

GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate, Geneva, 1-2 December 2011

Cluster III Summary Report ¹

Working Sessions on: *Tools for Evidence-based Migration and Development Policies*

GFMD discussions, since 2007, have consistently dealt with the issue of policy and institutional coherence on migration and development, and the necessary tools for governments to work towards such coherence. The Athens (2009) and Puerto Vallarta (2010) Meetings sharpened the focus on these topics by addressing such questions as linking data, research and policy development more effectively; assessing the impact of migration and development practices and policies; and building capacity for data collection and impact assessments -including cooperation with non-State actors. Migration Profiles were discussed as emerging tools for the systematic compilation and analysis of all relevant data on which to build migration and development policies, and the issue of mainstreaming migration policies into development planning figured prominently in the discussions. Concurrently, the prevailing lack of accurate, disaggregated, up-to-date, policy-relevant and comparable migration data was underlined in all meetings.

Cluster III of the 2011 GFMD work plan sought to narrow the debate on these tools and test some of their practical applications by tapping into the concrete experience of government practitioners and policy makers on the ground. For this purpose, six workshops were held, in France, US/New York, Georgia, Morocco, Moldova and the Philippines, on three concrete tools for evidence-based migration and development policies: 1) *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning*; 2) *Impact Assessments of Migration and Development Policies*; and 3) *Implementing Migration Profiles*.² These small meetings offered an excellent peer review opportunity for exchanging different views, expectations and priorities among governments, and for raising awareness among governments not yet familiar with these tools. Each meeting included a mix of governments from different regions of the world, as well as international organizations and civil society.

Sub-theme 1: *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning* (to be addressed in the combined Working Session on *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning and on Migration Profiles*; 1 December 2011, 15.00-18.00)

Thematic Meeting: **Mainstreaming Migration into Strategic Development Planning**
Chisinau, Moldova, 12-13 October 2011³

Introduction

GFMD 2009 had recommended that sustained attention be paid to mainstreaming and integrating migration into development planning processes, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and activities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In June 2010 the GFMD Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research organized a follow-up seminar in Vienna which made specific

¹ This Cluster Summary was prepared in consultation with a government team comprised of Argentina, Belgium, France, Georgia, Ghana, Moldova, Morocco, Philippines and Switzerland.

² The full reports of all thematic meetings under Cluster III are available on the GFMD website.

³ This meeting was organized and hosted by the Government of Moldova, and co-chaired by the Governments of Bangladesh, Jamaica, and Mali and Moldova. It was held in conjunction with the Global Migration Group (GMG), with funding by the Swiss Chair and EU/ENPI and organizational support by IOM. It involved 80 participants, including governments from Africa, the Caribbean, South East and South Asia, and Central, Eastern and Western Europe, as well as international organizations and civil society representatives.

proposals for discussion at the GFMD 2010 where governments addressed the matter in broader depth, *inter alia* by encouraging the use of the 2010 GMG publication “*Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning: A handbook for policy-makers and practitioners*”.

Mainstreaming is a process that integrates migration factors in a comprehensive manner in the design of national development planning and poverty reduction strategies (and their related sectoral policies), including implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such actions. It seeks to embed migration in the broader development planning of concerned countries and also aims to foster policy and institutional coherence on migration and development. Drawing on the above-mentioned GMG Handbook, the Chisinau workshop on Mainstreaming Migration into Strategic Development Planning aimed to deepen the understanding of this planning tool, and discussed mainstreaming methods and thematic content. The workshop concurrently addressed the issue of Migration Profiles and sought to advance the synergetic use of both planning tools for mainstreaming migration and development issues into country and regional-level consultations and planning frameworks. The GMG pilot project on Mainstreaming of migration into development planning, currently being implemented with the four pilot countries Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mali and Moldova (which were co-chairing the workshop), served as a concrete basis for the discussions. Other similar initiatives in Morocco and Ghana under the EU-UNDP JMDI project were also discussed.

Key Issues and Outcomes of the Chisinau workshop

Drawing on the comprehensive descriptions and guidance offered in the GMG Handbook, participants reaffirmed the relevance of migration for development and the related need to mainstream migration into national development planning for more coherent migration and development policies. Key aspects of a mainstreaming process were discussed in detail, ranging from methodological guidance, the mainstreaming into various development sectors, the definition of specific national development goals, the most relevant general national planning tools, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), to national expertise and financial capacity. Fundamental principles informing mainstreaming, such as human rights and gender equality, the involvement of non-governmental actors in mainstreaming policy making and implementation, as well as the data and evidence-base required for mainstreaming processes, were also addressed.

