Concept Note: Discrimination, Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia

Transnational Migrant Platform (TMP)
Pan African Network in Defense of Migrants Rights (PANDiMIR)

Context

Today, we are witnessing an intensification of xenophobia and racism including racist violence, hate speech, and islamophobia against asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. The emergence of political movements and political parties with representation in Parliament (especially in Europe, but variants also exist in other region BJP in India) founded on the manipulation of racist fears leading to the intensification of xenophobia has been fuelled in different degrees among some sections of citizens in different societies of our global community: fear of unemployment, insecurity in difficult neighbourhoods and of the pressure on public services, including schools, housing and health facilities. This fear draws more attention from the media and politicians who exploit prejudiced ideas that portray migrants and refugees as "the threat" to their way of life. In Europe, the rise of rightist and fascist parties justify islamophobia accusing people of Muslim faith to be an assault on European values and way of life. Religious, ethnic and racial based discriminations know no boundaries and no region is exempt. From the Rohingya in South Asia whose faith put them at odds in neighboring countries, to South Africa, where xenophobic attacks on fellow Africans from East and West Africa regions exhibited similar fear of loss of employment, space and threat to identity.

In this context, discrimination and open racism against refugees and migrants has become widespread. Refugees and migrant communities have been placing this on the public political agenda as well as on the media and have gained the support from social movements and civil society organisations. Together these initiatives have resulted in strong demands for governments to move away from a policy of enacting, walls, barriers and borders (real or figurative) to acknowledging the root causes of migration and displacement and forced mobility and to reclaim comprehensive and human rights based approaches such as the Conventions as the UN Refugee Convention (1951) and Migrant Convention (1990).

On the global level, the first acknowledgement of the growing threat was in the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Xenophobia and Relate Intolerances, held in Durban South Africa in 2001. The Durban Declaration, especially as relate to the treatment of refugees and migrants provided important lessons that need to be replicated. More recently, during the September 19th UN General Assembly, a High-Level Plenary convened to address large movements of refugees (UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants) in light of the need for greater international solidarity and support to respond to such movements. The Summit, adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants where the Secretary-General also launched a new campaign to "respond to rising xenophobia and turn fear into hope." He urged "world leaders to join this campaign and commit together to upholding the rights and dignity of everyone forced by circumstance to flee their homes in search of a better life."

As migrant and refugee communities gathered at the People’s Global Action on Migration, Development & Human Rights, we welcome this new campaign and affir that it is high time that these issues are discussed from a mutual and many sided perspective.

Objectives of the Workshop

1. Initial Mapping on the Countries and Regions: Interactive Sharing of experiences from different regions and sectors.
How is the Narrative on Racism and xenophobia articulated within the cultural and historic context in different countries or regions?
What are the main strategies and struggles that are ongoing or developed in each country or region?

2. Identifying the next forward: How do we lay the groundwork for next steps and process towards PGA in 2017 and 2018?

List of resources

- Bridget Anderson - Imagining a world without borders https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zht-6BrX1b4&list=PLneroGdkLzuR4aVEou- AgpzFJWe0fVs&index=1

- "Making Anti-Racial Discrimination Law: A Comparative History of Social Action and Anti-Racial Discrimination Law" Dr. Iyiola Solanke


- A JOURNAL ON RACISM, EMPIRE AND GLOBALISATION http://www.irr.org.uk/about/raceandclass/

- Understanding Implicit Bias http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias/

- Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation 1st Edition by Derald Wing Sue