

Meeting of the Friends of the Forum  
29 June 2012, Geneva

### **Update on Civil Society Activities**

John K. Bingham, ICMC  
GFMD Civil Society Coordinating Office

*Check against delivery*

**Mr. Chair**, colleagues and partners in migration and development: with 20 weeks left before the Global Forum meeting in Mauritius, thank you for considering this update on activities of civil society.

Working with civil society partners and cooperating with the Mauritian chair and task force, ICMC's small Coordinating office has focused on three fronts this past quarter: [1] building the 2012 process; [2] filling important gaps in civil society's ability to engage and contribute to GFMD impact; and [3] strengthening the continuity, sustainability and coherence of civil society organizing in relation to broad migration and development dynamics, including future GFMDs and also the UN High Level Dialogue next year.

#### **1. Building the 2012 process**

- **Common Space**

Taking seriously the feedback from so many states, civil society and international organizations calling for greater dialogue in the **Common Space** than was possible in the single *uber*-plenary of 800 participants in prior years, we worked closely with the Chair and task force on a format of discussion in smaller sessions that the Chair has proposed today. Running parallel and focused on central thematic elements of the states' and civil society roundtables, the sessions will enable a dialogue with input of direct relevance to what you will be focusing upon in your two days of meeting. The template asking each Common Space session to identify common ground and partnerships—whether existing or new—and report back to the plenary is further reason to commend to you the format that the Chair has presented.

- **Civil society programme**

The Coordinating office has been actively working on **logistics and event planning** of the November Civil Society Days with its local partner Caritas Mauritius.

Within the fortnight, the draft of the **civil society concept paper** is going into wide consultation among civil society and other actors, as was so productive last year. As signaled to you in April, and linked to both the work-to-date in civil society GFMD meetings and your own states' roundtables, civil society's roundtable themes will center upon: **[1] labour mobility and labour matching [2] protection of migrants and their families and [3] diaspora and development**. The emphasis however, will be on identifying not so much practices but mechanisms, frameworks or tools—wherever possible, that already exist. For example, in the labour mobility and labour matching roundtable, a principal focus will be upon abusive recruitment processes and mechanisms or frameworks that can curb abuses, such as those being developed by NGO and private sector actors in the Middle East and ILO Convention 181 on private employment agencies. This was an area where

civil society at the 2011 GFMD thought solutions were “distinctly within reach”, with clear common ground apparent and expanding among states, international organizations and civil society worldwide. We further expect that this focus and approach will attract and benefit from the participation of legitimate recruitment and placement actors from the private sector. Similarly, one of the exercises of the diaspora and development roundtable will be to identify a framework or set of conditions conducive to engagement and investment in countries of origin. Finally, we confirm that there will also be a specific track in the Civil Society Days programme on organizing for the **High Level Dialogue and beyond**.

On the **International Advisory Committee** we have aimed for a mix of continuity plus fresh energy and good sense, inviting new participation by civil society actors from Mauritius, Sweden and a development agency as well as from a number of veterans of last year’s core group. Like last year, the IAC will oversee the finalization of the themes and help steer the rest of the organizing through at least the end of the year.

**The application process** for civil society delegates to the Civil Society days closes 8 July. At present we have received some 450 applications for the 200 delegate seats, and seem on track for about the same level of enthusiasm as in last year’s GFMD. As in prior years, we will organize a selection process with the IAC, aiming for broad regional, sectoral and gender diversity. Guided by the IAC however, we will be more assertive than in prior years in reaching out to specific organizations and individuals who bring *extra* value in their participation, in particular among civil society platforms active in migration and development in the regions.

At the cost of burdening our civil society colleagues worldwide, we did something that we think was very smart with the applications this year. We added an entire section to the application form entitled “**Preparations, Implementation and Follow-up**.” First, we asked 17 questions for applicants to describe their follow-up to specific recommendations from last year’s GFMD. Then we asked another four questions about any steps they have taken to organize or participate in GFMD-related meetings with civil society partners, national governments, or regional, international or intergovernmental entities. That is to say, we now have some 450 maps to organize and consider of civil society follow-up on GFMD work—i.e., impact, with more on the way in applications still coming.

