

GFMD Ad-hoc Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research Promoting Policy Coherence for Development in International Migration Issues

Report of a one-day expert workshop

Brussels, Tuesday 26 June 2012

1) Workshop focus and objectives

In the spirit of paragraph 5 of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which calls on UN members to “(...) ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people”, the 8th Millennium Development Goal (MDG) describes their ambition to give shape to a ‘**global partnership for development**’. During the 2010 MDG Review Summit the UN members called for “(...) increased efforts at all levels to enhance policy coherence for development. We affirm that achievement of the Millennium Development Goals requires mutually supportive and integrated policies across a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues for sustainable development.”

Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) requires synergetic and systematic support towards the achievement of development objectives within and across individual policies. Promoting PCD should not be seen as a separate activity but rather as part of a country’s regular process of formulating, changing and implementing policies. Policy processes on migration and development have to reconcile a variety of interests, including those that are mainly driven by short-term considerations that may not necessarily be compatible with long-term development considerations. The key challenge is to promote efficient migration management while keeping in mind its development perspectives and contributions.

The Global Forum on Migration for Development provides opportunities to contribute to promoting PCD at four different levels:

1. **Intra-governmental coherence:** Coherence across all of the policies and actions of countries in terms of their contributions to development, both within and between different levels of institutions in the government (i.e. central, district-level and local).
2. **Inter-governmental coherence:** Policies and actions should be consistent across different countries in terms of their contributions to development, to prevent one from unnecessarily interfering with, or failing to reinforce, the others.
3. **Multilateral coherence:** Coherence of the policies and actions of bilateral donors and multilateral organisations, and to ensure that policies adopted in multilateral fora contribute to development objectives.
4. **Multi-stakeholder coherence:** Coherence within the policies and actions of international organizations, civil society organizations, and private sectors; and between each other.

The GFMD Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research (hereafter: working group) has promoted discussion on coherence in the Global Forum since its creation in 2009. Mauritius, as GFMD Chair-in-Office for 2012, has set the overall theme as ‘Enhancing the human development of migrants and their contribution to the development of communities and states’. Building on the outcomes of the Swiss Chairmanship, it was agreed to initiate a dedicated expert workshop on PCD so as to provide a useful input to the 2012 GFMD Summit.

The main objective of this **expert workshop**, which was held on 26 June 2012 in Brussels, was to examine good practices, opportunities and obstacles in terms of policy and institutional coherence, and create an atmosphere of trust where sensitive issues pertaining to migration and development could be discussed. The workshop was divided into four sessions that look into the four different levels of coherence, and were informed by introductory statements from the workshop co-chairs Switzerland and Finland, as well as from Morocco as co-chair of the working group.

This report will present the most salient points put forward during the four different sessions and end with specific recommendations formulated by the workshop co-chairs that are put forward for consideration for the 2012 GFMD Summit.

a. Intra-governmental coherence:

The introductory addresses accentuated the nature of the challenge of promoting migration and development policies that contribute to a global partnership on development and noted that a wide arrange of ministers, agencies and various committees in parliament engage in policies that are related to migration and development. Participants from the governments of Jamaica and Switzerland made key inputs for the discussion during this session of the workshop, which was moderated by Finland. The presenters focused on strategies and practices to effectively deal with the **institutional challenges and opportunities** in migration and development policy making.

In the discussion it was noted that the process of **decision-making radically differs from country to country** in terms of the nature of a governance system, the institutional balance of powers and how consensus is built in this system. Bearing these caveats in mind, the workshop contributions and discussions looked into specific country examples and led to the identification of some **common challenges** faced by many GFMD members in seeking to promote intra-governmental coherence:

- First of all, the involvement of such a wide breadth of actors in government, both at central and decentralised levels of governance, can be guided by means of a **common, agreed and long-term oriented approach**. This approach is ideally defined in joint public policy documents and strategies on migration and development.
- Linked to this, it is essential that there is **clarity on each other's role(s)**, so that people know who is at the table and why. There is also a need to be aware of the different **values and interests** with respect to migration that each ministry or agency brings to the table, and thus a need to unite these around an overarching governance vision. In this context it was suggested to consider migration first and foremost as a **livelihoods and poverty reduction strategy**.
- The **asymmetrical relationship** in government between migration and development both in policies and institutional frameworks was confirmed, as well as the **differing interests between ministries** when it comes to migration policy. Ensuring awareness and recognition of the different interests has been crucial to making progress in different countries.
- Participants alluded to the general importance of **taking specific measures to ensure that development objectives are adequately taken into account** in migration policy making.

