm (Geneva) Venue: Room 8, UN Headquarters	
5 minutes	Opening Remarks Mr. Felipe González Morales, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants
25 minutes	Panel discussion Panel discussion with the following speakers will be discussing the principle, challenges, good practice, and recommendation in advocating migrants' meaningful participation in the IMRF and GCM processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nothing about Migrants without Migrants</i>, Ms. Eni Lestari from International Migrants Alliance (IMA) • <i>Unpacking migrants' meaningful participation - A "360-degree" approach of migrant's participation</i>, Laurel Townhead from Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) • <i>Our voices matters: Participation as a redistribution of power</i>, Ms. Joanna Concepcion from Migrante International, the Philippines



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Breakthrough the Tokenism: Migrants' meaningful participation in the GCM process</i>, Presentation by Mr. Rey Asis, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) <p>Moderator: Ms. Ka mei Lau from Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)</p>
15 minutes	Discussion / Q&A
5 minutes	Initiatives from the Migrants: Migrants' Spotlight Reports and Migrant Advocacy Videos
5 minutes	Closing Remarks by all the speakers
5 minutes	Photo Op – Our Commitment to migrants' meaningful participation