

Working Sessions theme 2:
Operationalizing Human Development in International Migration
Background note and guiding questions

GFMD Civil Society 2012 focus on operational mechanisms and benchmarks

The GFMD Civil Society programme 2012 focuses on “**Operationalizing Protection and Human Development in International Migration**”. This theme reflects civil society’s priority for this year’s GFMD to focus on operationalizing recommendations with concrete implementable mechanisms and - where feasible - benchmarks against which success can be measured in the next years - a kind of “Migration & Development Goals”. Therefore each of the working sessions will be geared towards putting forward:

- **mechanisms or tools**, including examples of “good” practices, existing partnerships and success stories,
- as well as a proposal for **the next 3-5 steps to take** by relevant actors, in particular governments, civil society actors and the private sector.
- Where feasible each focus theme will also formulate **some benchmarks** against which success can be measured in the next years – a kind of “*Migration & Development Goals*”, which emphasize aspirations and allow for better impact evaluation and monitoring.

The programme for the Civil Society Days 2012 will be structured around working sessions along three themes: “Labour”, “Development” and “Protection. This note provides some background to the second theme “Development”, in particular on what has previously been concluded in the GFMD and a set of guiding questions to the working sessions during Civil Society 2012.

Theme 2: Operationalizing Human Development in International Migration

The discussion of what “development” means has evolved in the GFMD. At first the focus was predominantly on economic development and growth, and in particular on the role of remittances in increasing macro-indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP), gross national income (GNI), and household incomes. Taking up strong calls from civil society, international organizations and a number of governments, the GFMD gradually adopted a more comprehensive and “human” approach to development, looking more broadly at improvements in the overall quality of life and the expansion of opportunities and freedoms of individuals—not contrary to but fully inclusive of economic development and growth. This approach includes a greater focus on protecting people’s human rights.

Development is now widely understood in the GFMD as “human development”, which includes economic development, as expressed in the titles of both the States’ concept paper 2012 “*Enhancing the Human Development of Migrants and their Contribution to the Development of Communities and States*”, and this Civil Society Programme: “**Operationalizing Protection and Human Development in International Migration**”.

While it is clear that migration can contribute to human development of the migrant, families and communities involved, civil society in the GFMD has consistently emphasized that (1) migration should not in and of itself be used as a development strategy through which people are compelled to leave; and that (2) the root causes of migration must be addressed.

Migrants and diaspora can play a critical role in spurring this more holistic, human development and expanding choices, as entrepreneurs, social investors and policy advocates, and are a *sine qua none* of the link between migration and development. At the same time migration-related development planning and practices go far beyond diaspora and migrants alone, and need partnerships and cooperation with local development NGOs, international development agencies, government representatives from development ministries, as well as the private sector.

This civil society thematic “Development” track proposes to resume the attention to engaging diaspora and migrants, as well as other development actors in migration-related development planning, *at local, national and international levels* – in ways that genuinely make migration an opportunity and choice, not a necessity. Civil society’s two Working Sessions under this theme at the GFMD 2012 will focus on:

- 2.A - Engaging Diaspora as Entrepreneurs, Social Investors and Policy Advocates
- 2.B - Rights-based Development Solutions and Migration

One of the three joint civil-society dialogues in this year’s GFMD Common Space will also focus on “*Diaspora alliances and partnerships for development*”.

Working Session 2.A: Engaging Diaspora as Entrepreneurs, Social Investors and Policy Advocates

While the role of diaspora and migrants and their organizations has been on the agenda of the GFMD in its first six years, it seems to have diminished or at times even to have disappeared into the background of the discussion over the course of time - and did not figure at all in the States agenda of 2011. On the other hand the civil society agenda of 2011 did include a full working session on “Diaspora, Employment and Development” that concluded the following: “*diaspora and migrants contribute to development and job creation; as entrepreneurs, investors, consumers; by financial and knowledge transfer, but also as advocates for policy reform working with governments to establish conditions that are conducive to creating jobs, such as access to justice, protection of property rights, good infrastructure, access to credit and skills development.*”