While different institutional solutions and mechanisms can definitely help, different participants noted that **promoting PCD is first and foremost a political endeavour**. Different examples were shared of how political developments, such as the rise of new parties under a multi-party system with non-evidence based positions on migration policies can help trigger other parties to become more explicit and form political coalitions on the issue of migration and development policy. Other examples were shared of how it can be ensured that political visions are renewed over time and gain **political sustainability**.

In this session as well as subsequent sessions of the workshop, it was emphasised that **'coherence starts at home'**. National coordination processes are the key means to make sure that a government puts forward consistent positions in different inter-governmental, international and multilateral organisations as regards migration and development. More generally, and applying to all the four levels, it was suggested to take specific measures to ensure that the inception of migration policy processes start from the **migrants' perspective** and seek to systematically include their concerns. This can be most effectively realised at the

national level to the benefit of decision-maker at inter-governmental and multilateral levels. In this context reference was also made to the benefits of specific efforts to **mainstream migration into development planning**, which can help to strengthen capacities to engage in relevant migration and development policy processes.

b. Inter-governmental coherence

This second level of coherence points to the need to ensure that policies and actions in migration and development should be consistent across different countries in terms of their contributions to achieving development objectives. Participants from the governments of the Philippines, Nigeria and of the European Union made key inputs for the discussion during this session of the workshop, which was moderated by the Centre for Development Studies in India.

Participants confirmed and shared examples of how **many governments consider migration policy an aspect of sovereignty** and thus find it difficult to effectively take cooperation at an inter-governmental level forward. Linking back to intra-governmental coherence, the discussion touched upon a ‘chicken or egg’ question in the sense of whether intra-governmental coherence creates a necessary basis for inter-governmental cooperation or that it was the other way around, and nudged to a conclusion that both levels can mutually reinforce one another.

While noting different examples of successful regional cooperation in the area of migration and development (e.g. freedom of movement in the European Union), the contributors to the discussion noted that most ‘substance’ of inter-governmental coherence is given shape by means of **bilateral cooperation approaches** such as migration partnerships. At the regional level, even though some consultative processes such as the Colombo Process and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue are producing tangible results, overall process in terms of providing building blocks and impetus for norm-setting at multilateral level remains limited. It was however noted that certain governments are not as active in regional and inter-governmental processes compared to their engagement in bilateral cooperation. There is a risk that if regional processes do not lead to tangible results, they can be tempted to **recycle recommendations**.

Reflecting on good practices in regional cooperation, it was highlighted that progress has often been made in a pragmatic manner, e.g. by a country first taking an issue further bilaterally and hoping that other countries will follow the example. Based on these experiences it was suggested that **regional dialogues primarily advance by having concrete projects and programmes that contribute to realising concrete development objectives**. Linked to this, it was also argued that there is a need to **streamline dialogues at the national, regional and continental level** according to what can be achieved at which level.

It was also observed that **regional organisations have not yet advanced much in preparing inputs for the UNHLD as well as on migration in relation to discussions on post-MDGs** with a high-level meeting also planned for 2013. Another more general observation was that in regional cooperation as well as in the GFMD further efforts have to be made to **ensure that development experts become more involved** to help avoid that the discussions become lopsided to ‘home affairs’ concerns. In addition several participants pointed to the need to **further enhance migrants’ involvement in regional processes** in areas such as trade, culture and diaspora bonds.

