SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE GFMD

"Migration Profiles as a Tool for Informed Policy Making, Integration and Reintegration, and Emergency Response"

Manila, Philippines
20-21 October 2011

Organized and hosted by:	**Department of Labor and Employment, Government of the Philippines**
In Collaboration with:	**Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines; Swiss GFMD Chair; and IOM**
Supported by** (funding entities)**:	**Swiss Development Agency; IOM**
Workshop Coordinator:	**Ms. Carmelita Dimzon, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Philippines**
Rapporteur:	**Department of Foreign Affairs & Department of Labor and Employment, Philippines**
Participants:	**Colombo Process and ASEAN Countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam); labor receiving and sending countries (Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, South Korea, Switzerland); international organizations, academia, civil society**
Total number of participants:	**Fifty-two (52)**

1. Introduction/Summary

Data on migration are often scattered among different ministries, and also between countries of origin and destination pointing to the need for developing an evidence-based tool for managing migration issues. **Migration Profiles (MP),** first proposed by the European Commission in 2005, have evolved in recent years from just another national report on migration trends into a cost-effective tool to promote policy coherence on migration and development. As an *output,* MPs constitute an essential knowledge management and reference tools in migration governance which can be updated on a regular basis; as a *process,* they foster continuing dialogue, coordination

and capacity-building among government agencies and other stakeholders; as an *outcome,* they help countries to come up with more coherent, well-informed national policies and strategic plans on migration and development, to implement responsive service programmes, to monitor the effectiveness of such programmes and to inform various publics and stakeholders on a timely basis. Last year's GFMD, held in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, called for widespread government adoption of MP, prompting for the conduct of a series of regional thematic workshops on Migration Profiles this year, with the first two already held in New York *(Migration Profiles: Developing Evidence-Based Migration and Development Policies)* and Georgia *(Migration Profiles: Lessons Learned).*

2. **Key issues and outcomes of the Workshop**

The two-day workshop was composed of several sessions including presentations from experts on the concept and modalities of country migration profiles, sharing of best practices of countries on the usefulness of migration profiles in informed policy-making, a workshop on the issues and challenges in the formulation of country profiles and how they can be overcome and a per country exercise on the first strategic steps to undertake in the development of migration profiles. (Please refer to Annex 1: Conference Agenda).

In her welcome remarks, Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz of the Department of Labor & Employment emphasized the importance of information in responding to the needs of migrants effectively and immediately—specifically in crafting policies in response to emergency situations and to issues concerning host country integration, and home community reintegration. She likewise noted that cooperation and dialogue among and within governments are crucial to migration management as well as the shared responsibility of governments—both sending and receiving—in protecting migrants. Ms. Beata Godenzi representing the GFMD Swiss Chair emphasized that developing migration profiles should be considered not just a tool, but as a process in formulating migration policy as it evolves through time, depending on the needs of each government. Mr. Ovais Sarmad of IOM Philippines highlighted the importance of partnership and cooperation among governments and partners, as well as the need for horizontal and vertical integration of data to advance analytical techniques.

The first session "Migration Profile: Concept, Template, and Process" gave way to presentations which provided some guide on the concepts of migration profiles,

migration data systems, core migration indicators and exposed the participants to recent projects such as the EU-UNDP Joint Migration & Development Initiatives, which built new sets of migration data. Representatives from the governments of labor sending countries, international organizations, and the private sector were able to develop a common understanding of the concept of a Migration Profile (MP) and on how MP can contribute to policy development and greater policy coherence, and migration and development in general.   The second session, "Migration Profiles: Sharing of Good Practices and Practical Applications," provided a venue for the participants to share experiences in deriving gains from the development of migration profiles. Vietnam shared its experience in using migration data to mainstream migration into development planning; South Korea presented on the importance of having data to come up with its policies and programmes geared towards designing responsive integration and reintegration programs for migrants specifically foreign brides of Korean nationals; the Philippines shared its experience in rescue and repatriation missions for overseas Filipino workers in times of crises and how migration data was essential in the carrying out such missions.