Indeed, this role of migrants and diaspora - whether in the north or the south - as development agents in their country of origin has been central to the GFMD dialogue, and international attention has been booming with many changes in recent years. For example there has been an enormous increase in data collection on remittances accompanied by significant reduction in rates for remittance transfers; diaspora organizations have increasingly formed networks among themselves for joint projects and advocacy; and many governments have formed specific departments and ministries dedicated to diaspora engagement. At the same time many barriers and challenges remain for diaspora and migrants when investing in development in their countries of origin, including mobility, tax and property barriers, limited access to financial capital, corruption, weak infrastructure, mistrust, and limited multi-stakeholder partnerships. This Working Session will look at how to scale up the successful changes, as well as how to overcome these barriers.

Convergence of recommendations by Civil Society in GFMDs of 2007 – 2011 on engaging diaspora as entrepreneurs, social investors and policy advocates

In all previous GFMD, Civil Society has consistently called for the recognition of the voice and importance of migrants and diaspora in all matters of migration and development, including as contributors to development. Over the course of the past five years there has been overwhelming convergence that there is a need to look far beyond remittances, and acknowledge and facilitate migrants’ contributions to development through entrepreneurship, social investments and policy advocacy. There is broad consensus on at least the three following recommendations:

If 2012 delegates agree to pick up these recommendations from prior GFMD civil society meetings as a starting point – the working session should aim to take these recommendations to the next level, add elements not previously discussed and formulate some benchmarks to measure progress in the next years.

GFMD Civil Society,

1. urges governments both in countries of origin and destination, foundations and other donors to include **diaspora and migrant voice and organizations in development policy formulation and implementation** and to each create a **national platform for dialogue** with migrant/diaspora representatives, and to increase the resources available for **capacity building of diaspora and migrant organizations**, focusing on such areas as financial literacy, development of organizational skills, advocacy and education.
2. calls upon local, state and national governments to create conducive **legal and financial frameworks** to promote **migrants as entrepreneurs**, provide access to credit, property rights and skill development, and promote Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) which can play a critical role in job creation (e.g. by governments of countries of origin providing low interest loans to migrants abroad towards income generating investments back home)
3. Recommends to migrant/diaspora organizations create **trust relationships and partnerships** among themselves and other partners including the *private sector, local authorities and “mainstream” development organizations*; to share experiences and knowledge, to replicate and scale up projects and build a common vision on specific themes that enable advocacy with one cohesive voice

Links with government recommendations - GFMD 2007 - 2011

The first years of the government GFMD meetings also included a strong focus on diaspora and migrant engagement for development, although much more focused on remittances than broader issues. It is interesting to note that the recommendations that came of this session were largely of a pragmatic nature, proposing things such as the issuances of diaspora bonds (GFMD 2007, RT 2.3), a catalogue of good practices (GFMD 2008, RT 1.2), the inclusion of diaspora data in migration profiles (GFMD 2008, RT 1.2), and a Diaspora Policy Handbook containing lessons learned and practical guidelines for engaging diaspora in development activities (GFMD 2009, RT 1.2). The latter was published last year by MPI and IOM, as a direct result of the GFMD.

However the GFMD government recommendations seem to shy away from more institutional recommendations and the wider policy context, such as the reforms of legal and financial frameworks, instituting permanent representation structures for diaspora and migrants, and creating an enabling environment for migrants to invest home. Exceptions are the government GFMD

meetings in 2007 which called for the creation of an enabling environment by providing ‘*multiple re-entry visa, dual citizenship, recognition of skills and portability of social welfare*’ and in 2008 calling for ‘*measures to promote the exercise of political rights and political participation, such as overseas voting and dual citizenship, to promote continued connection to the home country*’.

