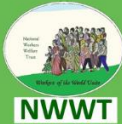


ANDHRA
PRADESH-TELANGANA
STATE-LEVEL
CONSULTATION
on the Implementation
of the Global Compact
for Safe, Orderly and
Regular Migration
(GCM)

Jeevan Jyothi Centre
Hyderabad, India
13-14 September 2019





**ANDHRA
PRADESH
TELANGANA
GCM
CONSULTATION
REPORT**

Background

In the second week of December 2018, United Nations (UN) member countries adopted the first ever Compact for international migration (GCM) in Marakkesh, Morocco. A non-binding agreement, the GCM aims to better govern migration at local, national, regional and global levels, including reducing the risks and vulnerabilities migrants or refugees face at different stages of their journey.

As a signatory of the compact and as a very important migration country, India is expected to play a pro-active role in the implementation of the 23 objectives. The federal government structure of the country provides an opportunity to incorporate and engage the actors at the provincial and very local level in the implementation process. However, the government level negotiations and attempt to implement the objectives are yet to gain momentum. Since we are approaching the first anniversary of the compact, it is important to bring state and non-state actors on one platform and work towards the achieving the GCM objectives.

Unlike most of the countries of origin, India follows a federal system of government. Almost half of the provincial states are affected by International migration. Among them, a few of the state governments introduced various initiatives for the welfare of migrants. Moreover, there is an active presence of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Media, various diaspora and returnee organisations at the provincial level. As per the implementation process of the GCM, it is important to engage various actors at the local level for the successful implementation of the objectives. In Indian context, the actors at the provincial level can propose policy-suggestions to both state governments and national government to ensure the effective implementation of the objectives.

The CSOs and other stakeholders at the state-level with the financial and technical support of Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Solidarity Center and International Labour Organisation (ILO) have decided to organise state-level consultations on GCM. Out of the three consultations planned, Hyderabad was selected as the venue for first consultation. The consultation was planned for two states Andhra Pradesh (AP) and Telangana. Due to the recent history of state bifurcation and homogenous nature of stakeholder activities, the organisers decided to conduct the consultation for two states together. Only a few states in India have set up specialised agencies to deal with the governance of their emigrants. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are among them.

The increasing number of migrants from both states coupled with the interventions of state and non-state actors made the consultation vital in the Indian context. The consultation was jointly hosted by National Workers Welfare Trust (NWWT) and Emigrant Welfare Forum (EWF). The consultation was financially supported by Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) with the technical support from ILO, Solidarity Center, and MFA.

Objectives

1. To identify the GCM objectives which are important to the state and country and develop an understanding on the challenges for the implementation in Indian context.
2. To lobby with the state and national government for inclusive participation of non-state actors in the implementation and review process of GCM.
3. To prepare a matrix which consists the details of policies and programs by stakeholders and suggestions to improve the existing initiatives related to 23 GCM objectives.

4. To develop a set of recommendations for the Government of India and both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state governments on the overall GCM implementation process.

The consultation was held at Jeevan Jyothi Centre, Begumpet, Hyderabad on September 13-14. Around 50 stakeholders participated in the two-day program.

Nature of Participants



The program witnessed participations from a diverse set of stakeholders include CSOs, Academia, State government, national-level bureaucrats, media, faith-based organisations, Trade unions (central and state trade unions) returnee associations, returnee migrants and students. List of major organisations are the following:

Civil Society Organisations – NWWT, EWF, Kindness society, Shaheen, Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) and People Action for Rural Awakening (PARA),MAKAAM (Mahila Kisan Adhikar Manch), Savitribhai phule seva sanstha, Montford Social Institute (MSI),Spandana, Pratheeksha social services ,Safai Karmachari Antholan, Bharathiya Mahila Sangam

Trade Unions – TRSU, Palamuru labour Union, CITU

Structure of the Two-Day Consultation

The programs began with the registration followed by an Inaugural session which consists of an inaugural address and perspectives from various eminent stakeholders from both states. After the inaugural session, an exclusive session for introducing the GCM document and objectives were planned. For ensuring constructive outputs, the break out sessions were divided into three. The first session would discuss the objectives 1-7, second session would look into objectives 8-14 and final session would discuss the rest of the objectives. After each break-out session, a presenter from each group was expected to share the outcomes of the discussion in the given matrix form. The first session was planned as post-lunch session and the next two sessions were planned for day 2.

