



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

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GENDER COORDINATION REPORT 2009

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INTRODUCTION

1. In 2009, the Gender Issues Coordination (GIC) worked on consolidating core aspects of its mandate. On the one hand, vis-à-vis the outside world, it carried out activities aimed at putting gender and migration issues high on the international agenda, including through accrued cooperation at the inter-agency level. On the other hand, efforts were geared internally at sensitizing staff to key gender issues pertaining to their work, as well as at reinforcing IOM's position as an employer implementing gender equality. At the same time, new avenues were explored and new doors opened for IOM to increasingly contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide.

I. AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES ON GENDER AND MIGRATION

Addressing female genital mutilation in the context of migration

2. In the course of 2009, GIC concentrated efforts on communicating about IOM's comparative advantage and strengths when addressing female genital mutilation in the context of migration. Several IOM missions in Europe are now fully engaged with state and civil society actors to address this issue.

- **Information sheet**

3. In order to provide the necessary guidance to IOM field missions, while at the same time equipping them with a communication tool for external use, GIC developed an information sheet: "Supporting the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation in the Context of Migration" to highlight the challenges and present IOM's comprehensive four-point strategy to support the abandonment of female genital mutilation in destination countries. The information sheet is available on the IOM website: <http://www.iom.int> (follow these links: About IOM; Organizational Structure; IOM & Gender; Activities and Best Practices).

- **Panel discussion**

4. In Geneva, on 6 February 2009, GIC marked the sixth International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation by jointly organizing for the second year running, with the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Geneva Cantonal Office for Human Rights, the interactive panel entitled: Political Will at the Centre of Achieving Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation. Panel discussions covered two themes: (i) building national frameworks to end female genital mutilation, with panellists including representatives of Norway, Egypt, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Switzerland; and (ii) on enforcing change: the role of political leaders, which included presentations from IPU, IOM, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization and the IAC. Plans are ongoing for similar events in 2010 in cooperation with the Geneva Museum of Ethnography. The report of the 2008 event has been jointly published by all the partners and widely disseminated among key stakeholders.

- **Collaboration with the canton of Geneva**

5. GIC is still a member of the Geneva-based steering group on female genital mutilation. The group is now preparing a report detailing the activities implemented since 2005. In December 2008, at the request of the Geneva Youth Health Services, GIC trained school nurses on addressing female genital mutilation in their daily work.

- **Expert Meeting on Human Rights and the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Countries of Prevalence and among Immigrant Communities**

6. The Swiss Committee for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNICEF Headquarters organized this two-day expert meeting on 2 and 3 July 2009. GIC introduced the session on "Challenges and opportunities in working with communities of immigration" and the thematic discussion on "Applying the knowledge on social dynamics of female genital mutilation/cutting in communities of immigration".

Capacity Building Workshop for Women Leaders of Diaspora Associations

7. GIC is organizing this workshop in collaboration with the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Center for International Cooperation (MASHAV), the Center for International Migration and Integration, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). This ten-day workshop that will take place in Haifa, Israel, from 16 to 26 November 2009 aims to strengthen the capacity of migrant women mainly in Europe and North America to guide diaspora organizations and to mobilize diaspora contributions and human and financial capital towards the development of their country and communities of origin.

Seventeenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

8. GIC participated in the second and concluding parts of the Seventeenth Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Economic and Environmental Forum: "Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region", held in Athens on 18 to 20 May 2009, and made a presentation on the need to provide more regular migration channels for women migrant domestic and care workers. Over 2009, GIC started a new partnership with the OSCE on the topic of women and migration. GIC actively collaborated on the recently published OSCE *Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies* and is now working with the OSCE on follow-up products and activities.

International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security

9. GIC participated in the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security, held in Monrovia on 7 and 8 March 2009. IOM led the discussions on migration through round-table discussions, involving Liberian and international experts, which generated key recommendations for incorporating a gender perspective into community security, refugee reintegration and diaspora involvement policies.

Global Consultation on Migration, Remittances and Development: Responding to the Global Economic Crisis from a Gender Perspective

10. With the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), GIC co-organized the Global Consultation on Migration, Remittances and Development: Responding to the Global Economic Crisis from a Gender Perspective in Geneva from 29 June to 1 July 2009. It brought together researchers, government representatives, international organizations and financial institutions. The objective of this meeting was to discuss more broadly the effects of the global economic and financial crisis on migrants, their families and development and to develop recommendations to address old and new migration and development challenges from a gender perspective. At the end of the consultation, the participants adopted a communiqué, which sets policy recommendations for future action.

