



REPORT OF 2019 NATIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUE

Localising the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: Developing a National Implementation Action Plan

Banquet Hall, State House, Aso Rock Villa, ABUJA - FCT

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By

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the importance of celebrating the life and contributions of migrants in human and social development of the world and thus set aside 18th December of each year as international migrants' day.

This event has taken varied shape of commemoration in different global, regional and national communities. It has become so emphasized that the event of this day takes seriously the issues of the conditions of migrants and other aspects that form the global migration dynamics which continues to increase in magnitude of numbers, opportunities, challenges and prospects.

Nigeria has since 2014 institutionalised National Migration Dialogue (NMD) as its own unique way of celebrating the world's International migrants' day. On this day, issues of concern to the Nigerian migration perspective and management are discussed based on the contingency of the moment.

The 2019 NMD, 5th in the series, was celebrated with a focus on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration adopted in Marrakesh, Morocco in the first intergovernmental conference on migration, December 09-10, 2018. With the theme "Localising the GCM: Developing National Implementation Action Plan," the NMD took step towards an agenda setting for effective way of developing the framework of action plan that is rooted in Nigeria perspective with hope of proffering practical solution to unique Nigeria migration issues within the GCM agenda.

The event attracted the support and participation of key migration actors and partners including the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as well as members of the Nigerian migration management architecture, and representatives of local and grassroots communities. These actors participated in the two sessions of the event that included technical session which offered them the opportunity of engagement with the GCM text. From conversations that took place in the various thematic groups that looked at the twenty-three objectives of the GCM, some key recommendations were generated as guide towards the development of the national implementation action plan.

II. ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CSOs – Civil Society Organizations

ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States

EU – European Union

FEC – Federal Executive Council

FMLE – Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment

FMHDS – Federal Ministry of Humanitarian, Disaster management and Social Development

GCM – Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

HOD – Head of Department

ILO – International Labour Organization

IOM – International Organization for Migration

MDAs – Ministries, Departments and Agencies

MIDWA – Migration and Development in West Africa

NCFRMI – National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons

NMD – National Migration Dialogue

TWG – Technical Working Group

III. BACKGROUND

The National Migration Dialogue (NMD) to mark the International day of Migrants is a strategy adopted by the Nigerian migration management to sustain the increasing awareness on the importance of migration as a function of population dynamics with great potential for national development as well as a platform for identifying national migration priorities. The event is convened within the platform of the technical working group (TWG) of the national migration management architecture under the auspice of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), the coordinating agency of migration.

The NMD enables key stakeholders in the field of migration and development from across the country—government, civil society and international organizations the opportunity to discuss on a topical issue on migration in order to mainstream migration into the National development and governance strategies.

The 2019 edition of the NMD with the theme *Localising the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: Developing a National Implementation Action Plan* was held on the 17th day of December, at the Banquet hall of the State house, Abuja. The event enjoyed the technical and financial support of International Organization for Migration (IOM) under the “European Union, EU-IOM Initiative for Migrants’ Protection and Sustainable Reintegration in Nigeria;” and International Labour Organization (ILO). In attendance at the event include senior government officials from the members of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and members of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); members of the Diplomatic Corps and senior officials of United Nations agencies and other international organizations, senior executives of private sector organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs) and a cross section of the public.

The international community negotiated and adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration on December 19, 2018. The Compact was a result of a series and varied global attempts at sustainable response with sustainable impact to the reality of international migration with its gains, challenges and prospects. The Compact is a set of common frameworks, guiding principles and objectives that cover all dimensions of international migration. It provides for international cooperation and collaboration in responsibility sharing towards a better management of global migration for the benefit of the individual migrants and the countries involved.

Nigeria occupies a strategic position in global migration dynamic and discourse. The country participated actively in the entire processes of developing and adopting the GCM. On adoption of the Compact, Nigeria affirmed and pledged its commitment to the implementation of the Compact at the national and sub-national levels.

Dedicating this year’s dialogue to localising the GCM was timely and pertinent as it provided the platform for Nigeria to once again demonstrate its belief in the Compact and its commitment to realizing the Compact’s dreams of making migration work for all. Indeed, the Compact clearly recognizes ownership at various levels as important to its implementation.

