

Identifying new modalities for engagement between GFMD and the private sector

Since its inception, the GFMD has expended considerable effort to engage the private sector in policy related discussions on migration. With increased globalisation of human resources, work and services that also impact national development goals, the private sector is a necessary stakeholder and negotiating partner within the area of migration and development. How the private sector works, what employment opportunities are created and where the jobs are located are key concerns regardless of the GDP of a particular country.

From the beginning, the private sector was included as one of the civil society stakeholders in the GFMD process, but the private sector, with few exceptions (notably recruitment agencies) has not reciprocated the interest. At best, engagement has been through human resource representatives and with businesses whose core constituents were migrants (e.g. Western Union, Manpower etc.) indicating that the economic argument for engagement on policy and process with states is not apparent to the private sector. With few exceptions, the outcome-oriented nature of competitive business stands in stark contrast to the states' process-driven consultations in the GFMD.

During 2011-2012 an assessment of the GFMD process was conducted. The recommendations put forward as part of this exercise point to the need to give greater weight to the development impact of migration, and to improve the format for engagement and collaboration with civil society actors - in particular with the private sector. To this end, the GFMD assessment report finalized in 2012 proposed that the private sector, including employers and recruitment agencies, should be considered a separate stakeholder group, and *“cooperation with this group should be strengthened by means of a dedicated consultative system”*. The Report also recommends that *“new modalities for engagement of the private sector should be explored to strengthen cooperation with this distinct stakeholder group.”*

By adjusting the format for engagement to become more outcome oriented and tailored to the specific needs of the private sector, the GFMD may be able to initiate a more sustainable platform for dialogue. Within the framework of an outcome driven initiative, the substance of discussion is central to the final result. Thus, *how* the discussion is structured is a secondary consideration to be determined by the topic, whether it be in the form of roundtables, a conference or panel sessions. Ultimately the *how* is also influenced by the *who*, and what stakeholders are finally identified. Currently, as there are

no guidelines for how this consultative process should be formed, it is the prerogative of Sweden as the incumbent GFMD chair to put forward suggestions. The chair proposes to i) identify a format for a deeper engagement with the private sector; ii) identify the substantive areas for private sector engagement; and iii) propose key actors to be invited for closer collaboration.

The Chair seeks input from GFMD stakeholders interested in shaping the dialogue with the private sector. A preparatory meeting for Government stakeholders will be held in Geneva on May 23rd, 2013. The agenda for the meeting will include a presentation from The Hague Process which has worked specifically to involve businesses on migration and development as well as comments from the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Migration. We will also present what is known currently about private sector engagement on migration issues, share information about the skills gaps faced across multiple regions by both governments and businesses and seek your input on next steps towards securing a substantive discussion between states and the private sector on migration and development.

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