



Syrian refugees crossing the Serbian-Croatian border © IOM Malavolta 2015

## NEWS FROM THE WORKING GROUP: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CONSULTATIONS

*By Michele Klein Solomon, Director of the MICIC Secretariat, IOM*

We are now at the mid-way point in the process of consultations for the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative, with a view to developing non-binding, voluntary principles, guidelines and effective practices. To date, the MICIC Initiative has led consultations with the participating States of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees, and of the South, South-East and East Asia, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions. Civil society organizations organized parallel consultations prior to the latter two regional consultations, in which their representatives also participated.

While each consultation brings new ideas, perspectives and experiences, it is heartening to see that core themes and ideas have emerged and are being reinforced by the participants in each consultation.

Key amongst these are the following:

- There is a shared understanding of the urgency of the MICIC Initiative and of the value of an inclusive, multi-stakeholder, government-led process to look at what can be done to better prepare for, respond to and address the increasingly common situation of migrants caught in countries experiencing conflicts and natural disasters;
- The better protected migrants' rights are in normal times, the more resilient and able to help themselves they will be in times of crisis; as a corollary, the protection of the rights of all migrants at all times must be our collective aim;
- Pre-crisis preparedness and planning – explicitly integrating migrants and their particular needs in disaster preparedness and management plans – is critical;

- During crises, ensuring that migrants have access to the same life-saving and other humanitarian assistance as nationals is critical, and dedicated measures may be needed to overcome barriers that migrants face in accessing such assistance, such as language, cultural or legal status barriers;
- Post-crisis recovery is best seen in a longer term development context that focuses on the socio-economic well-being of migrants and their families – i.e. livelihoods that allow people to secure their basic necessities, education, health – and of their host and home countries. This includes post-crisis return and reintegration assistance and community stabilization measures in countries of origin, as well as future opportunities to migrate.

### About MICIC

The MICIC Initiative is led by the Philippines and the United States of America as co-chairs, in consultation with a small working group composed of Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, the European Commission, IOM, UNHCR, Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of International Migration, the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for International Migration, and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

Funding for the MICIC Initiative is generously provided by the United States of America, the European Commission, and Australia.

IOM serves as the MICIC Secretariat.

The outcome of the Initiative will be a set of non-binding, voluntary principles, guidelines, and effective practices to better prepare for, respond to, and address the longer term consequences of migrants caught in countries experiencing a conflict or natural disaster.

## NEWS FROM THE WORKING GROUP: UPDATE FROM THE EC AND THE ICMPD

By Chantal Lacroix, International Centre for Migration Policy Development

The European Commission is pleased to support the MICIC Initiative as a member of the Working Group. The principles, guidelines and effective practices being developed by the Initiative have the potential to make a concrete and significant contribution to supporting and protecting migrants caught in countries in crisis.

In order to complement and support international efforts, the European Union launched a four year project entitled "Migrants in Countries in Crisis: Supporting an Evidence-based Approach for Effective and Cooperative State Action". The project seeks to reinforce global coordination in crises response, strengthen the EU comprehensive approach for external policies and crisis management, and ultimately better address the needs of migrants caught in crises.

The project is implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), also a member of the Working Group, which brings long-standing experience in facilitating migration dialogues, conducting large-scale research and implementing worldwide technical assistance on migration.

The project consists of three complementary components:

1. Support for six regional consultations and a global conference with governments and other key stakeholders. These consultations will make a direct contribution to the development of the Initiative's principles, guidelines and effective practices. The consultations aim to explore and define issues at stake, gain the perspectives of states and other stakeholders, learn from best practices from previous crises, collect evidence, and propose a way forward to strengthen the international community's capacity to better manage and respond to situations of migrants caught in countries in crisis;
2. Research that broadens the evidence base on the issue of migrants in countries in crisis, with a specific focus on the socio-economic implications of crises for development, using a case-study approach; and
3. Capacity building and concrete technical support to ensure operational implementation and follow up on the consultations' recommendations.

For more information, see the project's [website](#), or contact ICMPD at [icmpd-micic@icmpd.org](mailto:icmpd-micic@icmpd.org).