Inaugural Session

After the registration, the inaugural session commenced with a group song from the members of NWWT. The song reminds the participants the need for ensuring welfare for the migrants, their hardship, sorrows, families and discrimination face by migrants. Followed by the song, Ms. Lissy Joseph of NWWT welcomed the gathering and the dignitaries on the dais. During her welcome speech, she spoke about the emergence of GCM and called for better co-operation from all stakeholders for the successful implementation of the objectives in India. She introduced and welcomed the speakers, Mr. B. M. Kumar IFS (the former diplomat), Professor Adapa Satyanarayana, Adv. Thripurana Venkatraman (former chairperson of women's commission), Mr. Narasimha Naidu (activist), Ms. Ashalatha (Trade unionist), Mr. Manikyal Rao (Activist), Mr. Rajasekhar (APNRT), Ms. Khalida (Migrant rights activist) and Mr. Rafeek (MFA) to the two day consultation program. Former ambassador Mr. B.M. Kumar delivered the keynote address. He shared his experiences as a diplomat and accepted the fact that the issues of international migration deserve more government interventions. He identified the lack of co-ordination within the ministry and between various ministries as the most important issue. He was optimistic about the GCM and expected that it would solve the present gap in governance. The keynote address ended with a call for more interaction between different actors in the state to fight for the emigrants. Ms. Thripurana Venkatraman shared her experience as the former chair person of Telangana and AP women's commission on dealing with the issues of women migrants. She underlined the fact that women migrants from the state are most vulnerable and both central and state governments are yet to find ways to manage these vulnerabilities. By citing good practices and examples from other countries, she demanded a comprehensive strategy for managing women migrants. After her speech, the participants had an opportunity to listen to an academic perspective from Prof. Adapa Satyanarayana and his core argument was related to the reluctance of central government to recognise illegal migrants. He wished that the compact would direct the state government to improve the existing governance structure. Then a different perspective from trade union was presented by Ms. Ashalatha of MAKAAAM. She spoke about the adverse drivers of migration including the anti-farmer policies of the state governments. She presented the stories of missing migrants, distress migration of women farmers and victims of trafficking from rural villages of Andhra Pradesh. Followed by Ms. Ashalatha, Mr. Narasimha Naidu who is a politician cum activist shared his perspectives. His speech focused more on current pro-migrant activities by Telangana government and urged the government to introduce welfare policies for the returnee migrants and their families. Another activist, Mr. Manikyal Rao who is the patron of an NGO called 'Kindness Society' which focuses on repatriation of mortal remain and rescue of migrant workers in distress. He demanded more government interventions to support the CSOs who conduct the rescue operations abroad. The state representative among the speakers, Mr. Rajasekhar, the former director of APNRT described about the efforts behind the formation of newly formed APNRT society and its welfare activities. He sought support from all the participants to expand the activities of APNRT to make it inclusive. The last speaker for the inaugural session was Ms. Khalida who works among the women migrants in distress in the old city of Hyderabad. She reported that they are focusing on educating the women to understand the disadvantages of marriage migration. Her major concern was the threat from the nexus between government- traffickers and police which fuels the irregular migration from the region and she demanded appropriate government support for migrants throughout the person's migration cycle. The session was concluded with the vote of thanks from Mr. Bheem Reddy of EWF who was one of the organisers of the program.

An Introduction to GCM

After the inaugural session, an exclusive session on GCM document and objectives was carried out by Prof. Adapa Satyanarayana in the regional language called Telugu. The session was facilitated by Mr.