Specific comments were also made on the EU’s regional and bilateral dialogues, and a need to be more strategic and efficient in giving shape to the menu of issues that are discussed at these levels. The **EU mobility partnerships and regional dialogues were critiqued for being lopsided** in terms of giving

more attention to anti-trafficking and illegal migration at the expense of long-term development considerations. Development-investments made by the EU could be more effective if they would **underline the ownership of the partner countries** concerned by aligning the support to their national development strategies. It is through these engagements that the EU can translate its policy visions as laid out in the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility and the Agenda for Change into practice.

c. Multilateral coherence:

This third level of coherence relates to the challenge to ensure the coherence of the policies and actions of bilateral donors and multilateral organisations, and to ensure that policies adopted in multilateral fora contribute to development objectives. Participants from the governments of Mauritius, Mexico, the OECD, as well as from UNODC in their capacity as incoming chairs of the GMG made key inputs for the discussion during this session of the workshop, which was moderated by the OECD.

The **'governance gap'** in the field of migration and development at the multilateral level that was suggested in the workshop guidance note was confirmed and commented on by different participants. In doing so an analogy was made with the World Trade Organisation, arguing that promoting movement of goods seems less sensitive to agree to than promoting movement of people. One reason that could explain this was that it is **often not possible to ensure reciprocity in the negotiation when it comes to movement of people.**

During the session references were made to how multilateral and international organisations could help **manage projects** focused on migration and development and/or help **provide and share information**, all of which could improve inter-governmental coherence and as such create a more enabling environment. The continued use of wrong or misinterpreted data in the media and political debates points to the need to **further strengthen methodologies and availability of data on migration and extend in-depth analysis of the impact of migration on development in destination and origin countries.** In this discussion it was also suggested that the promotion of PCD could be improved by ensuring that there is **sufficient clarity of what is meant with 'development' in more operational terms.** Analytical work such as the 2009 Human Development Report contributes to this, as does the Millennium Declaration and the Goals derived from the Declaration, but the benefit of increasing analytical efforts was alluded to.

A specific discussion was held on the **role, potential and challenges of the GMG.** Challenges of the GMG that were alluded to during the discussion included having 16 members (14 UN agencies, ILO and World Bank), limited resources and the lack of a permanent secretariat. The GMG's know-how of the global level was referred to as its strength, and the importance of dealing effectively with the GMG's challenges to ensure contribution of the UN to Policy Coherence for Development in the field of migration and development was alluded to. The GMG is carrying out in internal review to look into this. It was added that the individual GMG members have technical knowledge and capacity to work at the national and local level, and that they provide strong support to the GFMD and other international processes. Participants also pointed to a need for GMG agencies to improve coordination between headquarters and the field level, as well as seek to having consolidated country teams to be able to deliver as one as ongoing reform aims to do.

The Global Forum on Migration on Development has provided a place for its members to engage in discussions on migration and development. It was suggested that **the GFMD was created to allow for substantive discussions on migration and development that could complement and inform discussions at the UN level. A stronger CSO involvement** can help the Global Forum to become more successful in policy making, especially by better helping to better articulate migrants' perspectives.

Efforts made in the GFMD and other fora were seen as opportunities to inform the 2013 UNGA High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) and possibly for the issue to be referred to at the high level review meeting on the MDGs planned that same year. It was noted that there is **presently no real basis for a structured participation of the GFMD in the UNHLD**, but that the assessment team put in place by the 2012 Chairmanship will look into this. Some stakeholders argued that the GFMD could usefully use space to promote **soft norm-making**, but that governments can only take this further if an effective multi-stakeholder process can be realised that ensures substantive outcomes receive follow-up.

At the margins of the discussion, some stakeholders also noted that **at the national level** of some members there is increasing attention to the importance of including attention to population, demographic and migration aspects in the envisaged post-MDG framework.

d. Multi-stakeholder coherence

This fourth and last level of coherence relates to coherence within the policies and actions of international organizations, civil society organizations, and private sectors; and between each other. Participants from the government of Sweden, the World Bank as well as from the ICMC made key inputs for the discussion during this session of the workshop, which was moderated by Switzerland.

During the session several country-based examples were shared that illustrated **the benefits of investing adequately in multi-stakeholder approaches** in terms of promoting PCD in the field of migration and development policy. Participants commended the more **structured dialogue** between government and CSOs has been put in place in some countries. The **need to improve the collection and systematisation of research** was also alluded to in this context, as well as the need for specific efforts to ensure that the **relevant information is brought to the 'table'** in migration and development policy processes. States can set enabling frameworks for this while CSOs have an important research production and networking role.

