

Concept Paper

Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Switzerland 2011

Taking Action on Migration and Development - Coherence, Capacity and Cooperation

1. OBJECTIVES

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is a state-led, voluntary process dedicated to informal, non-binding and outcomes-oriented dialogue. Over the past four years, the GFMD has sought to contribute to more policy *coherence* on migration and development at the national, regional and global levels, strengthen the *capacity* of States to address migration and development opportunities and challenges more effectively, and promote international *cooperation* among states and between states and other actors. Through its inclusive approach, ongoing consultations and follow-on activities it has also become more than just an annual conference.

In lieu of a full annual GFMD meeting, 2011 will provide space for a series of smaller, focused and action-oriented meetings around the world, in support of the Chair's flagship theme *Taking action on Migration and Development – Coherence, Capacity and Cooperation*. These thematic meetings will build on the content and key outcomes of previous GFMD meetings. They will also tap into the concrete experiences of practitioners on the ground and explore some of the practical applications of GFMD discussions at national, regional and international levels. The results and outcomes of these meetings will be drawn together and discussed in a final two-day extended Meeting of the Friends of the Forum in Geneva in early December 2011.

The Chair intends to involve governments in all regions, to maintain the global, voluntary and state-led character of the process, as well as other GFMD stakeholders, including the Global Migration Group (GMG), civil society and the private sector. Working in partnership with governments and other actors is in itself a key objective of GFMD 2011.

Another priority for the 2011 Chair will be to initiate and guide the first phase of the GFMD assessment process, as discussed and endorsed in Puerto Vallarta in November 2010, and to ensure that in 2012 the findings of this assessment can usefully feed into the strategic analysis by the Steering Group and Friends of the Forum on the Future of the Forum. A special session on the assessment will also be held during the extended Friends of the Forum meeting at the end of the year.

This Concept Paper outlines the format and thematic focus proposed by the Chair for 2011, suggesting three clusters of themes to take the GFMD debates to a next level of practical application. It also offers comments on the GFMD Assessment Process, the role of the Friends of the Forum and the Steering Group, the ad-hoc Working Groups, the Platform for Partnerships, the national GFMD focal points, and the involvement of international organizations and civil society.

This paper was submitted to the Friends of the Forum and the Steering Group for written comments by 4 February 2011 and subsequent review by the Steering Group at its meeting of 8 February. This final version takes account of the principal comments received.

2. 2011 FORMAT

The Chair proposes an action-oriented and regionally-balanced program of substantive activity in 2011, in reflection of the 2011 GFMD theme: *Taking Action on Migration and Development - Coherence, Capacity and Cooperation*.

While preserving the global nature of the Forum, the Chair is promoting the organization of a series of smaller thematic meetings (workshops, seminars, etc.) around the world, dedicated to focused and action-oriented debate, and engaging as wide a range of governments across regions and other relevant GFMD stakeholders as possible. To achieve this logistically, the Chair intends to work in partnership with individual governments and governments involved in regional bodies, inter-regional fora (IRFs) and regional consultative processes (RCPs). Support from international organizations and non-governmental actors already engaged with the themes will also be sought.

Some meetings would be held under GFMD auspices (e.g. in follow-up to Puerto Vallarta, and/or as part of the Working Group work plans), while others would take place in association with the GFMD Chair (e.g. meetings envisaged in partnership with RCPs or IRFs). The thematic meetings would culminate in the final Friends of the Forum meeting, for which governments will prepare throughout the year via the thematic meetings, Working Group activities and discussions of the Steering Group and FOFs.

Working in partnership

Much of the proposed GFMD 2011 work plan can only be implemented through partnerships, in particular among GFMD participating governments. Interested partners should be able to offer substantive input to the thematic meetings, assume logistical responsibility, and where feasible provide financial support. The Swiss Chair is prepared to co-fund some of the meetings under its own budget.

Sharing responsibility for thematic meetings should greatly enhance the dynamics and ownership of the GFMD process, since the Forum will be able to draw on the government experiences and lessons learned on the ground that may otherwise not reach the traditional GFMD roundtables.