Bheem Reddy. The speaker explained the processes of GCM draft preparations, zero draft preparation, Approval of the compact and the 23 objectives in detail. Since the document was in English, some of the participants were unable to understand crucial aspects in the document. The speaker used real-life examples and recent incidents to narrate the objectives. The session clearly paved the way for the discussion in the next two days. After the introductory session, the forum disbursed for breakout sessions and preparation of matrix.

Breakout Sessions and Preparation of Matrix

The breakout sessions for preparing the matrix started after lunch. Mr. Rafeek Ravuther, MFA and Lissy Joseph, NWWT explained the purpose of matrix and the various heads to the participants. A brief interaction with selected facilitators were also conducted to provide clarity on the matrix. The participants were divided into four groups and each group consisted of 10-12 members. The selected facilitators were Mr. Swadesh of EWF, Ms. Grace of NWWT, Mr. Trilok of Hyderabad Central University and Ms. Alphonsia. The groups were divided by ensuring inclusive distribution of various stakeholders in all groups.

Session 1

In session 1, the groups discussed GCM objectives 1-7 and attempted to fill up the matrix based on the existing situation in both states. After a vibrant discussion for 75 minutes, the groups were ready for the presentation. The group 1 was led by Ms. Alphonsia and Mr. Rajasekhar. The presentation was facilitated by Mr. Rafeek, Ms. Lissy and Mr. Bheem Reddy. They had planned the first presentation as a bench mark for rest of the presentations and sessions. Misconceptions and lack of clarity in the objectives were cleared immediately by the facilitators and it led to a productive interaction which was reflected in rest of the presentations. In the first session, as expected lack of any kind of official data at



the state level including survey or census of international migrants was a major concern. However, both government officials and CSOs shared their attempts to collect data in the form of 'electronic data gathering' and village surveys. All stakeholders sought for a data sharing between state and central governments and opined that absence of data is a hindrance to convince government to frame comprehensive policies. The stakeholders from Andhra Pradesh identified the financial burden caused by agricultural distress as the major adverse reason for migration.

In the case of Telangana, intergenerational poverty and unemployment among youths were

identified as the adverse drivers. Since these problems were existing in the state for a long time, the stakeholders were able to identify a number of existing government programs in both states. But they raised concerns over the implementation of all these programs due to widespread corruption.

The landlessness among the poor was identified as another hindrance in availing most of the programs. Presenters opined that the CSOs and Trade Unions (TUs) are constantly engaging with the issues of the people in distress and shared many good practices by non-state stakeholders in the presentation. The presenters discussed the recent programs introduced by Andhra Pradesh Non-Resident Telugu Society (APNRT) and NRI cell Telangana with the help of TOMCOM (Telangana Overseas Manpower Company) and OMCAP (Overseas Manpower Company of Andhra Pradesh). They reported that the pre-departure orientation and recent recruitment drive for domestic workers and semi-skilled workers had positive impact among migrants. Group 1 managed to identify the recent Andhra Pradesh government programs which ensure pathways for regular migration and adequate documentation with the help Mr. Rajasekhar, the former director of APNRT. The stakeholders suggested that a permanent system should be developed to provide free Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) and documentation assistance at district level in both states. Apart from the specific suggestions, a few groups demanded the formulation of Non-Resident Telugu (NRT) policy in both states in the first session. The CSOs assistance in documentation, grievance redressal and organising PDOT at the village level were appreciated by all groups. Recruitment and vulnerabilities in migration were the major areas of concerns in the session 1. The presence of sub-agents, trafficking and lack of information on the procedures were raised as the factors which are leading to irregular recruitment and increase in vulnerabilities. Stakeholders shared a common feeling that all actors are responsible for the failure to manage rampant illegal recruitment of women migrants in both states. However, they identified certain interventions like increasing rate of recruitment by the stat-run agencies and the formation of NRI police cell to deal with the illegal recruitment and vulnerabilities as positive steps. The stakeholders repeated the long-term demand of legalising the sub agents in the matrix and identified that an extensive campaign through visual, print and social media should be conducted and government should co-ordinate with CSOs and others to spread the awareness at grassroots level. Group 2 demanded that an awareness manual in Telugu language should be prepared by both departments in two states and distributed in all schools, colleges and other common places. The efforts by CSOs including support mechanism for women migrants, case filing for distressed migrants and awareness programs conducted in associations with Recruitment Agents (RA) and government agencies were discussed in the session. Overall, the session was the most vibrant among the three sessions in the two-day program. The intervention of the panel was helpful for the presenters to narrow down the points and direct the presentation as per the given matrix columns. The presentations from first session were completed on second day morning and the stakeholders were divided into three groups on day two and discussed GCM objectives 8-15.