Also migrant and diaspora engagement for development seems to have dropped off the government agenda altogether in 2010 and 2011, at least in its own name, with its own dedicated session. Nevertheless, the government GFMD meeting in 2011 did put forward two recommendations very much in line with the recommendations of civil society:

- i. “Home and host countries should recognize that migrant associations can bring multiple contributions to the development of local communities, on account of migrant associations’ solidarity with their home land, knowledge of local realities and needs, long-term commitment and respect of local and traditional values.” (Working Session III.2)
- ii. “Support by central governments and local authorities at both ends of the migration trail is essential for migrant associations to act as professional partners, in synergy with official migration and development policies.” (Working Session III.2)

Guiding questions for Working Session 2.A - Engaging Diaspora as Entrepreneurs, Social Investors and Policy Advocates

- (1) **What are the changes most urgently needed** to improve diaspora/migrants engagement and effectiveness in forging the development of communities and societies of origin, i.e., what are the **obstacles and barriers** that migrant and diaspora organizations encounter when engaging in (i) Entrepreneurship and financial investment; (ii) Social investments and social projects; (iii) Policy advocacy and political changes? Specifically what are the obstacles in:
 - a. **countries of residence** (.e.g., *lack of cooperation and trust among stakeholders, lack of access to financial capital, difficulties of travelling back and forth due to migratory status and entitlements, gender differences, etc.*)?
 - b. **countries of origin** (e.g., *no access to property rights, complicated tax laws, lack of infrastructure in areas such as transportation, water, electricity, power, bureaucracy, corruption, instability, lack of trust, legal protection, political tensions, gender differences, etc.*)?
 - c. **migrants’ and diaspora’s own ranks** .e.g., *lack of cooperation, capacity, networks, trust, resources, access to information about country of origin, gender differences, etc.*)?
- (2) **Who** can make these changes happen and **how**? What replicable good-practices, **mechanisms or tools** exist that we can use, and what are the **next steps to take and by whom**?
 - a. How can diaspora and migrant organizations build alliances and networks, nationally, internationally and thematically to maximize voice and impact?
 - b. How can we make sure that these existing tools and good-practices are actually adopted and adapted by governments, international agencies and diaspora/migrant organizations? What actions are needed at national, regional, international and thematic level (e.g. information technology, agriculture, etc.)? What do we want governments to do, and what should we do ourselves?
- (3) Can we formulate and/or endorse up to three **benchmarks to measure** real progress towards achieving these changes? And **who can track** the progress in achieving these benchmarks?
- (4) Which **one priority issue and benchmark** should be taken up by governments in **the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013**?

Working Session 2.B: Rights-based Development Solutions and Migration

Building upon the recommendations and benchmarks put forward in Working Session 2.A on diaspora engagement, this session will link these with a much wider set of stakeholders and policies, in particular focusing on *the place of migration in national and international development policies*. In contrast to diaspora/migrant organizations, more “mainstream” development actors, such as local development NGOs, international development agencies (working on issues such as poverty reduction, health care, education, water management, environmental sustainability, gender equality, etc.), government representatives from development ministries, as well as the private sector, have largely been underrepresented in the GFMD, both in the States and civil society components. And yet many development-related planning processes and policies have direct and indirect links with migration dynamics, such as:

- Labour market planning and employment policies; (*e.g. providing decent jobs at home, attracting skilled migrants back home, attracting foreign workers for knowledge sharing and learning, etc.*)
- Economic growth, trade and investment policies; (*e.g. attracting foreign direct investment from the diaspora, lowering trade barriers, etc.*)
- Education, human capital formation and skills development; (*e.g. catering for local labour market needs, for international labour market needs, twinning arrangement with labour-receiving countries and companies, etc.*)
- Health services, social policies and protection; (*e.g. providing for decent livelihoods as alternative choice to migration, addressing brain drain, etc.*)
- Environmental policies (*e.g. displacement due to environmental change*)

These interlinkages between “mainstream” development policies and actors on the one hand and migration issues and actors, in particular migrant and diaspora organizations on the other hand, are the topic for discussion of this Working Session. In addition to policy-making at local and national levels, this session will also give some specific attention to connecting migration with the global development agenda post-2015, when the Millennium Development Goals expire.