Expert Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Policy and Public Symposium on the Global Economic Crisis and Development – The Way Forward

11. GIC participated in two events organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: the Expert Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Policy, held on 10 and 11 March 2009, and the Public Symposium on the Global Economic Crisis and Development – The Way Forward, held on 18 and 19 May 2009. GIC contributed to highlight migration and women migrant issues in both debates. IOM's response to the crisis was also highlighted and a call was made for continuous dialogue between countries of origin and destination so as to mitigate the effects of the crisis on migrants and societies and to accelerate recovery.

International Dialogue on Migration – Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants: Ensuring the Protection of Human Rights

12. GIC participated in the International Dialogue on Migration intersessional workshop entitled Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants: Ensuring the Protection of Human Rights (Geneva, 9 and 10 July 2009) through a side event focusing on IOM's multidimensional response to migrant trafficking and exploitation. GIC made a presentation on IOM's activities to prevent and address violence against women migrant workers. A book, *Working to Prevent and Address Violence Against Women Migrant Workers*, has been published on this topic and presents IOM activities, including, but not limited to: promoting regular and safe migration as well as gender-sensitive labour migration policies; promoting and protecting women migrant workers' human rights; fighting trafficking; and providing direct assistance to victims. This publication is available from the IOM online bookstore (<http://publications.iom.int/bookstore>).

II. INTER-AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

13. GIC continued to be an active member of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, attending the annual meeting in New York and participating in various task forces and initiatives.

Contribution to the reports of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

14. In 2009, GIC contributed to several reports of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, namely the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, the report of the Secretary-General on violence against women migrant workers, the report of the Secretary-General on improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, and the report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation. The Organization also contributed to the world survey on the role of women in development, as well as the update of the inter-agency inventory on violence against women.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee sub-working group on gender issues

15. GIC and the Emergency and Post-Crisis Unit continued to be an active member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee sub-working group on gender issues, and this year provided input more specifically on the Sex and Age Disaggregated Data Project and an e-learning course on gender and humanitarian action (still under development).

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and its Committee

16. IOM uses the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women as a key instrument in policy and programming. It also contributes to the work of its Committee by regularly sending confidential country reports to provide information on the Committee's work, flagging important and specific issues faced by migrant women.

Gender and "One United Nations"

17. GIC participated in the Delivering as One on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment retreat, held in Hanoi from 19 to 21 November 2008. The objective of the retreat, organized by the Resident Coordinator Office in Viet Nam and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, was to assess coherence and effectiveness on delivering as one on gender and the extent to which the pilots are advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the process of United Nations reform. Some of the key findings of the meetings have been that resource constraints have a negative impact on the ability of United Nations country teams to deliver as one on gender quality, that the capacity for gender equality within the teams needs to be strengthened, that the positioning of gender as a cross-cutting issue cuts gender out, and that the accountability for gender equality within the teams remains weak.

Committee on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families

18. GIC actively took part in the Day of General Discussion on Migrant Domestic Workers, organized by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the ILO. IOM offered its perspective, including key recommendations and good practices under discussions on the drafting of an ILO Convention on domestic workers.

III. NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Tostan

19. Tostan is an international NGO based in Senegal which leads in the area of non-formal education and community empowerment based on human rights. IOM and Tostan plan to cooperate to transpose the Tostan approach, which encourages participants to take action for social change and better health practices, including the abandonment of female genital mutilation in targeted migrant communities in Europe (United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium and Germany). A joint project proposal has been submitted to the Daphne programme (European programme to prevent violence against women and children). It has been pre-selected, but a final decision is still pending.

United Nations Volunteers programme

20. GIC participated in the Gender and Volunteerism Workshop organized by the United Nations Volunteers programme in Bonn (28 and 29 May 2009) with the main objective of reaching a common understanding of the gender dimensions and dynamics in volunteerism, peace and development. GIC brought the migration perspective into the debate, highlighting the potential for volunteering and development among women in the diaspora.

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

21. IOM and UN-INSTRAW signed a Memorandum of Understanding in March 2009 focusing on research, capacity-building and knowledge management on gender and migration.

Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children

22. IOM and the IAC signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2009 focusing on the cross-border practice of female genital mutilation in Africa, as well as in the context of migration in Europe.

United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to education

23. At the request of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Mr. Muñoz Villalobos, GIC is contributing to the preparation of his report on migrants' and refugees' access to education by providing academic resources, information on IOM's work and technical advice on a questionnaire to be administered in the field.

IV. THE GENDER FOCAL POINT NETWORK

24. In order to revalorize the Gender Focal Point function and provide incentives for staff to devote time to gender-related activities, GIC has requested that the role of Gender Focal Points be appropriately reflected in their regular terms of reference. The Network now comprises 129 Gender Focal Points (82 per cent women, 18 per cent men; 29 per cent international staff, 71 per cent national staff) covering 84 countries.