Session 2

The three groups discussed 8 objectives and prepared the matrix within an hour. Mr. Trilok, Mr. Swadesh and Mr. Srinivas were representing the three groups in the discussion. The session commenced with the discussion on issues of missing migrants, smuggling and trafficking. Since Andhra Pradesh and Telangana experience highest number of trafficking and smuggling to other countries, many issues were raised by the stakeholders. The lack of government efforts to curtail the trafficking of women labour migrants especially domestic workers and the smuggling of women for sheikh marriages and sex work were severely criticised. However, the presenters reported the programs or

initiatives by governments which were shared by the government officials in the groups. Lack of a standard operating procedure (SOP) for dealing with the missing migrant issues and trafficking, the ineffectiveness of existing grievance mechanisms and information asymmetry among the rural people were recognised as the major reasons. They demanded strengthening of domestic anti-trafficking laws, periodical review of the migrant's status to reduce the missing cases, a direct co-ordination mechanism between state governments and Indian missions etc. to curb these practices. Again, many of the groups have the activities and efforts by CSOs were acknowledged including the case management, rescue operations for missing migrants and trafficking victims etc. A notable intervention by an NGO named as 'Shaheen' which works to curb the sheikh marriages among Muslim women in the old city of Hyderabad. They managed to bring down the rate of sheikh marriages and rescued and rehabilitated more than 500 women in the recent past. The discussion of these three objectives exposed the need for better co-ordination between government and other actors.

Even though the objectives 11,12 and 13 are not directly related to the state government's responsibilities, the stakeholder identified issues and came up with concrete suggestions on how to improve the present system. The high rate of corruption at the ports was a common concern. The unscientific screening methods and lack of visa fact checking or lack of 'offer letter validation' mechanism at the state level were raised in the discussion. Regarding the objective 13, the efforts by state government to support the migrants who seek amnesty were highly appreciated and group 1 stated that the support of state government provides encouragement for many migrants to return to home country rather than stay illegally in the host country. They demanded for a permanent fund to be set up by the state government agencies for supporting the amnesty seeking migrants. The presenters reported that most of the stakeholders demanded for the extensive use of technology to ensure proper screening and sought the possibility of developing a comprehensive mobile application at the state level.

Regarding the consular support, the stakeholders raised the ill-treatment of embassy personals and lack of man power in Indian missions at the major host countries. They wanted the state government to act as an intermediary between the migrants and the Indian missions. Further, group 3 pointed out the importance of inviting major countries of destination from both states to open consulate in the two states. They felt that it would surely increase the possibilities of negotiation for both state and non-state actors. They added that a few CSOs already conduct consular visit to update the status of migrant's in distress. The objective 15 talks about the provision of basic services. The major focal point of discussion regarding this objective was about the possibility of providing basic services for the migrants and migrants family in the host country and about creating awareness among the migrant on the basic service provisions in the host country. The stakeholders felt the need to introduce social security schemes for migrants in the host country and a demand for preparing a separate module on basic available services in the major host countries in the pre-departure manual. The discussion on the first day had clearly helped the stakeholders to come up with a comprehensive matrix in the session 2. The session 3 discussed objectives 16-23 and the groups and presenters remained the same for the last session as well.