The specific issues discussed and outcomes reached were the following:

- i) Migration is not generally prioritized in PRSPs and other national development strategies. However, participants recognized the significant development potential generated by migration for countries of origin, countries of destination and migrants alike. Migration mainstreaming was also acknowledged as an engine to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.
- ii) An institutional migration and development structure is required to monitor and implement the entire migration mainstreaming process. This should also define the actors to be involved, i.e. all concerned government agencies (whole-of-government approach), employer organizations, trade unions, international donors, civil society, research institutions, etc. And for a mainstreaming process to be successful, it requires strong political ownership by governments and constant consultations with all stakeholders.
- iii) Mainstreaming ideally takes place when national development plans or PRSPs are being defined (or when specific sectoral policies are determined where migration can impact on development and *vice versa*), allowing that relevant migration aspects be directly integrated in the process. If development plans are already determined, the mainstreaming of migration would take place separately and take account of already defined development strategies and goals.
- iv) All relevant sectors that link migration with development need to be considered, such as demographic forecasts; migration in- and out flows; employment; labour market planning; human capital formation and skills development; brain drain and brain waste; social protection; diasporas; human rights and migrant protection; health services; particular needs of women and children; economic growth; leveraging remittances for local investment and development; environmental factors, *et alia*.

- v) Mainstreaming implies a sustained long-term effort that should be based on a comprehensive collection of data and an in-depth analysis of these data.
- vi) Appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are needed to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the devised migration and development interventions.
- vii) Systematic approaches and a common methodology need to inform mainstreaming, but implementation must take account of diverse national priority migration and development parameters.
- viii) Capacity building and training of civil servants is of paramount importance for governments to embark in the complex process of mainstreaming; for this purpose, the GMG Handbook should also be translated in all relevant languages.
- ix) Migration Profiles, in particular Extended Migration Profile processes, are essential tools in supporting mainstreaming processes. Through their focus on inter-ministerial coordination and national capacity building, they represent a high potential of synergy with mainstreaming processes, which may be enhanced by common national coordination mechanisms.
- x) Regional dialogue and consultations among governments can foster common mainstreaming approaches and promote mutual understanding.
- xi) The GFMD and GMG can play a pivotal role in promoting a better understanding of and further exchanges on mainstreaming of migration into development planning, including the synergetic use of the Migration Profiles tool.

Core messages from the Chisinau workshop to the GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate

- i) In support of an evidence-based approach to migration and development and related migration mainstreaming into development, the full range of planning tools needs to be used, including the Extended Migration Profiles. Migration Mainstreaming and Extended Migration Profiles are not static tools, but processes, and they should be used in a mutually reinforcing approach.
- ii) Governments are at different levels of defining their national mainstreaming concepts. Further awareness-raising, including through the translation of the GMG Handbook, and increased exchange and peer reviews among governments with different experiences are needed.
- iii) The mainstreaming of migration into development is a complex and long-term process and hinges on strong ownership of concerned governments.
- iv) Any mainstreaming process requires coherence and coordination within government and among multiple associated stakeholders; appropriate timing for policy-making cycles and planning horizons; better use of existing data, and better data, for informed decisions and evaluation of progress achieved; synergetic use of Extended Migration Profiles; capacity building; approaches which are inclusive of civil society, the private sector and diasporas; solid fundamentals related to human rights and international legal frameworks, gender dimension and the situation of children; and efforts by the GMG and donors to cooperate with governments in support of their work.

Questions to guide the Concluding Debate discussion

1. ***How can government peer reviews and further exchanges among all stakeholders contribute to a better understanding of migration and development mainstreaming processes, at the regional and global level?***
2. ***What are the synergies between Migration and Development Mainstreaming and Migration Profiles?***
3. ***How can the experiences of migration mainstreaming processes supported by the GMG in the four pilot countries Mali, Moldova, Jamaica, Bangladesh, and in other initiatives, be shared more broadly?***
4. ***How can interaction between the GFMD and GMG and their respective working groups be leveraged with regard to the mainstreaming of migration? And what are possible inter-actions***

with the European Union's Global Approach to Migration and its Human Mobility Partnerships tool?