IV. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The Overall Objective of the 2019 NMD was to develop a national action plan for the implementation of the GCM with measurable indicators.

Specific Objectives:

- i. To create awareness on the GCM
- ii. To develop a National Action Plan for the implementation of GCM
- iii. To seek local opinions on how best to manage migration dynamics for the benefit of all within the GCM.

V. ACTIVITIES

The dialogue event was organized in two sessions namely, opening and technical sessions.

A. Opening Session

Opening session featured remarks from stakeholders including representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Labour Organization (ILO), European Union (EU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE) and Ministry of Humanitarian, Disaster management and Social Development. There was also a presentation of the lead paper on the topic of “Making Migration Work for Us: the 2019 National Migration Dialogue,” as well as a piece of drama.

A1. Speeches

- i. The Hon. Federal Commissioner, National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), Sen. Basheer Garba Mohammed in his welcome speech underscored the importance of localising GCM maintaining that “the GCM has no value if it does not change the life of migrants. The realisation of this dream depends on local, national and regional disposition and actions towards the Compact.” He thus called on participants to focus on “Nigerian priorities yet not in isolation of the global realities to identify what values lie in the Compact for Nigeria and then make concrete recommendations to be fed into the action plan for better management of its national implementation.”
- ii. The IOM Chief of Mission, Franz Celestin, rightly noted that Nigeria is making history by joining the list of first countries taking a step to localise the GCM by developing an action plan for its implementation locally. He went on to highlight the interconnectedness of migration and security, socio-economic and political realities and policies. He lauded the NMD in its whole of government and whole of society approach as it offers everyone the space to contribute to the process of localizing the GCM. He concludes with pledging

IOM's continuous support to Nigeria in achieving the goal of localising the GCM and ensuring a better migration management.

- iii. International Labour Organisation's Country Representative for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone and Liaison for ECOWAS, Mr. Dennis Zulu, represented by Ms Agatha Kolawole highlighted ILO's engagement with migration through activities such sustaining international empowerment of migrants workers, enhancing the governance of labour migration including skill mobility and protection of labour migrants' rights and jobs. In Nigeria, ILO is supporting the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment in reintegrating returnee migrant workers, within the framework of the GIZ sponsored project. ILO is also working towards harmonizing the Labour Laws in the country, as well as working on Child mobility to protect children against child labour. She also informed the audience that ILO is collaborating with relevant agencies of government to strengthen the implementation of Alliance 8.7 aimed at ending child labour, Trafficking and modern day slavery. Accordingly, ILO sees 2019 National Migration Dialogue as an opportunity to promote effective collaboration and forge new partnership. She opined that the NMD availed stakeholders the opportunity to deepen mechanisms for the protection of migrants and investment in skills development in line with the principles of the GCM.
- iv. The Minister of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Dr. Chris Ngige, recalled that migration is multi-sectorial and cuts across various ministries. This is more so in the Nigerian situation where all aspects of the government feels the impact of migration. Speaking from labour perspective he underlined the fact that 60% of the national population is made up of the youth and less than 10% of this population has decent job and could thus be classified as "working poor." This situation has its huge implication for migration. In that light, he advised that the action plan must be structured in line with the thematic groups to fit into the Nigeria migration architecture.
- v. Head of European Union Delegation (EU) to Nigeria and ECOWAS Ketil Karlsen represented by Migration Officer, Elleni Zerzeloni, re-echoed the significance of this year's NMD in providing the opportunity to discuss local challenges emanating from the area of migration. She posited that development of an action plan for the implementation of the GCM is a step in right direction and recalled that over the years, the EU has been supporting in strengthening migration governance, Migration dialogue, return and reintegration processes in Nigeria.
- vi. On behalf of the ECOWAS Commissioner for Trade and Free Movement, represented by Dr. Tony Luka Elumelu (Head of Department HOD, Migration), in his speech commended the choice of the theme of the dialogue and the NCFRMI for its efforts as the migration coordinating agency and for its efforts in mainstreaming an international migration agenda, the GCM into a national programme. He informed that in Ghana forum, on 13 – 14 September, 2017, Migration and Development in West Africa (MIDWA) developed a way forward in addressing irregular migration and that six recommendations were adopted. He stated that migration initiatives remain critical to addressing migrant issues and that common approach is the way forward. In conclusion, ECOWAS lauded the Federal Government's Visa on Arrival Policy and encouraged Nigeria to develop an action plan that is in tandem with global standard and best practice.