Session 3

Even though the break out session was cut short for 45 minutes due to time constraints, the stakeholders prepared the matrix within the available time frame. The groups had identified that the

state government and other actors at the state level have an important role to play in empowering the migrants and in eliminating all forms of discriminations. The presenters reported that a demand for providing comprehensive training about the socio-economic and cultural practices in the major countries before the departure was put forward during the discussion. The participants believed that the state government can provide better programs to ensure the inclusion of migrants. However, the campaigns including media campaigns by the CSOs and to a certain extent by the government helped the migrants to gain minimum understanding about the host country situations. Both the state has a long history of caste, class and gender discriminations.



The promotion of welfare policies and skill development programs by both governments were identified as potential programs for alleviating discrimination. CSOs efforts to identify the vulnerable sections of the population and support them were appreciated by many of the stakeholders. But the lack of sustainable initiatives by all parties were identified as vital concern. The stakeholders demanded special campaigning about recruitment, PDOT and migration related programs among the vulnerable sections in both states. The objective 18 is one of the rare

objectives which led to a comparison between two states during the discussion. It was due to the upper hand which Andhra Pradesh got with the formation of APNRT society. The lack of scientific skill training programs and training modules in both states were identified as a hindrance in skill development in both states. However, the stakeholders reported that APNRT has a comprehensive skill development program compared to 'no programs' in Telangana context. AP Skill development center initiated an international skill development center to train electricians, plumber, firefighting and masonry in 2019 with a certification from an international agency to match the demands from host country with the support of APNRT. The forum identified that APNRT's activities are way ahead of Telangana and demanded that the Telangana government should introduce skill-matching and skill development initiatives for migrants. Another observation was about the advantages of local-level skill development programs by CSOs. They managed to identify the exact beneficiaries and provide service based on the needs of the workers. The initiative by 'Shaheen' to provide 'certified mehndi' training as part of the rehabilitation of the victims of sheikh marriages was identified as a good practice by stakeholders and hailed as a successful program in terms of the number of placements in gulf countries. The discussion on objective 19 which points out the need to ensure conditions for migrants to contribute to the state government also led to the comparison between programs in both states. The forum recognised the investment incentives and investment campaigns by APNRT as an important factor in brining contribution from diaspora and migrants. The participants identified the lack of political will as a major reason for the absence of programs in Telangana. They suggested to set up an NRT investment company for channelling the investments and other contributions from the people abroad. Lack of knowledge about the procedures in transferring money was recognised as an important concern related to objective 20. The representative of group 3 demanded that the government should make sure that each migrant has a bank account before they leave the country for work. Respondents felt that it would reduce the leakages in remittances.

Further, they urged the government to negotiate with the banks to introduce special saving schemes for NRTs to ensure financial inclusion. The saving initiative by NWWT for migrant's families was appreciated by the participants as a 'good practice' and it was hailed as a success by all groups. Both state governments and non-state actors were criticised during the discussion of objective 21 on

reintegration of migrants. Even though the central government kept the responsibility of reintegration on state governments, both governments do not have any initiatives for reintegration of migrants till date. However, a few attempts made by CSOs (especially EWF) and TUs to provide support for returnee migrants for availing the government schemes were mentioned during the discussion. All the stakeholders unanimously demanded deliberate upscaling of CSO and state intervention on reintegration. The stakeholders mentioned that the recent labour recruitment Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) signed between state-run recruitment agencies with Oman and Kuwait as a welcome step regarding objective 23 at the state level. They wanted the state government to act as pressure group to push the government to attend regional and international consultations and to sign bilateral agreements with host countries. They identified that the lobbying of CSOs to the state with national government on signing various agreements and compacts might have influenced the policy makers. They urged the CSOs and state governments to continue with the para-diplomatic efforts and international cooperation with various agencies to safeguard the welfare of migrants from the state.

