



Civil Society Key Advocacy Messages GFMD Roundtable 6: New Technologies and Digitalisation

Disclaimer: The following content reflects only the outcomes of the GFMD Civil Society Thematic Dialogues. Therefore, the challenges and opportunities outlined are limited to what emerged during the discussions. These ideas may evolve as further analysis and discussions take place.

Challenges

1. The Digital Divide and Uneven Access to Technology

- a. Increasing digitisation of services and processes by States increases barriers to communities with lower digital literacy.
- b. Increases gender gap and systemic inequalities due to prohibitive costs of devices, platforms, and limited internet coverage in remote areas.
E.g. CBP One app tool to request appointments to cross into the USA

2. Lack of or Misuse of Legislation

- a. Uneven and under-development and enforcement of legislation regarding data protection, misinformation, hate speech and ethical use of technology.
- b. Usage of cybercrime legislation to target and criminalise migrant leaders, activists and civil society, particularly through social media.

3. Spread of polarising and xenophobic migration narratives

- a. Social media algorithms and companies exacerbate polarising narratives and are still inadequately regulated or monitored for disinformation, misinformation and hate speech.
- b. Limited tools and education are being developed and disseminated to distinguish fake news and assess the impact of hate speech on migrants' lives.
- c. Limited capacity and resources to develop local content and effectively highlight positive contributions from migrants to their host communities.

4. Prioritisation of border securitisation and surveillance in technology development and implementation

- a. Technology use at borders is increasingly focused on surveillance and supporting the criminalisation of migrants, leading to increased violence, risk to life and non-human rights-based securitisation.
- b. Data collected at borders and in migration contexts are being used in contradiction to human rights, including being shared with authorities to commit forced returns, held in inaccessible ways to search and rescue operations, and with a lack of transparency and right to privacy around biometric data usage.
- c. Problems created by digitalisation based on automation and Artificial Intelligence models trained on flawed or biased existing data that risks exacerbating inequalities.

5. Issues with AI

- a. Racism, discrimination and bias in AI algorithms for assessing or accessing essential services, such as automated visa systems and job assessment, due to limited (often Western-centric) data, history and bias training.
- b. Lack of diversity in AI usage watch committees and monitoring bodies.
- c. Deepfake and AI-assisted scams disproportionately affect vulnerable communities with lower media and digital literacy- often affecting migrant communities.
- d. The negative environmental impact of AI development and usage contributes towards climate drivers of migration and vulnerability.

6. Issues with Data

- a. Ethical issues with data collection within migrant communities, data extractivism, and data ownership are still under-addressed.
- b. Misuse and unsafe storage of migrant data, including personal data such as biometrics.

Opportunities

1. **Ensure language justice:** Technology can help with faster, cheaper and accurate communication and interpretation to support migrant communities, provide information in Mother Language, and bridge the language divide.
2. **Utilise participatory-design technology and digitalisation to enhance access to services:**
 - a. Accessible online platforms can provide affordable education, fast remittance services, and opportunities for employment or upskilling.
 - b. Online, accurate and secure technology can expand protected access to justice, as well as support and assist migrants on migration routes and in employment.
 - c. Accessible digital platforms can be used to establish further support avenues for consular services, and provide solutions for diploma and qualification recognition, as well as access to portable identity documents.
3. **Enhance collaboration across regions and sectors:** innovative technology solutions could provide bridges between siloes of stakeholders or work areas and connect to rural areas.
4. **Support climate justice and the preservation of communities:**
 - a. Technology solutions can help predict the effects of climate change, as well as model for improved efficiency and preparation for inclusive and rights-based adaptation.
 - b. Solutions can help preserve and protect the intellectual property, culture and language of Indigenous Communities.
5. **Enhance information dissemination and access to rights in more difficult areas:** digital solutions are needed to disseminate accurate, accessible information at the grassroots levels and provide opportunities to organise where freedom of association is at-risk.
6. **Enhance ethical data collection and analysis to support evidence-based decision-making, policy and programme development:**
 - a. Opportunities to use real-time, big data analytics and enhanced ethical data collection methods to streamline and analyse migration data for needed programmes (e.g. skills matching).
 - b. Data can be used to track patterns and perpetrators of human trafficking and labour rights violations.

- 7. Utilise positive aspects of social media and technology to combat xenophobia and discrimination:**
 - a. Diversify and utilise accessible content formats to disseminate accurate information.
 - b. Ethically utilise social media as a data collection tool for situation and needs assessment, collaborating with people on the move and regional diaspora.