

Civil Society Advocacy Paper **Rights and Migration**

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Background

Over the course of the 2023-2024 Global Forum for Migration and Development, under the French Chairmanship, civil society engaged in all the official GFMD activities as well as conducted various global, regional and thematic consultations. This encompasses participation and engagement from large and small NGOs, CSO networks, trade unions, migrant community groups, migrant and diaspora-led organisations, faith-based organisations, research and academia. A calendar of activities can be found [here](#).

This paper is a compilation and consolidation of the main priorities and recommendations around **Rights and Migration** that have come out from these consultations, and represents the breadth and diversity of civil society, as well as the nuances across the regions.

Key Messages: Global

The GFMD Civil Society Mechanism conducted virtual global consultations before each GFMD Preparatory Meeting in April and October, as well as a consultation before the GFMD Workshops on Climate and Narratives in June. Across these global consultations, and in the Civil Society Preparatory Meetings leading up to the Summit, participants put forward the following priorities:

Rights and Protection pre and during migration

- **Enhance regular pathways and ensure safety throughout migration corridors:** Key rights and safeguards must be established and protected throughout migration corridors including within transit countries, including rights to freedom from disappearances, right to life, and the upholding of rights in detention-situations and at borders.
 - **Address the externalisation of borders and the outsourcing of asylum processes,** which creates a significant increase in human rights violations in transit and relocation countries.
 - Ensure that regular pathways and regularisation programmes established are **rights-based and inclusive intersectionally inclusive.**
 - **Ensure rights to life, personal integrity and liberty in migration corridors must be ensured, and access to asylum guaranteed.** Recognise and protect documentation such as employment authorization documents (EAD), social security identification and regularisation, and accessibility considerations to safe and legal channels.
 - **Support humanitarian and education corridors as safe migration pathways,** and models of solidarity involving both institutions and civil society.

Rights and Protection during transit and in destination countries

- **Protect migrants' rights to participate and advocate for themselves:** The protection and upholding of migrants' rights must be ensured, including those enabling inclusive civic participation - such as the rights to information and association. It is important to shift the focus of varying governmental agendas towards a human-rights based approach which prioritises the rights of those on the move irrespective of their migration status. These must extend to ensuring migrant communities are included in decision-making at all levels.
 - This must also include rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining, and unionising in order to effectively combat exploitation of migrant workers. This implies removing policy and administrative obstacles to the legal recognition of diaspora and migrants' own forms of organisation, providing them legal training and financial support and valuing their experience in policy planning and decision-making.
- **Equality of rights and non-discrimination must be prioritised:** It is essential to emphasise the equality of rights and non-discrimination between citizens and migrants, as well as amongst migrants, regardless of nationality and category of migrants. The needs of migrant women, minors and LBGTQ+, must be included, e.g. granting labour migrants rights to move with infants / children, rights to quality healthcare, right to education, among others.
- **Accountability against Right Offenders:** The global community needs to commit to holding human rights offenders accountable for their actions. Migrants' rights are protected by international law and should be respected by all means, irrespective of the parties involved.
 - Respect the international law
 - Establish monitoring mechanisms for compliance with international human rights standards.

- **Ensure access to justice and the rights to humanitarian assistance / solidarity with migrants:** Rights-based approaches must be established to guarantee protection against criminalisation for those working in solidarity with migrants. Migrants' rights to access justice must be upheld, including by granting them access to free legal aid and interpretation / translation services. Ensuring such access necessitates legal and policy frameworks that enable the creation of civic spaces providing safe environments for migrants to exercise their freedoms. Policies and mechanisms must be set in place for migrants to voice their grievances should their rights be violated.
 - Alongside this, multi-stakeholder actors must combat the criminalisation of migrants, and ensure access to full justice with non-discrimination.

Advancing Rights and Protection Discourse and Frameworks

- **Actively discuss areas that may lead to restrictive narratives or further vulnerabilities:** Collaboration must be promoted and facilitated with stakeholders, particularly civil society and migrant communities, to discuss and target problematic topics (e.g. the development and integration of technology, evaluating whether rights protections create push-pull factors).
- **Ensure all rights-based discourse and policies utilise inclusive language, and adopt strong and inclusive intersectional and gender-sensitive perspectives.** This should include LGBTQIA+, child-friendly considerations, and accessibility-sensitivities.
 - Specific attention must be paid to guaranteeing the labour and social rights of women in domestic service.