The break-out session came to an end much ahead of the stipulated time. So, the last planned session on interaction with the government officials was cancelled. However, the organisers managed to bring together the various government officials from both states and collected their responses on the objectives during the consultation.

Session with Government Officials

A parallel session during the session 2 was conducted to gather inputs from the government officials from both states. The participants were Mr. Chitty Babu from NRI cell Telangana government, Mr. Rajasekhar from APNRT Andhra Pradesh, Ms. Nagabharathi from TOMCOM and Mr. K.V. Swamy from OMCAP. The three representatives from CSOs, Mr. Rafeek Ravuther, Ms. Lissy Josesh and Mr. Bheem Reddy also joined the discussion. Mr. Rafeek presented the matrix and explained the purpose of matrix to the officials. They managed to identify several projects and schemes which were completely unknown to the other stakeholders. They accepted the fact that the lack of understanding about the programs for rest of the participants shows the poor rate of outreach of the initiatives. As the heads of state-run recruitment agencies Mr. Swamy and Ms. Nagabharathi pointed out the difficulties in conducting a recruitment drive with limited resources. They wanted the government to expand the existing agencies and to provide much larger financial resources for better advertisement of programs. At the same time, they acknowledge the commendable job done by the CSOs in both states to help the migrants in distress. As the first director of APNRT, Mr. Rajasekhar provided a detail outlook on programs and its success rates. He added that APNRT is aware about the limited programs for the welfare of labour migrants before and during migration and promised that he would push for equal funding for both diaspora and labour migrants. Mr. chitty Babu shared that he expects the current government would implement the already prepared Non-Resident Telugu (NRT) policy in the coming months. But with the lack of manpower, the NRT cell failed to spend the 100 crore rupees allotted for NRT affairs in the last budget. This parallel discussion added an extra dimension to the preparation of matrix from the consultation. All of them agreed to go through the final matrix and provide their comments.

Due to the time constraints, the closing session was cancelled and Ms. Lissy Joseph presented vote of thanks for all the stakeholder and sponsors who actively involved in the two-day consultation program.

Outputs and Observations

- *Inclusive Participation of all stakeholders*

The break out session and the discussion of the prepared matrix provide opportunities for all stakeholder including CSOs, TUs, government officials, students, academicians, media, advocates, politicians and other organisations to share their perspectives on GCM in a larger platform. The facilitators opened the floor for discussion several time during the presentation of matrix to listen to various stakeholders. The interactive nature of the consultation ensured participation of most of the participants.

- *Inputs from government officials*

The organisers succeeded in ensuring the participation of a few government officials throughout the consultation. Apart from that the special roundtable with the top bureaucrats from both states contributed immensely in the preparation of the matrix.

- *Introduction of lesser known good practices*

Even though the network of CSOs in both states are as strong as other states, organisations and government might not have information about various successful models. For example, the 'certificate course on mehndi designing' by Shaheen was presented in the consultation and most of the stakeholders were surprised to know such a sustainable rehabilitation model. A bunch of similar good practices were introduced through out the program by both state and non-state actors.

- *Translation of GCM objectives*

The GCM objectives were translated into Telugu, the local language in both states and distributed among the participants during registration. It helped the participants to understand the concepts clearly. Apart from that, the introductory session on GCM objectives in Telugu aided the participants further to engage in the discussion.

- *Matrix preparation*

As the first state-level consultation on GCM in the country, preparing a concrete matrix which capture all dimensions of GCM objectives from the context of both states were challenging. However, the contribution from each group were equally good. The efforts by each participant, the presenters and the facilitators should be appreciated.

- *Joint consultation of two states*

The organisers planned for a single consultation due to the homogenous characteristics in both states. However, the recent developments in Andhra Pradesh's migration management overpowers the Telangana system. At a number of times, extra attention was given to Andhra Pradesh when it comes to government programs. It prevented from having a deeper discussion on Telangana on a few occasions.