Regarding preparations for such meetings, interested governments are invited to contact the Chair with proposals in support of the thematic program for 2011. At the same time, the Chair will approach governments, regional bodies and relevant regional and inter-regional consultative processes to gauge their interest and involvement in dialogue dedicated to the global themes of the 2011 GFMD agenda. Each thematic meeting will have its own specific preparations and modalities, but the meetings will be small to ensure focused discussion; and agendas will be limited to 2-3 questions or issues in line with the 2011 program. While most meetings will take place in the regions, not all will be implemented with regional and inter-regional processes. Cross-regional participation and exchange will be encouraged for all meetings.

As appropriate, the Chair would co-chair thematic meetings with governments and other interested actors. In some instances, meetings may be chaired by the government co-chairs of the GFMD *ad hoc* Working Groups.

In coordinating the program of thematic meetings in 2011, the Chair will pay particular attention to preserving the global nature of the GFMD dialogue. The combined results of the thematic meetings will be reported to the extended Friends of the Forum meeting at the end of the year. Throughout the year, thematic meeting reports will also be presented to the other meetings of the Friends of the Forum, which – along with the Steering Group – remain the central reference points for all GFMD related activities.

Governments as key partners of the process

Governments are the principal partners and stakeholders in the GFMD process. Over the past 4 years, they have cooperated in roundtable teams, working groups, workshops, follow-up projects, webinars

etc. This will continue in 2011 when governments, individually and jointly, would prepare, organize and co-chair thematic meetings in cooperation with the Chair. Furthermore, throughout the year, governments will play a key role in discussing and reviewing the outcomes of the various thematic meetings, both in the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum meetings.

International Organizations and Civil Society

Cooperation with and thematic input from relevant *international organizations*, in particular the Global Migration Group, would remain as in the past. Interested organizations may also be approached to co-organize, with the GFMD Chair and interested governments, thematic meetings relevant to the GFMD 2011 work plan.

Cooperation with *civil society* will largely depend on the format and themes of the 2011 work plan. A mutually reinforcing *modus operandi* will need to be discussed and defined jointly with both civil society groups in Switzerland and international partners. As in the past, select civil society actors, including the private sector, would be approached to assist the GFMD Chair or co-organizing partners with substantive input and participation in certain thematic meetings. The GFMD Chair intends to distinguish between the 2011 civil society work plan, which would be under the responsibility of civil society actors, and mechanisms for direct interactions between governments and civil society. Bancomer, the organizer of the 2010 Mexican Civil Society Days, and the MacArthur Foundation have already expressed their willingness to support these reflections and define areas of convergence and action. One possibility could be for civil society to form a small international coordinating committee that would assume responsibility for the civil society 2011 work plan and act as liaison point for the GFMD Chair. In practice, the Chair is considering organizing a “common space” panel, as in Mexico last year, between civil society and governments in the context of the Extended Friends of the Forum meeting. The Chair also intends to promote, where possible, interaction with civil society representatives in the various thematic meetings.

GFMD 2011 thematic program support mechanisms

- **The Working Groups (WGs)**

The WG on Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development (chaired by the Philippines and the UAE) and the WG on Policy Coherence, Data and Research (chaired by Morocco and Switzerland) have been instrumental in prioritizing and implementing GFMD outcomes, in this way ensuring a certain continuity and linkage between GFMD meetings. The WGs are formulating their work plans for 2011 based on outcomes from 2010 and earlier GFMD meetings, and on projects already commenced. The Chair has agreed with the respective co-chairs that these planned activities will form an integral part of the GFMD program in 2011. Some WG activities are already included in the proposed 2011 thematic program.

- **The Platform for Partnerships (PfP)**

The Chair intends to promote the use of the PfP as a tool to facilitate *exchange* and *showcase* initiatives, projects and programs undertaken by governments in the field of migration and development which are related to GFMD themes, debates and outcomes, as determined by the Chair and the Working Groups. The PfP provides an online space (www.gfmd.org/pfp) for showcasing projects and practices and for announcing calls for projects and partnerships. In addition, in the framework of the PfP direct meetings and other offline activities can be organized between interested governments and other actors to present such projects (the first such interface was held in Puerto Vallarta). Responsibility for implementation and funding lies with the project proponents, not the GFMD. Adjustments to the PfP may need to be considered to ensure its compatibility with the expectations of participating states.

Pulling the strings together – Extended Meeting of the Friends of the Forum

The Chair will organize an extended Friends of the Forum meeting with all GFMD stakeholders at the end of 2011.¹ This two-day meeting will discuss the outcomes of the thematic meetings held during the year. Discussions would be held in break-out and plenary sessions and be structured along the three thematic clusters. This final meeting of the Friends of the Forum will also include a special session on the GFMD assessment, as well as a space for government-civil society interaction, possibly in the form of a “Common Space” panel debate on the year’s key outcomes. The meeting will take place in Geneva and is tentatively scheduled for 1/2 December 2011.

