



Augustinians International



## **CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM FOR CO-OPERATION ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

**Outcome of Satellite Meeting in Preparation for the Civil Society Days on Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016  
Held at Bolton White Hotel, Abuja 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

### **CONVERNERS/ORGANIZERS**

Global Forum on Migration and Development, Civil Society; Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE); Augustinians International (AI); Centre for Women Studies and Intervention (CWSI); African Foundation for Development (AFFORD); and West African Observatory on Migration

### **BACKGROUND**

Migration is a global burning issue and has generated numerous dialogues and initiatives around the world. These include the annual meetings of the global forum on migration and development (GFMD) with its next gathering scheduled to hold in Dhaka in December 2016; the adoption of the agenda 2030 on sustainable development goals and the UN General Assembly summit on large movements of refugees and migrants held on September 2016. These meetings underscore the importance of migration in sustainable development matrix. These international efforts and dialogues are to streamline migration governance mechanism and coherence, and change the negative perception of migration. Civil society organizations play key roles in mobilizing and supporting these international efforts. Many a time, dialogues on migration takes place at regional and global levels but not as much as the country level. Realizing this fact, the international steering committee for the civil society days in the GFMD, planned to start this year's GFMD with satellite meetings in different countries and regions of the world. It was against this background that this meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> October was held in Nigeria among local and

national civil society organization to gather on-the-ground country's perspective on migration and development to enrich the GFMD Dhaka, 2016.

Though majorly a civil society event, it was well attended by a wide spectrum of stakeholders in migration dynamics including the government agencies, UN and other international agencies in the administration of migration and refugees.

The conference was perhaps one of the most insightful discussions on migration and refugees ever held in Nigeria. It featured an array of erudite speakers locally and internationally. The discussions covered a wide depth of field in Nigerian migration and refugee dynamics. In line with global dialogues theme, the conference focused on how best to harness the benefits of migration while minimizing its negative effects and in deepening the understanding of migration and refugees dynamics such that there would be a change in the perception of migration in Nigeria. Participation was interactive, involving the views of the various organizations and agencies that attended the conference. The conference succeeded in throwing light on the efforts and gaps in the Nigerian system of responding to migration and refugees.

There are various activities and efforts by the government of Nigeria towards a constructive national management of migration such as the creation of the office of special assistance of the president on diaspora, the May 13, 2015 signing of the National Migration Policy and a host of others activities and services provided by National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), etc and the collaboration of the UN system and other agencies in this regard. The strategic position of the civil society as a key player, no matter how minimal, was supportive to these efforts in migration governance in Nigeria. These notwithstanding, there was a startling revelation that migration and refugees' issues have not received enough attention and collaboration that they ought to have been given by government and the civil society in Nigeria.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

Two major challenges are identifiable; firstly, there has been lack of communication among Nigerian civil society organization on issues of migration and the protection of the rights of migrants. This is a gap that has limited the capacity of Nigerian CSOs to be pro-active on migration issues or to canvass common position on the subject.

Secondly, there is an obvious gap in the capacity of both the society and the government agencies and entities managing migration dynamics. Lack of capacity to initiate and sustain interventions in migration issues is a critical gap. It is thus recommended that the conveners should organize a capacity building workshop for critical stakeholders in migration and refugee dynamics. This is in furtherance of building advocacy momentum for migrant and refugees. In view of this, and for wider impact and inclusiveness, critical stakeholders who were not represented at the meeting should be contacted and included in future actions on migration.

### ***CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK FOR MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT FORMED***

The conference recorded a land mark achievement as the participants representing various organizations took the decision that culminated in the formation of a conglomerate body named “Civil Society Network for Migration and Development (CSNMD).”

The network is formed for the purpose of strengthening dialogue and collaboration among civil society organizations working on any aspect of migration and refugees in Nigeria. The Network provides a collective platform for Action. The great benefit expected is that migration and refugees-focused NGOs will be able to better achieve collective goals, amplify voices, increase visibility, better engage governments, and other stakeholders, through allied interventions and advocacy for the advantage of a critical mass—migrants, refugees, IDPs and their families.

For the avoidance of doubt, the network does not replace existing NGO cooperation on migration but provides a space for all such networks to have a single umbrella. In furtherance of this objective; it was agreed that the convener should create a website for the purpose of information dissemination, experience sharing, contributions among member NGOs/Civil society organization and civic education on migration.