Sub-theme 3: Implementing Migration Profiles (to be addressed in the combined Working Session on *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning and on Migration Profiles; 1 December 2011, 15.00-18.00*)⁴

Thematic meetings:

- a) **Migration Profiles: Developing Evidence-based Migration and Development Policies**, New York, USA, 30 June 2011⁵
- b) **Migration Profiles: Lessons Learned**, Batumi, Georgia, 12-13 July 2011⁶
- c) **Migration Profiles as a tool for Informed Policy Making, Integration and Reintegration and Emergency Response**, Manila, Philippines, 20-21 October⁷

Introduction

Following from GFMD 2009 and 2010, the purpose of the three workshops was to highlight the importance of the Migration Profiles (MPs) concept as a comprehensive data collection and capacity building tool for informed and coherent policy planning. MPs are defined as frameworks for aggregating, in a structured and systematic manner, existing data and information from international, national and regional sources. First introduced by the EC in 2005 as a basic tool for migration-related data collection, the concept subsequently evolved into the 'Extended Migration Profile' which aims to gather information on all economic, developmental, demographic, social and other aspects, including human and sustainable development, that impact on migration and *vice versa*.

More than 70 national MPs have been implemented so far. However, the relevance of MPs for addressing migration and development in a comprehensive manner often remains unclear. And there also prevails a lack of understanding what MPs entail or should entail, how preparing and implementing a MP needs to be based on coordinated action between concerned government entities, and that MPs are processes closely related to national capacity building. *Extended Migration Profiles* (Extended MPs), in particular, imply an on-going effort since they go beyond providing a static snapshot of migration dynamics in a given country and seek to create a sustained process of inter-ministerial cooperation and capacity building for systematic data gathering and analysis, and updating a Migration Profile. National ownership and national priorities figuring in a MP vs. the need for international comparability of collected data is another key aspect, and Extended MPs are also seen as key tools in supporting the mainstreaming of migration into development planning.⁸

⁴ As the discussions on Migration and Development Mainstreaming and Migration Profiles will take place in a combined Working Session, sub-theme 3 on Migration Profiles is addressed in this paper before sub-theme 2 on Policy Assessments. Please note further that the 17-18 October Thematic Meeting in Abuja, '*From Evidence to Action – Facilitating South-South Labour Migration for Development*', also addressed the issue of Migration Profiles. This is reflected in the Cluster I Summary.

⁵ The meeting in New York was held in the context of the 'Migration and Development Series' convened by IOM, UNITAR and UNFPA, supported by the MacArthur Foundation and the Swiss GFMD Chair. It was co-chaired by the Governments of Argentina, Ghana and Moldova and attended by some 60 participants, including government officials from capitals and UN Permanent Missions, regional organizations, international and UN agencies, the UN Secretariat, and Civil Society.

⁶ The meeting in Batumi was organized and hosted by the Government of Georgia, with the support of ICMPD and the Swiss GFMD Chair. It involved 43 participants, including 17 governments from Asia, Central Asia, Western and Eastern Europe, Africa and Middle East, as well as international organizations and civil society representatives.

⁷ This meeting was organized and hosted by the Government of the Philippines, with the support of IOM and the Swiss GFMD Chair. It involved some 50 participants, including 17 governments from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe, as well as international organizations and civil society representatives.

⁸ Since 2011, and in order to promote comparability between Migration Profiles, the Global Migration Group has been developing a core set of indicators for MPs, based on estimates and data that are already produced by GMG agencies. Individual agencies, such as IOM and ICMPD have cooperated closely with governments to implement MPs. IOM is developing a global action guide outlining the key aspects and challenges involved in the elaboration of MPs, and ICMPD, under the Building Migration Partnerships

Key Issues and Outcomes of the (three) workshops on Migration Profiles⁹

Government representatives recognized that the MP concept has in recent years evolved into a key tool for them to promote an evidence-based and coherent approach to policy-making in the field of migration and development. They presented latest developments on concrete or planned implementation of MPs, and international organizations pointed to recent activities in support of this planning tool.