Timelines

The Chair will finalize the concept paper in February/March 2011, based on written inputs received from the Friends of the Forum and the Steering Group by 4 February, and consultations with the Steering Group during its meeting on 8 February. In the wake of this meeting, the Chair will engage in consultations with potential partners. The final paper will be shared with the Friends of the Forum for a meeting planned in mid March. The bulk of thematic meetings (workshops, seminars) should take place from April to September/October 2011. The details of each thematic meeting will be announced in advance on the GFMD website and during meetings of the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum. October/November will be dedicated to preparing and posting a summary of the meeting reports and outcomes for the extended Friends of the Forum meeting in early December. The full reports of the thematic meetings will also be made available on the website.

3. 2011 THEMATIC WORK PROGRAM

Coherence, capacity and cooperation will be at the core of the 2011 GFMD thematic work program. These three central elements have underpinned all the GFMD debates on migration and development. Coherence is essential for governments to define comprehensive, evidence-based and effective policies; capacity is needed to create the appropriate tools for governments to develop such policies; and cooperation at the national, regional and global levels is required to implement coherent and evidence-based migration and development policies for the benefit of both migrants and societies.

Based on this concept, the Chair proposes three thematic clusters of global relevance, under which thematic meetings would be organized: *Labour mobility and development*; *Addressing irregular migration through coherent migration and development strategies*; and *Planning tools for evidence-based migration and development policies*. These global issues will guide the preparation of all thematic meetings.

The meetings proposed below are not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive, either in terms of substance, possible organizing partners or participation. Governments are welcome, within the proposed clusters, to add ideas and come forward with their own suggestions. The interlinkages between development, migration and human rights shall be considered as an overarching principle in all three clusters. The protection and promotion of the human rights of migrants are directly linked to their contribution to the development of States, both origin and destination, the development of the migrants themselves and the members of their families.

CLUSTER I Labour mobility and development

Most of the challenges related to migration and development continue to arise in the context of labour mobility. The GFMD has discussed the multiple aspects and implications of labour mobility for development, ranging from linked-up labour market and migration planning for circular, temporary and longer-term migration to the role of recruitment agencies. At the same time, the Puerto Vallarta meeting addressed for the first time the critical issue of how to provide social and income security for

¹ This extended Friends of the Forum meeting would also include international bodies and civil society group and experts that have contributed to the thematic meetings in 2011.

temporary and circular migrants as a precondition for enhanced development outcomes. The specific situation of migrant women was examined through the example of the global care industry, where some of the most blatant forms of gender-based discrimination and disempowerment of migrants are occurring.

Under this cluster, the Chair would support thematic meetings on three practical strategies for making labour migration work better for countries of origin and destination and the migrants: engaging the private sector in labour market planning, lowering the costs of migration for development, and better regulating/protecting the global care industry.

Sub-themes and possible meetings

i) Engaging the private sector in labour market planning

Since its inception, the GFMD has faced major difficulties in engaging in a meaningful dialogue with business leaders and private sector employers. It has discussed the misalignment between labour market needs (and planning) and migration policies/programs, and the implications of this for development, at the human and economic levels and in countries of origin and destination. Issues such as more linked-up labour market and immigration planning, better job-skills matching, transparent admissions procedures, coherent, regulated recruitment and employment practices, and skills recognition have featured prominently on the GFMD agenda. But the dialogue often took place without such key actors as business leaders, employers and other labour migration brokers, and it is now time to address these issues directly with the private sector. A meeting could be organized with interested governments and with business leaders drawn from international manpower agencies, social partners and other relevant institutions.

ii) Lowering the costs of migration for higher development gains

Previous GFMD meetings identified high costs of migration as one of the biggest obstacles to labour migrants fully realizing the developmental benefits of working abroad, particularly in temporary or circular migration situations. The Puerto Vallarta discussions, and the studies of the Working Group on protecting and empowering migrants for development, identified a three-pronged approach to lowering costs and raising the potential gains of temporary/circular labour migrants for development: better regulating the labour recruitment industry; low cost up-front loans to migrants, and social security and income protection for mobile workers. All three strategies are being experimented within the context of a labour migration program between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Asian partner countries under the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. 2011 may see the fruition of some of this experimentation. As a first event in 2011 among several planned by the WG along the three prongs, the UAE and Switzerland co-organized, in January 2011, a workshop with other governments, international experts and private sector representatives on how to better regulate the migrant labour recruitment industry.

