

**ESCWA's Contribution to the Thirteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration
(New York, 12-13 February 2015)**

The member agencies of the working group have agreed

designed to assist countries in providing a more attractive finance and investment environment for their expatriate communities and ensuring that resources are channeled towards development.

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) proposed by the OWG take into account migrants and international migration issues given their importance to the achievement of sustainable development. Direct reference is made in the proposed SDGs to the protection of labour rights and the promotion of safe working environments; promoting inclusion on the social, economic and political levels regardless of origin; increasing well-managed, regular and protected migration and mobility of people, including through the reduction of the transaction costs of remittances; eliminating trafficking of women and children; increasing the retention of health workforce in developing countries; and enhancing capacities to produce and make available good quality accurate disaggregated data, including by migratory status⁵. In fact, integrating migration and migrants' issues in the SDGs is likely to strengthen current efforts of Arab countries to improve migration governance in line with global and regional norms and conventions towards maximizing the development benefits of international migration and reducing its negative impacts.

As intergovernmental negotiations on the SDGs progressed over the course of 2014, focus on migration issues and migrants was largely maintained.

Accordingly, it is clear that the efforts of various stakeholders to maintain specific reference to migrants and international migration have been fruitful. Reading the OWG Outcome Document from a migration/migrants lens shows the importance accorded to these issues by governments, and highlights the proposed SDGs and the future development agenda as a framework to address key issues, most importantly the protection of migrants.

Therefore, as progress towards agreeing on the final content of the SDGs is made, it is important to:

- Maintain focus on issues of migration and migrants as this will provide Governments with a global framework to address these issues, noting that most of the development funding will be channelled through this framework.
- Maintain focus on 'the vulnerable', thereby reaffirming the UN Secretary General people-centred approach to sustainable development and supporting the intensification of development efforts to bridge existing gaps between 'the vulnerable' and the mainstream population.⁹ The vulnerable' as a broader category could encompass socio-demographic groups "at high risk of discrimination"¹⁰ including migrants, a group that has "traditionally [been] marginalized and socially excluded ... in the Arab region"¹¹.
- Ensure that means of implementation dealing with migration issues remain part and parcel of the SDGs.
- Push to reintegrate in the SDGs a specific reference to displaced persons and refugees at the level of relevant targets and means of implementation.
- Formulate indicators that take into consideration migrants and migration issues and dynamics as this is important to facilitate the monitoring of and reporting on progress in the implementation of development goals and targets and to help move the migration agenda forward.

⁹ United Nations (2014) Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, A/69/302.

¹⁰ United Nations (2014) Framework of Actions for the Follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014, A/69/62, page 22.

¹¹ ESCWA (2014) Social Justice in the Policies of Arab States: Discussion Paper (E/ESCWA/28/8).