



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**Under Embargo until 2 October, 2014**

**Migration, the time for words is over  
It is time to Act: Global launch of *Rights of Migrants in Action***

**Geneva/ Brussels, 02 October 2014.** According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) there are 232 million migrants worldwide. Today, more than ever, the role of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and its 189 member National Societies is fundamental in both advocating for rights of migrants, and providing essential and lifesaving services to migrants. With the support and financial assistance of the EU, the IFRC is implementing “Rights of Migrants in Action”, which seeks to promote and protect the rights of migrants, especially migrant domestic workers and victims of human trafficking.

This EUR 10.5 million action aims to foster a coordinated approach of civil society organisations (CSOs) toward the protection of the rights of migrants, to enhance migrants' access to social services notably through small scale projects, and to build and strengthen the capacities of these CSOs to advocate for the rights of migrants.

The action targets origin, transit and destination countries in different regions of the world: Ethiopia and Zimbabwe in Africa; Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Honduras in the Americas; Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand in Asia; Kazakhstan, Russian Federation and Tajikistan in Central Asia and Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco in Middle East and North Africa. The action will contribute to maximise and complement existing efforts to address the rights of migrants in these countries.

Walter Kotte Witingan, IFRC Under Secretary General for Programs and Services said “Outside traditional support systems, migrants often are unable to access health, shelter, education and social services that respect their basic needs and dignity. They may be subject to human trafficking, sexual or labour exploitation; they may also be deprived of their liberty, detained or arbitrarily deported. The Red Cross and Red Crescent is committed to addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants and any other persons negatively affected by migration regardless of their legal status, in order to provide protection and assistance following our fundamental principles of independence and neutrality”.

The basic protection of migrants' rights along the migratory routes is not always ensured. Yet, many countries without migration or labour policy frameworks rely substantially on migrant labour force for their economic development. Moreover, migrants are vulnerable, and constitute an easy target for traffickers; they also represent a significant share of forced labour victims, in particular in sectors such as construction, agriculture and domestic work. Migrant domestic workers and victims of trafficking should be adequately protected and assisted according to their specific status through access to human rights mechanisms and to courts and lawyers.



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Responding adequately to the needs of migrants in today's global economic and political context is obviously not a simple challenge. The effectiveness of civil society actors' activities in the domain of migration and development largely depends on the identification and establishment of strategic partnerships among CSOs, between CSOs and governments at central and decentralised levels. "Rights of Migrants in Action" will work together with civil society organisations and local governments to strengthen partnerships and to protect the rights of migrants.

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