iii) Global care workers at the interface of migration and development

Governments agreed in Puerto Vallarta that gender and family should continue to be a central focus for the GFMD, specifically in regard to the global care industry (child, elderly care, domestic work, etc.), which illustrates some of the most negative aspects of migration for development. Global demographic and labour market developments have created demands in this service sector, which are largely filled by women from low income countries. While increasingly important for the economic and social development in countries of origin and destination and for the human development of the migrants and their families, this sector remains one of the most unprotected and risky for women and their families. The GFMD 2010 showcased some of the exemplary work begun by a few governments and international and civil society partners to redress this, and governments specifically requested active follow-up in this field in 2011, e.g. in cooperation with UN Women and others.

CLUSTER II

Addressing irregular migration through coherent migration and development strategies

The Puerto Vallarta session on irregular migration saw a deepening of this important debate since its first appearance in Manila in 2008 and a recommendation that it remains on the GFMD agenda. While the focus was on migrant vulnerability and protection, participants also addressed such issues as inter-state cooperation based on shared responsibility, the causes of irregular movements, the human rights of all migrants and the right not to migrate, the need for sustainable development and decent labour conditions in source countries, and the various effects of irregular migration on the human development of migrants and their families.

Irregular migration has a number of negative causes and consequences. In countries of origin, the absence of jobs and sustainable development has prompted many people to look for opportunities abroad, often in irregular ways, especially where there is inadequate information about the opportunities and risks of working abroad, and/or regular migration channels are inaccessible, unavailable or simply too expensive. In countries of destination, lack of coherence between migration and labour market planning, xenophobic sentiments based on poorly informed perceptions about migrants and the real or perceived threat they may pose to society and the economy, and a lack of support mechanisms for vulnerable migrants, can lead to an erosion of public confidence in the integrity and effectiveness of migration (and asylum) systems.

At the same time, irregular migration can endanger the lives and the integrity of migrants. A large but unknown number of irregular migrants die each year trying to cross land and sea borders, smugglers extract large amounts of money and traffickers, as well as certain employers and recruiters, ruthlessly exploit irregular migrant women and men by forcing them into low-paid, insecure and degrading work.

Enhanced and sustained inter-state cooperation on both migration and development is seen as part of a comprehensive and coherent approach to addressing the causes and impacts of irregular migration, often most effectively in the context of bilateral or regional cooperation agreements. Such an approach would seek to mitigate the factors (in origin and host countries) that cause or encourage irregular migration; identify mutually beneficial labour or other migration schemes that could yield the most benefits for countries of origin and destination, and reduce the need for migrants to resort to irregular migration; address return and reintegration; prosecute those that profit from irregular migration; and protect those rendered vulnerable by irregular migration.

Sub-themes and possible meetings

The Chair proposes that this important and sensitive issue could be dealt with in the context of relevant regional and inter-regional consultative processes or interested regional bodies. The Chair would consult with such bodies to ascertain how the Cluster II theme could be integrated into, or be added to their agendas.

Each regional or inter-regional process dealing with this theme would be expected to discuss:

National practices, models and strategies for inter-state cooperation between origin, transit and destination countries, in managing irregular migration, taking account of i) the development-related causes and implications of irregular migration, and ii) the human rights and special vulnerability of migrant children, women and men in an irregular situation.

CLUSTER III

Tools for evidence-based migration and development policies

The GFMD and its two government-led working groups have placed particular importance on sharpening the focus on planning tools required to promote evidence-based migration and development policies. The Chair thus wishes to build on the intensive exchange and outcomes on these issues in previous GFMD meetings and WG activities, where the link between data, information and the elaboration of evidence-based policies was widely recognized, as was the need to assess the

impact of migration and development policies and to support capacity-building. A series of concrete initiatives and projects were developed in this context by GFMD stakeholders, and the Chair, in conjunction with the WGs, intends to promote active follow-up to test some of these activities.