The specific issues discussed and outcomes reached were the following:

- i) National ownership of MPs and national priorities to be reflected in MPs are essential. The implementation of Extended MPs is a welcome development that ensures such national ownership. Extended MPs are also key tools in the context of mainstreaming migration into national development planning within various sectors, such as labour, health, education, urban planning, rural development, poverty reduction, etc.¹⁰
- ii) Inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination is essential to gather, verify and update data collected from different administrative sources; and a continued process of compilation and analysis is needed, including through Technical Working Groups at the national level.
- iii) Broad national ownership should include all stakeholders in the process, i.e. civil society organizations, academia, private sector etc.
- iv) Administratively-defined criteria and definitions for national data collection often differ, are gathered by different ministries and do not usually take into account or foresee their use for longer-term analytical purposes. There also remains a significant lack of data on migration trends and impacts.¹¹
- v) There exist different options for the elaboration of a MP: A comprehensive process of continued data gathering on all data relevant in the migration and development areas, requiring sustained national efforts and coordination linked to migration and development planning and specific follow-up surveys; or an approach that limits itself to the mere collection of migration data.
- vi) MPs are not stand-alone tools and should be seen as a process rather than just a product, and benchmarks should also be set for monitoring and evaluating the process and for its improvement.
- vii) Migration Profiles should go beyond statistics on emigration (outflows, stocks) and include data on immigration, diasporas and impact of migration on development, environment and other specific sectors. This includes issues such as return and (re)integration, as well as the social costs resulting from migration (families and children left behind, education, social protection etc.). In addition, it should, where appropriate systematically include a specific focus on internal migration phenomena and on south–south labor migration.¹² Mechanisms need to be set up for regular updates of these profiles
- viii) The ability to track expatriate migrant communities and to integrate diasporas in national development policies is particularly helpful. Also, in crisis situations affecting migrant workers, cooperation between origin and destination countries is essential since destination country migration data are not always accessible to origin countries. And there exists a lack of data on irregular migrants and smuggled or trafficked migrants in need of protection.
- ix) Cooperation and MP information sharing between governments is important at bilateral and multilateral/regional levels. For example, countries of origin would share information on their labour force and possible competing labour opportunities abroad; and origin and destination countries should disclose their respective data in a transparent manner. Also, data sharing, with non-governmental actors and, as appropriate with the public, is important.

(BMP) project, created the ‘BMP i-Map’, a web-based interactive map that also provides information on MPs and related cooperation with ICMPD.

⁹ As already mentioned, Migration Profiles were also discussed in the Chisinau and Abuja Thematic Meetings.

¹⁰ These aspects were also addressed in the Chisinau workshop on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning.

¹¹ In order to improve the evidence base for MPs, the recommendations of the report ‘Migrants Count: Five Steps Toward Better Migration Data’ (Center for Global Development, 2009) should be implemented. The 2010 round of population censuses is a key opportunity to collect updated information on the number, composition and characteristics of international migrants.

¹² These aspects were also addressed in the Abuja workshop on Facilitating South-South Labour Migration for Development.

- x) MPs should also be developed at the regional level, including through interested Regional Consultative Processes and Dialogues.
- xi) While MPs are equally relevant for developing and developed countries, developing countries may need the assistance of expert agencies to backstop their MP efforts.
- xii) A few governments mentioned possible negative connotations that could be associated with the term ‘profile’ (i.e. ‘profiling’), recognizing though that substance is more important than ‘labels’.

Core messages on Migration Profiles to the GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate

- i) MPs, in particular Extended MPs, are key government tools for effective and coherent migration and development policies. The GFMD, including its Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research, as well as the Global Migration Group and individual international agencies, have made a significant contribution in the promotion and implementation of MPs, and should continue these efforts.
- ii) MP development requires a political decision at the national level, and continuous political support and recognition of the process by all relevant authorities, including the identification of the main coordinating body. This will also ensure sustained state ownership of the process.
- iii) Government capacity building is an integral part of implementing Extended MPs, by enhancing government knowledge of migration and development, promoting policy coherence and a whole-of-government approach, ensuring government ownership and involving the expertise of relevant international organizations in the process.
- iv) MP templates should comprise a vast array of data and cover all migration aspects that have a bearing on the socio-economic and sustainable human development of concerned countries and migrants, and *vice versa*.
- v) To ensure appropriate comparability at the regional and international level, MP templates should include a common set of core indicators and apply international standards and definitions. However, governments determine on their own the national priority areas to be included.
- vi) Regional cooperation in implementing MPs is recommended, through Regional Consultative Processes or otherwise; and MPs should also include data on migrant protection and migrant rights, by means of arrangements and enhanced cooperation between interested origin and destination countries.
- vii) MPs are essential tools for defining comprehensive national migration policies, for regional and global policy dialogues and for the mainstreaming of migration into development planning.
- viii) Information on MPs and related data is scattered and should be shared with and made accessible to all concerned actors, through Government/GFMD/GMG/IOs websites. Concerned governments should also share such information amongst themselves.
- ix) As MPs are produced by different entities, relevant information should be made accessible to all actors in a central, universally accessible place.

