

GFMD Recommendations to the Global Compact on Migration

CLUSTER 4:

CONTRIBUTIONS OF MIGRANTS AND DIASPORAS TO ALL DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING REMITTANCES AND PORTABILITY OF EARNED BENEFITS

Based on the pledge to harness the contribution of diasporas and migrants for sustainable development – an element as well included in Annex II of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants – these recommendations deal on a large scale with the day-to-day lives of migrants, especially with regard to remittances (migration-related costs), capacity development, and the recognition of migrants and diaspora as agents for development. Recognizing the positive impacts migrants' contributions can have on the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, GFMD discussions have focused on finding ways to elevating those contributions by a range of different measures, such as: reducing migration-related costs, increasing the impact of remittances through lowering transfer costs and easier access to financial services, ensuring portability of earned benefits, and fostering diaspora partnerships. The potential of migrants as development agents as well as the corresponding need to enhance their contributions has also been recognized in the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#).¹

Similarly, based on a genuinely positive causality between migration and development, the [Sutherland Report](#) captures the portability of earned social benefits as a matter of fairness for migrants and countries of origin and of effective migration policy in destination countries. Therefore, Sutherland urges International Organizations such as ILO and the World Bank to intensify their coordination and step up efforts in assisting states in this regard.² The report also addresses recruitment costs through a number of recommendations targeted at recruitment practices and agencies as well as exploitative lending rates.³ On remittances, the report argues for operational partnerships among government policymakers and regulators, financial industry representatives and technology entrepreneurs to a) facilitate access to financial services, b) foster competition in remittance markets, and c) stop equating remittances with money-laundering.⁴

¹ [Addis Ababa Action Agenda \(AAAA\)](#), § 40.

² [Report of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, A/71/278, \(Sutherland Report\)](#), Recommendation 8.

³ [Sutherland Report](#), Recommendation 4.

⁴ [Sutherland Report](#), Recommendation 9.

Past GFMD discussions have come up with a significant number of recommendations around the relevant topics. These include (selection):

(1) Migrants' role as development actors

- Factor the **contribution of migration to development outcomes into development strategies**, considering the inter-linkages between international and internal migration processes.
- Ensure **appropriate frameworks for the involvement of migrant organizations and diaspora** on key subjects that affect them and the communities they live and work in in order to enhance the impact of migration at the local, national and regional level and recognize the multiple contributions to the development of (local) communities.

(2) Reducing costs of migration and increasing impact of remittances

- Encourage **innovations in money transfer** mechanisms, enhance competition and transparency in the remittances market and ensure the full use of services already existing to bring down remittance costs to targeted levels in accordance with the commitments in the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and G20 context.
- **Implement financial literacy programs** and provide/distribute high-quality information on financial services for senders and recipients of remittances.

(3) Establishing diaspora partnerships

- Establish **diaspora partnerships** at all levels of society and government to **strengthen the cultural and economic ties** between countries and increase coordination among different actors.
- Create an **enabling environment for diaspora activities**, for instance by providing multiple re-entry visas, dual citizenship, recognition of skills and portability of earned social benefits.

(4) Recognizing contributions and fostering capacity development of migrant organizations

- Expand the **capacities and roles of migrant and diaspora associations** and Civil Society Organizations, e.g. **through enhanced capacity building and decentralized cooperation**.
- Facilitate the **engagement of migrants in local business or as entrepreneurs**, e.g. by supporting migrants associations or providing **tax incentives for migrant businesses**.

Guiding questions for the discussion:

A number of recent UN documents, such as the [2030 Agenda](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), provide a framework – although not legally binding to states – that addresses a number of migration and development-related challenges. With this in mind:

- How can the GCM facilitate sustainable implementation of commitments in international standards and frameworks related to the topics covered by this thematic cluster?
- How can the GCM further advance relevant recommendations and good practices shared within the GFMD and affirmed in several UN documents, notably the [Sutherland Report](#), the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#)⁵ and the latest [Report of the Secretary General on Migration](#)⁶?
- Which current challenges, if any, are not yet sufficiently covered by existing international standards and frameworks and therefore require specific emphasis by the GCM?

⁵ [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#), A/Res/71/1.

⁶ [Report of the Secretary General on Migration](#), A/70/59.