Key Messages: Africa

The Abuja Forum, co-organised by African civil society and diaspora including PANDiMR, GRFDT, AFFORD UK, CSOMADE, ITUC Africa, and sponsored by FES, that took place from 30 Jan to 1 Feb 2023 in Abuja, Nigeria. The Forum aimed to build capacity and strengthen African engagement in global migration processes and frameworks, and also served as the launch of the 2023 GFMD civil society process. Learn more about the Abuja Forum, the Abuja Statement, and its outcomes [here](#).

Rights and Migration was a priority during the Abuja Forum. Participants put forward the following recommendations:

- Promote the human rights of migrants, social justice for migrants, decent work, inclusive integration policies and a focus on migration and development that reflects the realities of migrants and their communities.
- Protect women and child migrants on the move, guarantee their safety while on the move as well as provide safe avenues for their mobility.
- Adopt a humane approach in addressing security issues linked to migration to avoid the maltreatment of migrants and their families in the guise of security threats.
- Prioritise regularisation as a twin objective of providing legal pathways to the diversity of migrants.

Other Regional Best Practices

BEST PRACTICES- Central and Latin America

RED CLAMOR services mapping: RED CLAMOR, a network created in 2017, bringing together the human mobility pastoral departments of national LAC Bishops' Conferences, the Latin American and Caribbean Caritas, the network of religious men and women (CLAR), the Jesuits, the Scalabrinian sisters, the Good Shepherd's congregation, and other organisations, mapped all services provided by Catholic church organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean to protect, assist, and accompany migrants, refugees, displaced and trafficked persons along the migrations routes. It is a key instrument both for hosting communities and for the migrants themselves. They get to know where they can receive shelter, protection, assistance, food, psychological support, protection of their rights, legal counselling.

In 2022, RED CLAMOR also launched a digital campaign called **"The Darién is not the road, it is a stopper"** (**El Darién NO es el camino, es un tapón**), to provide accurate information for migrations around migration corridors, advocate for legal pathways (humanitarian flights) and raise public awareness on the Darién Gap, one of the world's most dangerous migratory routes at the borders between Columbia and Panama. Ten of thousands of migrants from Haiti, Venezuela, and elsewhere risk their lives each month to cross the Darien Gap, a dangerous jungle hike that can take ten or more days. Many migrants pay to be led by local guides, or "coyotes", and are vulnerable to smugglers and criminal groups that operate on the corridor. This route leaves child migrants vulnerable to death, and separation from parents and relatives while on this perilous journey.

BEST PRACTICES- Europe

The Caritas Confederation draws the attention to complementary migration pathways such as humanitarian, university and labour corridors as a tool to ensure safe entry and integration of refugees and other people in situations of vulnerability in host countries. In 2016, Caritas Italiana, the Community of Saint Egidio and the Tavola Valdese started specific programs called **'humanitarian corridors'** to relocate refugees and displaced people in situations of great vulnerability from Africa, the Middle East and Asia by signing several agreements with the Italian government. Since then, they have been implementing this mechanism that allows refugees - especially families with children, people with disabilities or with severe health issues, single women, and elderly - to reach Italy safely and legally.

So far, more than 1,300 (one thousand and three hundred) refugees and other displaced people from Ethiopia, Turkey, Jordan, Niger and Pakistan could be received in Italian host communities through the humanitarian corridors. All of these countries have faced the impact of huge crises affecting their neighbours over the past 10 years.

In addition to this, various Caritas organisations and other human mobility networks joined **EU-PASSWORLD**, a three-year project to enhance the links between community sponsorship and complementary pathways of admission for refugees and other people in situations of vulnerability. The project is implemented in 2022-24 by a consortium of 11 state, civil society and faith-based partners, and implements specific activities to expand labour and education complementary pathways in Belgium, Ireland and Italy. Projects co-funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund such as EU-PASSWORLD and **Displaced Talent for Europe (DT4E)** have been piloting different policy approaches to education and labour pathways.

Key Bibliography

- [Abuja Forum Report](#)
- Civil Society Global Consultation Summary Advocacy Points (April 2023)
- Civil Society Global Consultation Summary Advocacy Points (October 2023)
- Civil Society Preparatory Meeting: Global Civil Society Priorities (January 2024)