V. SENSITIZATION OF STAFF ON GENDER ISSUES

Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse

25. On 10 March 2009, the Director General of IOM signed a letter endorsing the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel, re-affirming IOM's collective determination to prevent acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by IOM staff members. The rules pertaining to eliminating sexual exploitation and abuse are therefore now set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules and the Standards of Conduct incorporating the six core principles of the Statement of Commitment. GIC is finalizing a training package including frequently asked questions to conduct mandatory half-day sensitization sessions in all IOM field missions. Over 2009, IOM continued to participate in the Executive Committees on Humanitarian Affairs and Peace and Security United Nations and Non-governmental Organization Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse at the principal and working levels, as well as in the five sub-working groups, and to actively support, including financially, the planned sexual exploitation and abuse review.

International Women's Day

26. On 9 March 2009, GIC organized several activities to mark International Women's Day, including the following:

- The distribution of white ribbons to all male staff members to sensitize colleagues on violence against women and men's role in fighting this phenomenon.
- A self-defence initiation course for women to learn basic self-defence techniques (attended also by some men).
- A film festival to reconnect staff at Headquarters with the realities faced by migrant women in various countries where IOM operates, in order to reinforce their commitment to gender mainstreaming (IOM actively participated in the production or dissemination of the four films).
- The dissemination of posters to sensitize staff on IOM's role in fighting violence against women in line with the topic chosen by the United Nations this year: "Women and men united to end violence against women and girls".

Intranet

27. GIC has launched a gender section on the IOM Intranet to serve as a clearing house and facilitate staff access to key background information on gender and migration and to didactic material on gender mainstreaming in IOM.

Training

28. In 2009, GIC continued to be involved in various training activities, including emergency and post-crisis displacement, camp coordination and protection training and the Chiefs of Mission Programme.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH SERVICE AREAS

29. Building on the momentum generated by the evaluation of gender policy at the end of 2006, cooperation with service areas is steadily increasing to ensure gender is appropriately mainstreamed in policy papers and project documents. Highlights this year have been GIC input to the Labour and Facilitated Migration Division Expert Group Meeting on Migration and Development; a Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners on Mainstreaming Migration into Poverty Reduction and Development Planning Tools (forthcoming publication); labour migration training modules; *IOM Guidelines for Projects with Detention Components* (internal document); various IOM policy briefs; and the *Quick Guide to Diplomatic Etiquette for the Use of IOM Staff* (internal document). GIC involvement in project reviews has also dramatically increased.

VII. GENDER IN HUMAN RESOURCES

30. GIC regularly monitors gender balance data within the Organization. The percentage of women officials in IOM stands at 43 per cent in 2009, showing no progress since 2005.

Statistics tell the story – Data on gender and human resources

31. This year, GIC has published a second issue in its series “Statistics tell the story” informing senior management and staff at large that, in 2009, out of 40 IOM missions with more than five international staff, just over half (55 per cent) are in the parity zone. In 37.5 per cent of these missions, the representation of women is still under 40 per cent, which was the target to be achieved in 2000.

Gender, rotation and spouse employment

32. In January 2009, GIC issued a paper “Recommendations for a gender-sensitive implementation of the rotation policy in IOM”, with the objective of supporting the work of the Rotation and Appointments Board, as well as of Human Resources Management, in implementing IOM’s rotation policy by providing advice on ways to ensure that rotation and gender policies mutually reinforce each other. In October, GIC participated in a lessons-learned retreat on the 2009 rotation exercise providing insight on processes and outcomes from a gender perspective. This was followed by a memorandum to the Director General and the Deputy Director General to provide recommendations on short-, mid- and long-term measures to facilitate spouse employment in IOM.

VIII. ONGOING ACTIVITIES

- GIC continues to attend meetings of the Appointments and Postings Board as a non-voting ex-officio member as part of the strategy to ensure proper attention is given to gender considerations and to assist in achieving a gender balance in the Organization.
- GIC continues to provide support and guidance to Field Offices and departments at Headquarters on a variety of issues. The workload related to this specific component of GIC’s mandate drastically increased in 2009.

- The *Gender and Migration News* is disseminated to a growing audience, including, as a pilot, to some permanent missions in Geneva.
- The Occupational Health Unit, the Office of the Ombudsman and GIC increased their collaboration in order to create synergies and harmonize their action in areas of common interest. In 2009, they closely collaborated on recommendations and information papers on maternity, paternity and adoption benefits and sexual harassment which are scheduled to be issued in 2010.