Convergence of recommendations by Civil Society in GFMDs of 2007 – 2011 on rights-based development policies and migration

The interlinkages between “mainstream” development policies and migration have not been the centre piece of civil society discussions in the GFMD over the past years. Nevertheless, in all previous GFMD’s, civil society has insisted that migration should be an opportunity and choice, not a necessity, and at least the following two recommendations have achieved broad consensus, and are directly relevant:

If 2012 delegates agree to pick up these recommendations from prior GFMD civil society meetings as a starting point – the working session should aim to take these recommendations to the next level, add elements not previously discussed and formulate some benchmarks to measure progress in the next years.

GFMD Civil Society,

1. Insists to governments to regard their primary **responsibility for sustainable and human development** thus adopting a rights-based approach to development which ensures economic and social rights – including access to decent work and essential public services (chiefly education, vocational and technical training programmes, and health care, that are necessary to make the “right to remain” possible; and to **abandon aid conditionality** and to detach development programmes and assistance from the repatriation of irregular migrants and (ex)asylum-seekers).
2. Calls for **effective coordination** (a) between ministries and departments - including ministries of health, education, labor, social security and development/foreign assistance (b) “vertically” across levels of government—national, state/provincial, and municipal; and (c) between government and **representative bodies of civil society organizations**, including diaspora and migrant organizations.

Links with government recommendations - GFMD 2007 - 2011

Whereas addressing the root causes of migration has not received any significant attention in the government GFMD debates, the integration of migration into development planning has been prominent on the government agenda from the GFMD 2009 in Athens onwards. Recommendations under this theme emerging from the government GFMD meetings are often quite technical in nature. Two relevant recommendations include:

- i. “Sustained attention needs to be paid to mainstreaming and integrating migration into development planning processes, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), activities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and National Adaptation Plans of Action concerning climate change (NAPAs)”. (GFMD 2009, RT 3.1)
- ii. “Impact assessments should be considered integral components of coherent and effective migration and development policies. In conjunction with migration and development mainstreaming and Migration Profiles, assessment processes serve governments to factor migration into development policies and vice versa.” (GFMD 2011, RT III.2)

Guiding questions for Working Session 2.B - *Rights-based Development Solutions and Migration*

- (1) **What are the changes most urgently needed** to improve the interlinkages between “mainstream” development policies and actors on the one hand and migration issues and actors, in particular migrant and diaspora organizations on the other hand? More specifically:
 - a. How are **poverty reduction strategies** currently being linked to migration issues?
 - b. **What policy interventions are needed in both** developed and developing countries **to make development policies migration-sensitive** and to improve living and working conditions in countries of origin, to reduce the “necessity” to migrate and mitigate “brain drain”? e.g. in the areas of social and health policies, training and education? In the areas of trade, commercial and agricultural policies? Gender equality? Other areas?
- (2) **Who** can make these changes and policy interventions happen and **how**? What replicable good-practices, **mechanisms or tools** are out there that we can use, and what are the next steps to take **and by whom**?
- (3) What indicators and benchmarks already exist, and can we formulate up to three benchmarks **to measure** real progress towards achieving these changes? And **who can track** the progress in achieving these benchmarks?
- (4) Which **one priority issue and benchmark** should be taken up by governments in the **UN High Level Dialogue** on International Migration and Development in 2013? And what are the entry points for integrating migration into the post-2015 agenda?

A few suggested existing tools and guidelines

- Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias and Kathleen Newland, **Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development – A Handbook for Policymakers And Practitioners In Home And Host Country**, IOM and MPO, 260 pages, (2011)
<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/thediasporahandbook.pdf>
- EC-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMIDI), **Migration for Development: A Bottom-up Approach**, (2011)
www.migration4development.org
- Global Migration Group, **Mainstreaming Migration Into Development Planning: A Handbook For Policy-Makers And Practitioners**, 152 Pages, (2010)
<http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/GMG2010.pdf>