- vii. The Minister of the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian, Disaster management and Social Development (FMHDS), Hajia Sadiya Umar Farouq praised the GCM as a milestone in global effort to manage migration for the greater good of the individual migrants and countries. She decried the situation that one year after the adoption of the GCM, the world is still beleaguered with rising spate of migration challenges particularly the irregular migration. She lamented the still prevalent reality of young men and women risking their lives in making perilous journeys across the Sahara Desert and even the Mediterranean Sea, looking for greener pastures. This situation according to her makes urgent the need to localise the GCM to facilitate its implementation.

She noted the importance of collaboration between the Government, academia, civil society, the private sector and other actors as crucial in the efforts to localise the GCM and to improve national mechanisms especially in coordination of all migration-related programmes.

A2. Lead Paper

The lead speaker, Prof. Joyce Uche Angela Ogwu in her paper, “Making Migration Work for Us: 2019 Migration Dialogue,” noted that the GCM is a dimension of history as this is the first time nation states are engaging in a cooperative behaviour to advance a common solution to a phenomenal need, namely migration. It is therefore an imperative as a nation to establish the framework of ownership of the GCM through the formulation of a National implementation plan which should bring in ideas, simple solutions and activities. Her paper indeed set the overarching tone for the day’s event as it took the participants through the global migration in its complexity and multifaceted nature as well attempts seeking programmes for its management.

A3. Drama presentation

Words, ideas and expressions can convey a lot yet these become more effective when they are couched in genre and medium common to the people. The highlight of the opening session was the drama presentation capturing in a simple but captivating manner, the typical Nigerian migration reality of today. A veritable sensitizing episode, the drama presented a wholistic picture of migration from the Nigerian perspective holding together, the good, the bad and the ugly sides of it. Most especially, it also showcased the various efforts in forms of programmes, and policies by the Nigerian government and people in collaboration with the partners in mitigating the negative effects of migration while harnessing its potential. The drama was presented by the Ama Ijere troupe of the Centre for Migration Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

B. Thematic

B1. Setting the Context

Thematic session within which the core business of the day namely, looking at the GCM implementation from the Nigerian perspective began with a plenary session of setting the context. The facilitator of the session, Dr. Emeka Xris Obiezu in his presentation “the GCM at a Glance,” gave a brief overview of the GCM outlining its meaning, vision, process, history, guiding principles, objectives as well as popular characterization of the Compact. This context setting answered the question “why are we here?” reminding the participants of the core objectives of the 2019 NMD, namely familiarising with the GCM and seeking Nigerian ownership through setting agenda for the national implementation action plan.

B2. Breakout session

To facilitate an inclusive and participatory engagement with this process of setting the national framework of action plan for the GCM implementation, the participants were grouped into six using the TWG thematic grouping. The grouping format is shown in the figure 1 in the annex. Under this grouping the entire twenty-three objectives of the GCM were discussed. A set of guiding questions were used to coordinate the discussions so that they stay on the theme to ensure that the goal and outcome of the event is realised. The set of guiding question as contained in the reporting template of the group discussion is shown in figure 2 in the annex.

B3. Plenary session: Outcome of the Discussions

The outcome of the thematic groups’ discussions was presented in a plenary session of panel discussion among the group leads. The detail of the outcome is herewith attached as part of the annex to the report. This outcome will be transmitted to the TWG for further development of the GCM national implementation action plan.

VI. CONCLUSION: EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

It was indeed obvious that the theme of 2019 NMD was very apt, timely and urgent as discussions both in the opening and technical sessions were engaging and insightful. Indeed the overall goal of the NMD, namely setting the agenda for the development of national action plan for the implementation of the GCM was achieved as practical opinions coming from people from the grassroots as well the policy formulation were engaged in the exercise. Nevertheless, it is important to note that a topic of this nature demands more time that cannot be achieved in one day dialogue.



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