Questions to guide the Concluding Debate discussion

1. ***How can governmental efforts to develop Migration Profiles best be supported by the international community? Would further exchanges between and amongst countries working on MPs be useful, and how could interested Regional Consultative Processes and Dialogues promote the development of regional MPs and assist in their understanding and implementation?***
2. ***How can Extended Migration Profiles support Policy Impact Assessments and Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning, in order to become sustainable tools for more evidence-based and coherent migration and development policies?***
3. ***Would GMG-generated core migration and development indicators from internationally-recognized and available sources be considered useful, to figure as an annex to each national MP and to ensure a measure of comparability? And with regard to Migration Profiles information sharing through a central location, what would be the relevance of a central data***

bank that makes accessible such information on the GFMD website/Platform for Partnerships ('Migration Profiles Repository')?

4. *How could national expertise better be used in the elaboration of Migration Profiles and Extended Migration Profiles, and would the implication of civil society actors and other relevant actors strengthen the process and ensure stronger ownership?*

Sub-theme 2: Impact Assessments of Migration and Development Policies (to be addressed in the Working Session on Impact Assessments of Migration and Development Policies; 2 December 2011, 09.00-12.00)

Thematic Meeting: **a) Managing Migration for Development: Policymaking, Assessment and Evaluation**, Marseille, France, 14-15 June 2011¹³

Introduction

The GFMD 2009 and 2010 had called upon governments to create or strengthen appropriate mechanisms for conducting policy assessments of the impacts of migration on development, *inter alia* by 'developing indicators to assess the impact of migration on development, using rigorous methods of evaluation' [GFMD Puerto Vallarta 2010]. These calls were consistently supported by the Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research, *inter alia* by means of a 2010 WG seminar held in Vienna.

Impact assessments judge the longer-term impact and merit of a policy or program, determine to what extent a policy or program has achieved its stated goal(s) and identify what works and what doesn't. They are also key tools in promoting policy coherence on migration and development and can guide a next cycle of coherent policy-making on migration and development.

The Marseille workshop was a concrete response to these GFMD discussions and follow-up actions. It aimed at informing governments and other stakeholders about the importance of monitoring and evaluation for improved policy-making and enhanced development outcomes, provided technical input by relevant international organizations, and placed the focus on policy objectives, design and assessment of specific initiatives.

Key Issues and Outcomes of the Marseille workshop

Participants shared innovative examples of evaluations conducted by some governments and international organizations, discussed why assessment activities can strengthen coherent policy-making, addressed the tools and techniques currently available, referred to the principal barriers, or 'fear'-factors', preventing monitoring and evaluation to be more commonly applied, and shared views about international cooperation and knowledge sharing mechanisms. The need for international cooperation and capacity building to address technical difficulties was stressed, as were the benefits of conducting assessments to understand a policy's or program's longer-term impact and improve policy-making over time.

The specific issues discussed and outcomes reached were the following:

- i) Assessments are integral components of policy-making on migration and development and of mainstreaming migration into development planning. Assessments should be integrated upfront in policy design, starting with determining the objectives, trade-offs, financial implications and intended outcomes of an intervention.
- ii) Barriers that may prevent governments from carrying out assessments need to be addressed openly. Such obstacles can include what was termed the 'fear-factor' (i.e. potentially negative results that

¹³ This meeting was organized and hosted by the World Bank and IOM, with the support of the Swiss GFMD Chair. It was co-chaired by Belgium and Morocco and involved some 65 participants, including representatives from 21 governments from MENA and other regions, 6 international organizations and 6 civil society experts. The workshop also served as a 'kick-off' event of a new joint World Bank and IOM project to strengthen evidence-based policy making for better employment and development outcomes across and beyond the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

put into question a determined government policy), the often significant cost implications, lack of data and technical expertise, the long-term effort needed for serious assessment exercises, the controversial nature of migration *per se*, and the complexity and cross-sectoral aspects of the migration and development equation. Ethical considerations may play a role since assessments also deal with migrants who may be reluctant to be seen as ‘research subjects’.