The session also included reflections on the role of Civil Society Organisations in the GFMD, with participants arguing that the key role of CSOs in the Forum is to help in better articulating migrants' perspectives as well as those of their families and communities. The GFMD uses an **inclusive definition of CSOs**, which among other actors includes the private sector, non-governmental organisations, the diaspora, academia, think tanks and trade unions. As per this wide diversity, CSOs face the challenge of **effectively coordinating among themselves and achieve internal convergence** in order to most effectively inform the GFMD.

It was further noted that CSOs in the GFMD can further strengthen performance in dealing with regional platforms, in engaging the Diaspora, in improving involvement of development-oriented CSOs as well as in **including the private sector** – although the latter was recognized as a key challenge to the GFMD as a whole.

In addition to CSOs, International organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development as well as the International Financial Institutions can carry out, commission or systematize research in relation to migration and development to help ensure a better informed policy debate. It was noted that research from these organisations points to **governments remaining ill-informed regarding their diasporas**, and that their involvement could help to better link up these actors as a means to improving policy and practice. Nevertheless, the engagement of migrants in policy formulation is not as such a guarantee for the definition of broad and comprehensive M&D policies which includes variety of

measures, some of which not directly perceptible by the migrants themselves. Participants also noted that **governments are gradually improving their understanding** of the migrants abroad as a result of their understanding of migration in general, e.g. some were under the wrong impression that migrants once arrived would stay in their countries of destination for good.

The challenges of further involving the private sector were discussed in more detail in relation to the 2012 GFMD. It was noted that **articulating the developmental outcomes in a more concrete manner is a key means to ensuring greater involvement of the private sector** in discussions on migration and development policy, including in the GFMD. Participants further suggested to use the 'common space' as a means to do so and bring this space to the attention of the private sector. Participants further noted a need to be more clear and concrete about **'which' private sector** the GFMD should best engage with.

2) Conclusions and recommendations in relation to the RT 2.1 and 2.2 expected outcomes

This expert workshop was part of a continuous effort to address Policy Coherence for Development in the GFMD. The Chair's 2012 Work Programme provides many opportunities for feeding the debates of the working group into the GFMD.

The workshop was welcomed as being the first thematic workshop on PCD, and the four levels were seen as a useful heuristic tool to help structure discussions and consider future actions. The workshop also pointed at important progress being made that needs to be capitalised on. At the same time, it was noted that an important challenge is to **move beyond the rhetoric**, and the post-MDG discussion was identified as a useful opportunity to test this willingness. The workshop also pointed to a need to further **improve the conceptual understanding of PCD** in the context of the GFMD as a means to what the Forum itself can deliver on in this regard.

It was emphasised that **progress in PCD is not cost-free**, and that further progress requires **additional investments** in ensuring process quality and mechanisms for decision-making. Participants were reminded that coherence does not mean an absence of diverging interests, but clarity and public debate on these in order to help governments to take decision on possible measures contributing better to development.

Based on the discussions in the workshop, the following recommendations emerged from the different sessions that could be taken further in the discussions in relation to the 2012 Global Forum:

1. **Coherence starts at home**: investing in clear political and policy mandates in terms of PCD in migration and development, and making sure all relevant stakeholders subscribe to an overall vision, is essential for taking PCD further.
2. At the national but also at inter-governmental (including regional) and multilateral levels, **specific measures are needed in terms of mechanisms and mandates** to ensure that development concerns are taken into account in migration and development policy making.
3. Linked to the previous recommendation, there is a need to **improve the collection, systematisation of research**, as well as efforts to ensure that the relevant conflicts of interest related to migration and development articulation are brought to the 'table' in migration and development policy processes. States can set enabling frameworks for this while CSOs have an important research production and networking role.
4. It was suggested to take specific measures to **ensure that migration and policy processes start from the migrants' perspective** and seek to systematically include their concerns.
5. The joint challenge to promote PCD necessitates investment into putting in place **structured multi-stakeholder dialogues** at all four different levels.

6. The **challenge of including and intensifying cooperation with the private sector** expresses the political sensitivity of policy discussions on migration and development. Making these discussions at all four levels **more operational and result-oriented** is a key means to ensure their participation.