- **Related events**

Many of us in civil society came away from several well-organized GFMD thematic preparatory meetings in Mauritius and Brussels this month, and from more indirectly-related engagement in Sweden and in Rio + 20, struck by the persistent segregating of migration from development and development from migration in processes that keenly need to consider them together. For example, in some of the GFMD processes (not least civil society’s own programming), we clearly need to be much **more serious about raising development perspectives on migration phenomena**, always including but also going beyond diaspora in development. Then too, in processes outside the GFMD stream, it is simply amazing how absent migration and migrants are in their own names from priority thinking, research and action in development discourse. It strikes us as anachronistic, something we’ve all grown out of, to say that migration is “too sensitive” an issue for these other processes. In truth, it calls for better focus on the part of civil society too. In this direction and with an eye towards the High Level Dialogue in 2013 and the Millennium Development Goals considerations post-2015, we have begun to explore with our civil society partners the value—and prospects, including capacity—of establishing **quantifiable goals or benchmarks and timelines** that truly reflect achievable outcomes where migration and development intersect. This is one more reason we have made such an effort to bring classic development actors into the IAC this year and reach out to them for greater participation in the Civil Society Days.

## **2. Filling gaps for better civil society engagement and contribution**

- **Fundraising**

As signaled at our last meeting here, and as every civil society coordinator has done since the first GFMD in 2007, we have spent a considerable amount of time this past quarter seeking sufficient funding for the core budget of civil society in this year's GFMD. We directed our efforts principally at governments, the EU and other donors. It is no small pleasure then to share with you three encouraging developments:

- We are gratefully following up with the Chair on contributions that Finland and Switzerland have made available to civil society through the Chair's budget for civil society; thank you both, very much, and thank you Chair.
- Counting commitments that we have obtained from a private foundation and development agency and economies that the Chair is providing on meeting space, may we appeal to you for what may be possible to close the US \$300,000 gap that remains in the civil society budget, including the \$69,000 shortfall in the Chair's budget for international civil society. The full gap largely consists of support for travel and hotel expenses for about ½ of the civil society panelists and delegates—100, including very much participants from Africa and from low income countries and organizations elsewhere.
- In the meantime, not one but two *concept* papers that we submitted to the EU for GFMD-related funding were pre-selected for us to submit full applications for multi-year funding of certain civil society activity. Together with civil society partners from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, and the governments of Mauritius, Switzerland and Sweden as associates, we have been working on the applications and are hopeful.

While none of these various funding streams by itself permits full funding of the civil society GFMD programme, combined they can make a major contribution to the continuity, sustainability and coherence of this effort, especially towards 2013 and the Global Forum meetings in 2014 and 2015.

- **Regional GFMD meetings and working groups**

In April we mentioned our hope, "should funding permit", to introduce to the civil society programming for the GFMD one or more regional preparatory meetings and working groups of civil society. We are pleased to announce that a **regional Africa meeting** linked to the GFMD and other civil society processes is being organized by the PanAfrican Network in Ghana the second week of September, and that separately, the development NGO Cordaid is contributing to and launching with us under the GFMD civil society umbrella a **working group on global governance of migration**. These two dynamics will directly and constructively feed issues, perspectives and delegates into regular GFMD processes.

### **3. Strengthening the continuity, sustainability and coherence of civil society organizing**

In April and again in this report, I have emphasized and, beyond these reports I hope civil society has demonstrated, the dividends of continuity in the organizing of its engagement in the GFMD. May I close simply by referring to a process that is more objectively *testing* perceptions of such continuity, among other things. As you know, last year the MacArthur Foundation, which since the beginning of the GFMD process has been the principal long-term donor to both the states and civil society programmes, commissioned an **independent evaluation of the GFMD process** by the consulting firm **Social Impact**, which to our knowledge is unrelated to MacArthur, ICMC and any other GFMD participant. The evaluation has a particular but not exclusive focus on civil society. Not involved in

the evaluation in any way other than as one responder, we would simply report that it has been underway for several months now, consisting of an electronic survey, in-person and telephone interviews aimed at 500 participants in the GFMD since 2007: states, civil society and international organizations. Following the timeline set out by the MacArthur Foundation at the GFMD last November, the evaluation is completing its schedule of data collection and analysis in July-August, with reports being drafted in September, and release of an external report for presentation at the GFMD in Mauritius.

Together with the assessment you have been conducting these past two years, the surveys we have organized following last year's GFMD and also within this year's civil society application process, we look forward to the perspectives and guidance this additional evaluation will provide.

*Copies of this update are available on the table at the side of the room.*

*/Thank you.*

---