## TIMELINE OF CONSULTATIONS

### IGC PLUS CONSULTATION

Geneva, 2-3 February 2015

### REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR SOUTH, EAST AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Manila, 23-24 March 2015

### BRIEFING FOR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Geneva, 17 April 2015

### REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Brussels, 25-26 June 2015

### PRIVATE SECTOR CONSULTATION

Geneva, 2-3 December 2015

### REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Dakar, 8-9 December 2015

### REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

TBC January 2015

### CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATION

Geneva, 28-29 January 2016

### REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

San Jose, February 2016

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTATION

Geneva, 16-17 March 2016

### REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Addis Ababa, April 2016

\* Civil Society Organizations organize parallel regional MICIC consultations prior to the governmental meetings, to which their representatives also participate as standing invitees.

\*\* EC/DEVCO is funding the six dedicated MICIC regional consultations and the global conference, assisted by ICMPD.

## THE MICIC INSIDER

The MICIC Initiative will publish a series of issue briefs on areas identified through the consultations that require further analysis. The issue briefs will provide clear, practical, and accessible recommendations on how to integrate the protection and assistance of migrants in countries in crisis into planning and decision making. The first issue brief, on disaster risk reduction strategies (summarized below) will be published this month on the [MICIC website](#).

### Reducing Migrants' Vulnerability to Natural Disasters through Disaster Risk Reduction Measures

By *Lorenzo Guadagno, Manager, MICIC Capacity Building Program, IOM*

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts aim to prevent and reduce the impact of natural hazards, thus strengthening the resilience and well-being of individuals and communities. The MICIC Initiative seeks to promote actions that reduce migrants' vulnerability through their improved inclusion within disaster risk management, preparedness, response and recovery systems.

Specific recommendations include:

- Improving the understanding of the size, composition, and vulnerabilities of the migrant population in a given location.
- Removing legal, administrative, and practical barriers that inhibit migrants from accessing resources and services including in support of long-term recovery and resilience-building. Institutional efforts towards more inclusive and culturally-aware systems can be complemented by longer-term trust-building and awareness-raising activities.
- Disseminating awareness and preparedness information, early warnings, and emergency communications targeted to migrants, in order to overcome specific language barriers, differences in risk perception, differences in information sources and lack of local knowledge.
- Adopting participatory approaches to DRR, emergency response and recovery that involve migrants, including the most vulnerable, alongside other vulnerable groups. The same approach can be key to the successful reintegration of migrants, in cases where the disaster results in their return to countries of origin.

## ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY: A MICIC WEBINAR

On 9 September 2015, the MICIC Initiative hosted a global webinar on the role civil society plays in assisting and protecting migrants caught in countries experiencing conflicts or natural disasters; how greater collaboration with governments, businesses, and other stakeholders can better support their efforts; what frameworks and tools they require to better address the needs of migrants caught in countries experiencing crises; and, how civil society can contribute to the development of the MICIC Initiative's principles, guidelines and effective practices.

The event featured speakers from the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), the Global Coalition on Migration (GCM) and Caritas Lebanon, in addition to members of the MICIC Working Group and the IOM MICIC Secretariat. A [video recording](#) is available on the MICIC website.



A boy at a makeshift IDP camp for families displaced by a natural disaster in Badakhshan province © IOM Graydon 2014

## PUTTING MICIC INTO PRACTICE

By *Lorenzo Guadagno, Manager, MICIC Capacity Building Program, IOM*

At the same time the MICIC Initiative seeks to develop principles, guidelines and effective practices to better support migrants caught in countries in crisis, IOM is leading a project to create operational tools to improve the capacities of host and home countries to do just that.

The project "Reducing the Vulnerability of Migrants in Emergencies", funded by the United States of America, aims to address the specific challenges migrants encounter when facing situations of conflict or natural disaster while abroad. In partnership with the Governments of Guatemala, Mexico, Myanmar and Thailand, IOM is developing and will roll-out a comprehensive set of tools that can help government and non-government actors, in countries of origin and of destination, improve migrants' emergency preparedness and their access to emergency and recovery assistance. The project builds on the evidence and experiences accumulated by diplomatic services and risk management actors around the world and collected through MICIC consultations.