- iii) The above notwithstanding, in order to improve sustainable human and other development outcomes of migration policies and programs in the long run, assessments should not be viewed as a burden but an opportunity to learn from past experiences. Costs involved may be high and concerned governments of origin and destination countries should consider sharing these costs.
- iv) Policy makers can choose from qualitative and participatory monitoring approaches to state-of-the-art quantitative impact evaluations, to be adapted to the national context and issues at stake.
- v) Governments tend to be absorbed by daily operations and often lack evaluation expertise and/or the resources required. International organizations and experts can help strengthen the capacities of governments. Local experts as well as migrant associations and civil society organizations should also be engaged. This can promote more comprehensive and context-sensitive policy design, data collection and evaluation exercises, while building capacity locally to carry out similar exercises in the future. International experts and development practitioners should be led by the views of governments which are the ultimate operators of migration policies and programs. Governments have ownership of each element of work being undertaken.
- vi) Migration policymaking and related impact assessments should not only focus on economic perspectives but take into account the broader social, cultural and political impacts of cross-border movements of people. Such a more comprehensive approach should promote human development outcomes for migrants and their home and host societies.
- vii) Migration is international by nature and related assessments should therefore involve cooperation and knowledge sharing on local and regional practices at the global level. The partnership spirit of the GFMD aims at fostering such knowledge sharing and cooperation.

Core messages of the Marseille workshop to the GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate

- i) To improve sustainable human and other development outcomes of migration and development policies and programs in the long run, a ‘culture of evaluation’ should be promoted with governments and other actors.
- ii) Assessments and evaluations are integral components of coherent policy-making on migration and development; they should be integrated upfront in policy and program design, starting with determining the objectives, trade-offs, funding implications and intended outcomes of an intervention.
- iii) Barriers (including the ‘fear-factor’) that may prevent governments from carrying out assessments need to be addressed openly; government ownership of assessment processes is essential and assessments should not be viewed as a burden but an opportunity to learn from past experiences.
- iv) Governments often lack the expertise or resources required for evaluation their policies and programs. International organizations and experts can help to strengthen the capacities of governments requesting assistance.
- v) Migration and development policies are international by nature. Related assessments should therefore involve cooperation and knowledge sharing on local and regional practices at the global level. The creation of a central repository to access and exchange information on policy and program assessments would be useful.
- vi) Support to the GFMD process by international organizations, including the GMG and other relevant stakeholders, can usefully foster such knowledge sharing and cooperation.

Questions to guide the Concluding Debate discussion

1. ***How can governments and other actors develop a ‘culture of evaluation’ that promotes coherent migration and development policies***
2. ***How can assessment indicators be integrated upfront in policy design and development?***

3. *What are the obstacles and barriers for governments to carry out policy and project assessments, which are the ‘fear factors’ and how can these be addressed and overcome?*
4. *What support can international expert organizations offer to interested governments, and how can the knowledge of assessment exercises and core indicators be shared among all relevant actors? Would further exchanges between and amongst countries be useful and would the creation of a central repository on assessments and evaluations be an appropriate tool for such information sharing (by the GMG and/or through the GFMD Platform for Partnerships)?*

Thematic Meeting: **b) The Contribution of Migrant Associations to Development**
 Taroudant, Morocco, 19-22 September 2011¹⁴

Introduction

The contribution of migrant associations and diasporas to development has figured prominently on GFMD agendas, but only limited focus has been placed on assessing the concrete impact of such contributions to development and on migration and development initiatives and projects by migrant associations. Also, the conditions under which cooperation between migrant organizations, governments and other stakeholders can be fostered have not been discussed in detail. The 4-day meeting in Taroudant sought to address these issues by deepening knowledge on key factors impacting on the success of migrant associations’ contributions to local development, and at analysing how governments of migrant origin and destinations countries respond to their actions and identify the most effective forms of cooperation.

Key issues and outcomes of the Taroudant workshop

Discussions focused on activities of the inter-regional ‘Dialogue on Mediterranean Transit Migration’ (MTM) and of several migrant associations, as well as on practical work and case studies implemented under the project ‘Co-développement rural intégré dans l’Atlas marocain’ (CORIAM) carried out by the Association Migrations & Développement, including field visits to sites of implementation. By choosing the actions of migrant associations as a point of departure and by examining how these concrete experiences can inform government policy-making processes on migration and development, the event also adopted a truly ‘bottom-up approach’. The workshop furthermore identified five core principles for a comprehensive approach to harnessing the contribution of migrant associations to the development of their regions of origin.