Following this session was a workshop facilitated by the EU Delegation in the Philippines to further explore the different issues necessitating the development of country migration profiles as well as common challenges on migration profile development and how these can be overcome. From the free-flowing discussion, it became apparent that several forces draw the need for organized migration data. Among these are: the need for improved systems for protection of migrants in host communities; the need for a more effective response to the repatriation of nationals in crisis situations; and the need for understanding the characteristics and issues of migrants in order to produce relevant policy-decisions. Concerns common to many of the participating countries include the issue of brain drain/gain; the hesitation of countries, especially host destinations, to share data; the interests of labor sending countries to maintain a competitive labor market positioning; and the need to identify irregular migrants. The discussions were frank about the challenges besetting the countries' capacity to organize migration data and cooperate with different institutions and governments. Among the difficulties are the lack of resources in terms of government budget, technology, and personnel; the conflicting interests of receiving and sending countries in using migration data, especially concerning irregular migrants; the lack of political will sense of ownership and broad understanding of migration issues; and the

inability of systems to track down irregular migration, trafficking and other illegal activities of illegal entities. The participants also pointed out that there are no universal terminologies concerning migration data and that not all data are in the English language which could facilitate data sharing and understanding. Furthermore, the varied definitions of terminologies, collection methodologies and formulas in computing variables make it difficult for existing data to be comparable. The use of common terminologies, common formulas, common methods and a common language was therefore encouraged. (Please see Annex 2: Workshop Outputs).

The third session facilitated by the ILO was "Mapping of Existing Migration Gaps and Needs: Towards Region-Wide Adoption of MP". IOM provided a brief summary of submissions of the migration mapping survey that was still a work-in-progress. The goal was to survey existing migration data in CP and ASEAN countries. The mapping survey showed that there are indeed gaps in most of the country submissions and recommendations concerning improvement of the quality of data collection, definition of categories and terminologies and harmonization of international migration data were put forward. The second half of the session involved the presentation of a representative from the Scalabrini Migration Center in the Philippines and its initiatives in developing the Migration Information System in Asia (MISA). Inspired by the Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which, since the 1970s, pioneered a system for continuous reporting, updating and sharing of international migration data among member-countries/areas, the MISA was envisioned to be a regularly updated database, with a special focus on Asia, that is freely shared with different stakeholders. SMC admits that one of the challenges in maintaining the MISA was the lack of resources and lack of quality of data that are collected by countries. The floor was opened for discussion after the session and one of the participants pointed out that the focus of the discussion was on temporary / labor migrants – she highlighted that an integrated collection system and profile creation is just as important for permanent migrants. Another participant distinguished between technical issues and institutional issues in developing the data systems. A third participant noted that the focus has been on legal, academic, economic and political issues of the movement of people and stressed that GFMD processes must also address the cultural impact and social costs of migration. Meanwhile, the involvement of all stakeholders as well as public and private partnerships was brought up as some of the ways to counter the obstacles enumerated. After the third session, the

country participants were encouraged to draft action plans indicating the specific measures they may take to initiate the development of migration profiles in their respective countries. Their strategic first steps were shared in an open forum. (Please see Annex 3: Action Planning Outputs.)

3. Conclusion

The event was considered a success, as articulated in the concluding statements made by representatives from the different participating governments and international organizations. The discussions were specific and honest, and all of the governments expressed their desire to implement the formulation of migration profiles for their respective countries. In the closing remarks, the 2011 Swiss Chair of the GFMD encouraged the participants to develop the plans further upon their return to their respective countries and submit these plans to the GFMD Chair along with their respective country reports.

For purposes of future discussions, the following questions are put forward:

a. To what extent can Migration Profiles contribute to policy development and greater policy coherence, and enhance the evidence-based quality of policies on migration and development?

b. What forces or pressures draw the need for organized migration data?

c. What are the challenges besetting the countries' capacity to respond to such pressures and demands for organized migration data?

d. What measures can be feasibly undertaken to counter these obstacles?

e. How ready are the countries in integrating or harmonizing information systems?

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