IOM is working with consular services in Myanmar and Guatemala (two countries from which a large number of migrants originate) to strengthen their capacity to assist their nationals abroad caught in emergencies through measures such as: improved data collection on the number of migrants and their location; preparedness planning; and, capacity to deploy resources and personnel in the event of a crisis. IOM is developing an e-learning tool to train consular staff and will work to improve information management systems.

In parallel, IOM is working with Mexico and Thailand (two countries hosting a significant number of migrants) to foster the inclusion of foreign nationals in emergency preparedness, response and recovery. A training tool for civil protection staff and representatives of other relevant emergency management actors will be created and rolled out at national and local levels. IOM seeks to promote coordination among relevant institutional actors, improve risk awareness among migrant groups, and support efforts for migrants' inclusion at the community level in locations with high concentrations of migrants.

# MICIC AND GLOBAL/REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES ON MIGRATION

Global and regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs) play a key role in highlighting issues important for the development and implementation of the MICIC Initiative's principles, guidelines and effective practices.

The MICIC Initiative was launched at the May 2014 meeting of the **Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)** in Sweden and has maintained a close relationship with the GFMD ever since. At the 8th meeting of the GFMD October 12-16 in Turkey (during the civil society, government and "common space" meetings), members of the Initiative's Working Group highlighted the needs of migrants caught in countries in crisis and encouraged engagement in the inclusive consultation process. The relationship between the MICIC Initiative and the GFMD's agenda is clear: crises disrupt the socio-economic well-being of migrants, their families and their home and host communities. Improved integration of the concerns of migrants into preparing for, responding to and recovering from crises can help save lives, reduce vulnerability, protect the rights of migrants and support more sustainable recovery for migrants and communities.

The **Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA)** was established in 2000, to facilitate cooperation within the Southern Africa Development Community and contribute to improved regional migration management. MIDSA raises awareness on challenges and best practices, and has discussed a broad range of issues including the protection of vulnerable migrants, refugees and asylum seekers travelling in mixed and irregular

flows. In the outcome Declaration from the 3rd Ministerial-level MIDSA consultation in Zimbabwe, July 2015, MIDSA Ministers took note of the MICIC Initiative and the forthcoming MICIC regional consultation for Southern and Eastern Africa.

The **Regional Conference on Migration ("RCM" or "Puebla Process")**, established in 1996, engages its eleven member countries in North and Central America plus the Dominican Republic, observer countries and regional and international organizations, as well as a network of civil society organizations to share information, experiences, and best practices. With a focus on promoting cooperation, the RCM prioritizes migration policy and management, human rights of migrants, and migration and development. Costa Rica and the United States shared aims of the MICIC Initiative and welcomed RCM member countries' engagement at the RCM Vice-Ministerial and technical meetings in 2014 in Nicaragua.

Since 2005, IOM has organized with its partners regular global meetings of the Chairs and Secretariats of RCPs. The **5th Global RCP** meeting with representatives from some 18 RCPs took place 21 – 22 October in Egypt, hosted by the League of Arab States. Among other topics participants discussed the Initiative and the plight of migrants, with a view to exploring how relevant RCPs can provide input to the principles, guidelines and effective practices and how the RCPs can utilize the final MICIC product in their practical work at the regional level.



IOM distributes non-food items to Haiyan affected families from Escalante City, Philippines © IOM Motus 2014

## MICIC TERMS AND CONCEPTS

### *What do we mean by Crises?*

The MICIC Initiative focuses on two types of crises whose magnitude demands a significant humanitarian response by the authorities of the country experiencing the crisis, countries of origin and/or by the international community: (1) natural disasters; and (2) conflicts.

## ENGAGE IN THE MICIC INITIATIVE

### Share your practice

We invite you to share notable practices, tools and innovative ideas for protecting and assisting migrants in countries experiencing a crisis.

We will collect information from a variety of sources and through different processes in order to produce principles, guidelines, and effective practices for all relevant stakeholders – governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and migrants themselves.

Share your practice through our [online form](#) on the [MICIC website](#)

Subscribe to this Newsletter at  
<http://micicinitiative.iom.int/connect/join-newsletter>