The specific issues discussed and outcomes reached (including the five core principles highlighted below) were the following:

- i) ***Migrant associations bring multiple contributions to development.*** Organized as group actions that qualify as civic efforts, they result in collective benefits for local communities and seek to address the local development needs in communities of origin. Actions are enhanced when other local actors engage in promoting economic growth, individually or through private investment. In other cases, hometown or village associations emerge out of migrant communities that engage spontaneously in the implementation of local small-scale projects.
- ii) ***Solidarity with their homeland is the motor of migrant associations’ initiatives, making the local scale the most appropriate level for their intervention.*** Many migrant associations are rooted in such local realities as village and hometown associations support their territories of origin by investing in a personal manner. These migrant associations have a strong personal stake in local development, based on traditional values and an emotive attachment to the local context. An

¹⁴ This workshop was hosted by the Government of Morocco and co-chaired by France and Morocco. It was organized with the support of the Swiss GFMD chair, ICMPD and the Association Migrations & Développement (this association operates between France and Morocco and is supported by the French Government policy on ‘co-développement’). It involved 65 participants, including 21 governments from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and the US, as well as international organizations, civil society representatives and local participants.

appropriate balance must thus be found between existing development approaches and such local values.

- iii) ***Effective actions of migrant associations must thus be rooted in local ownership.*** This also in line with the broader shift towards a human approach to development, based on the idea of self-development achieved by the actors. Development is not possible without the direct involvement of the people it concerns.
- iv) ***Collaboration and synergy between actors at all levels is required to enhance coherence between the local, national and international levels.*** Through their public policies, governments in origin and destination countries play an essential role in creating conducive environments; they can support the actions of migrant associations through institutional and policy frameworks both at the local and national level.
- v) ***Migrant associations ensure a long-term commitment, necessary for development to produce an impact and to share knowledge with other actors.*** Development approaches require ongoing adjustments and the necessary time for processes to produce their effect. Also, by acting over considerable periods of time, migrant associations attain important knowledge and technical skills that they impart on other actors through training and capacity building. Respect for local and traditional values is essential, while leadership (presence of individuals with outstanding charisma and an ability to mobilise others) is another key element.
- vi) ***The features of the migrant population*** (un-skilled/skilled, urban/rural origin, critical mass and concentration of significant numbers of people from origin communities in specific places of destination, age and generation of migrants, duration of a migration flow, etc.) ***are important elements that can shape the propensity to establish associations and affect their strength in undertaking concrete initiatives.***

Core messages from the Taroudant workshop to the GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate

- i) Home and host governments should regard migration as one of the pillars of their development policies and recognize that migrant associations can play a crucial role in this context. Governments should also acknowledge that migrant associations have extremely diverse capacities and aims and they should respond to this by establishing flexible schemes for cooperation.
- ii) The support by central governments and local authorities at both ends of the migration trail is fundamental in allowing certain associations to establish themselves as professional actors. This may range from encouraging the establishment of migrant associations where communities are weak, providing direct support to small-scale actions of existing migrant associations, to engaging in dialogue with larger migrant structures such as networks and umbrella organisations.
- iii) This process needs considerable time to develop as it requires building trust between institutional actors and migrant associations. It also requires the definition of clear, sound and transparent criteria for the selection of certain migrant associations over others.
- iv) Given the locally rooted nature of migrants' spontaneous engagement towards their home communities, this is best achieved through decentralised development mechanisms in which migrants are acknowledged as one of the key actors to be consulted and engaged in local development initiatives.
- v) While such decentralised development enhances local ownership, it also requires measures to ensure that the contributions of migrant associations feed coherently into regional/national development plans. The involvement of migrant associations in development must not become a goal *per se*, detached from development.
- vi) Migrant associations may also be linked to countries and areas that do not present the highest development priorities. Putting the action of migrant associations at the service of development thus requires identifying synergies between diaspora activism and local development needs, and making choices of those contexts where full and continuous support is possible.

Questions to guide the Concluding Debate discussion

1. *What measures can governments of both host and home countries take to create a more favourable environment for migrant associations to engage in development-related activities in their home countries?*
2. *How can local and decentralized development activities by migrant associations feed coherently into regional/national development plans of their home countries?*
3. *To what extent can the GFMD and relevant international bodies continue supporting the exchange of experiences on the involvement of migrant associations in local development of their home countries? And which should be the priority areas for such activities?*

31 October 2011