Sub-themes and possible meetings

i) Handbook on ‘Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning’

The Handbook on ‘Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning’ recently published by the Global Migration Group and presented at Puerto Vallarta, is addressed to policy-makers and practitioners and contains detailed guidance for governments to define their migration and development policies and programs. The Handbook is already considered a major step forward for concrete action in this crucial field. One or more meeting/s would be convened with the support of the Working Groups to promote the use of the Handbook and test its initial implementation with governments, international agencies and experts. Partners would be relevant GMG agencies.

ii) Impact Assessments of Migration and Development Policies

Following the stated interest in Puerto Vallarta to pursue this issue, a workshop could be organized with experts, interested governments and international agencies. Cooperation with the World Bank’s Centre for Mediterranean Integration in Marseille would be sought to co-organize such a workshop as part of the WB’s longer term policy impact assessment program, jointly implemented with IOM. Such a meeting would also be related to work done at the EU/EC level on impact assessments for ‘Policy Coherence on Development’. The Puerto Vallarta proposal to create a clearinghouse to include and share information on assessment indicators and methods of evaluation could be pursued in the same context. The Working Groups would support such a meeting.

iii) Implementing Migration Profiles

Puerto Vallarta generally endorsed the usefulness of Migration Profiles as a comprehensive data and information tool for evidence-based policy making on migration and development, to be supported by appropriate capacity building. Meetings could be held in different locations with governments, relevant agencies and experts to further promote Migration Profiles and to measure progress on implementation. With the support of the Working Groups, these meetings would be supported by relevant international agencies and bodies, such as the EC, UNITAR, IOM, other GMG agencies and ICMPD.

4. NATIONAL GFMD FOCAL POINTS SYSTEM

In view of the work-intensive and decentralized thematic program, and the need to also involve capitals in the assessment exercise, it will be necessary to communicate at short notice and throughout the year with GFMD governments in capitals. The Chair therefore plans to address a letter to the Friends of the Forum in order to reactivate the GFMD national focal points.

5. GFMD ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Chair will pay particular attention to the GFMD assessment and guide this process in 2011, following the endorsement, in November 2010 in Puerto Vallarta, of the Assessment Framework and the Terms of Reference of the Government Assessment Team. A first meeting of the Assessment Team was held in October 2010, chaired by the former Chair Mexico, followed by a second meeting on 14 December 2010, chaired by Switzerland.

At its second meeting, the Team reviewed the list of elements to be assessed and reaffirmed that Phase 1 of the assessment will be conducted in 2011. It also agreed that Phase 1 will look at past and current experiences and practices of the GFMD process, while at the same gathering information on those areas where the Forum can or should improve its future way of functioning. The evidence gained from phase 1 will feed into the 2012 strategic analysis by the Steering Group and Friends of the Forum on

the 'Future of the Forum' (phase 2). In phase 1, the wording of the questions to be put to governments should be neutral and will be developed with the assistance of one or two part-time assessment experts that will support the internal assessment Task Force. The assessment expert(s) should have a technical function only and be recruited from entities that have no vested governmental or institutional interest in matters relating to migration and development.

The Steering Group and Friends of the Forum will be informed on a regular basis about the GFMD assessment process, which will also be addressed at the final Friends of the Forum meeting.

6. FRIENDS OF THE FORUM AND STEERING GROUP

The Chair intends to convene regular meetings of the Friends of the Forum (FoF) and the Steering Group (SG) in Geneva in order to exchange and discuss relevant Forum-related developments, including the GFMD Assessment, the activities of the Working Groups and developments on the Platform for Partnerships. Meetings of the FoF and the SG will not necessarily be held back-to-back, and the FoF and the SG could be assigned separate roles in 2011, along the following lines:

The **Steering Group** meetings could be used to: (i) discuss work progress of the Assessment Team; (ii) review the Chair's 2011 thematic Work Plan and present updates on its implementation; (iii) discuss the activities of the Working Groups and developments on the Platform for Partnerships; and (iv) discuss other dialogues on migration and development in the international arena, such as the 2011 Informal Thematic Debate in the UN General Assembly.

The **Friends of the Forum** meetings could be used to: (i) provide regular updates on the discussions of the SG; (ii) offer updates on the assessment exercise and raise the Friends' awareness of the importance for **capitals** to contribute to the exercise; (iii) share the work plans of the Working Groups, including interest in concrete engagement in these groups, and (iv) share information on the PfP and convene side meetings where latest projects on the Platform for Partnerships could be presented and discussed.