A great benefit envisaged from the network is that it provides link opportunity for civil society actors in migration and allied issues to connect with the regional and international civil society migration and development network initiatives such as MADE Migration and Development Civil Society Network.

Furthermore, in fulfillment of a major objective of the conference, the network will create an enabling environment for continuous stakeholders’ consultation that will sharpen migration policies and programs as well as ensure for a better protection of the rights of migrants, refugees, IDPs and their families.

### **NIGERIAN’S CIVIL SOCIETY POSITIONS ON MIGRATION ISSUES FOR PRESENTATION AT GFMD 2016 SUGGESTED**

A major intent and purpose of convening the civil society National Cooperation on Migration and Development in Nigeria is to acquaint Nigerian Civil society with GFMD process and civil society point of engagement in the process and prepare them for a meaningful participation at the 2016 (GFMD) in Bangladesh. This purpose was successfully achieved. Participants suggested the issues, through syndicate brainstorming, that Nigeria should bring to the table in Dhaka. In total, a seven point suggestion was submitted; these include implementation and monitoring of the migration related targets of the SDGs, mobility within the region; and alternative narrative to change the negative perspective of migration. The articulation of the issues through group discussion evidences the spirit of co-operation and the commitment and enthusiasm of the Nigerian civil society to be a key actor in shaping and steering the dynamics of migration towards a better world where every citizen of the world moves and lives happily in dignity and respect for Human rights.

It is expected that the Nigerian Civil Society network for migration and development will closely examine the suggestion made towards GFMD 2016 and thereof develop a concrete country CSO position for strong participation in Bangladesh. There is a need to sustain the gains of the conference through post-GFMD communication and interaction with the organizations that attended the conference. This will deepen the multi-sectorial and integrated approach that have been initiated and to foster cooperation among the migration action in public service and the civil society.

## **CONCLUSION**

The conference was all of four things, auspicious, pragmatic, informative and decisive. It birthed a milestone outcome of a network which is poised to become a platform for action for CSOs who are actors for migration and development intervention. It has stimulated a process for migration and refugee issues to be addressed through an integrated or combined effort of all stakeholders and was able to bring out migration and refugee from the closet to the arena of public sensibilities.

It is hoped and there are reasons to believe that both the CSOs and the government, through sustained interactions, will reposition to effectively tackle the administrative and policy gaps faced on daily and routine basis on migration.

Finally, it is appropriate to recapitulate that the expectations that geared the conference was to an optimum degree fulfilled; it has added a realistic dimension and gave impetus for post-GFMD and Agenda 2030 follow up. It has also provided the needed platform and opportunity for government, international and local agencies, private sector and CSOs to have deeper understanding of migration. It provided a compass directing Nigeria towards a transformative migration Agenda that works for sustainable development for all.

## **List of Organizations and Government Agencies in Attendance**

### **International and Government Agencies**

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)

Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS)

National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI)

National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP)

### **CSOs**

21st Century Community Empowerment for Youth and Women Initiative

African Centre for Citizens Orientation  
African Centre for Entrepreneurship and Information Development (ACEIDEV)  
African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)  
AgricMen  
Aim Princess Enterprises  
Arike Foundation  
Asabe Shehu Yar'adua Foundation  
Augustinian Advocacy for Justice and Peace (AJ, Nigeria)  
Augustinians International (AI)  
CAFOD, Nigeria  
CAFSO-WRAG for Development  
Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN)  
Catholic Caritas Federation of Nigerian (CCFN)  
Center for Women Studies and Intervention (CWSI)  
Centre for Youths Integrated Development  
Children and Young People Living for Peace  
Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)  
CLAIN  
Community Life Project; BESTOPTION BUSINESS CORE  
Federal Mortgage Bank Nigeria (FMBN)  
Foundation for Charity and Community Health, Nigeria  
Global Network for Sustainable Development  
Mater Dei Communication;  
Niger Delta Women's movement for Peace and Development  
Pri global ventures  
Refocusing Nigerians Talents Organization  
Smile Communications  
Social Transformation Empowerment and Programs Centre (STEP\_C)  
Srum & Associates Limited  
Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)  
University of Abuja Model United Nations  
Veritas University, Abuja  
West African Observatory on Migration  
Women Environmental Programme