

7th of November 2014

Consolidated Civil society Feedback on 1st draft GFMD 2015 Concept Note (*dated 2nd of October 2014*)

At the invitation of the Turkish Chair, ICMC's GFMD Civil Society Coordination Office circulated the first draft of the GFMD 2015 Government Concept Note to civil society leaders and networks for a first round of feedback, including those active in the International Civil society's Steering Committee for the GFMD in Sweden and the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.. About a dozen responded, in general quite positively and constructive, with appreciation for the open consultation of the Turkish Chair, and the draft Concept's overall focus on *Partnerships*.

Feedback was along two lines: refining the thematic priorities in the draft Concept (see part A. below), and suggestions for GFMD modalities and civil society-government cooperation (see part B. below). This document summarizes the main feedback, and points of convergence¹ among global civil society, also taking into account the recommendations that came out of the GFMD Civil Society Days 2014 and the evaluation survey².

A. Suggestions on themes and roundtables

1. We suggest: to include a stronger focus on safe migration and human rights

As partner with governments in migration and development, civil society by and large welcomes the overall thematic focus on "Strengthening Partnerships", as well on *sustainable* development. Civil society emphasizes the importance for each of the roundtables to start from a *human rights-based approach* and that human mobility needs to become much *safer, more* regular and humane.

Most civil society feedback also applauded the themes indicated for the thematic meetings and Roundtables, but would welcome further detail and refinement on the exact issues that will be tackled. Many civil society respondents suggested a stronger focus on *mixed migration flows, labour mobility mechanisms, and social protection and social contributions* of migrants and diaspora to development, including *social* entrepreneurship. The following table summarizes civil society's main suggestions for refinement and deepening of the themes in the concept paper, with language that we suggest for your consideration *underscored*. The feedback is further summarized below.

¹ Civil Society achieved unprecedented convergence in 2013 presenting a 5-year 8-point plan on migration and development to governments for collaboration and action. (<http://hldcivilsociety.org/five-year-action-agenda/>). Following up on point 1 of the 5-year 8-point plan, and resulting from the Civil society Days in 2014, global Civil society has launched a campaign calling upon governments to make sure that migrants and migration are an essential component of these post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. More than 265 civil society organizations have now joined the Civil society Stockholm Agenda that proposes a set of rights-based principles and targets connecting migrants, diaspora and migration with human and economic development. For more information, please consult: <http://gfmdcivilsociety.org/stockholm-agenda-and-post-2015-sustainable-development-goals/>

² The 2014 GFMD Civil recommendations can be found [here](#); and the evaluation results [here](#).

Table 1: Suggestions by global civil society on the government agenda for the GFMD 2015

Strengthening Partnerships: <u>Safe Human Mobility for Sustainable Development</u>
<p>Three cross-cutting themes and preparatory thematic meetings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post-2015: Updating the GFMD position <u>on migration, migrants and the post-2015 development agenda</u> 2. Public perception: the role of communications <u>and media</u> in promoting widespread recognition of the benefits of migration, improving public perceptions of migrant and combating xenophobic reactions 3. Women: Recognizing the contributions of women migrants to economic and social development in countries of origin and destination and addressing their specific needs
<p><u>One special plenary theme and session for all delegations:</u> <u>Partnerships to make migration work post-2015 – implementing the SDGs</u> <i>(moved here from 2.2)</i></p>
<p>Three roundtables sessions, with linked subthemes:</p> <p>RT 1: <u>Labour mobility, recruitment and the well-being of migrants</u></p> <p>1.1: <u>Partnerships to protect the rights of migrants- for labour mobility mechanisms that ensure decent work, rights and social protection for migrant workers</u></p> <p>1.2: Reducing the human and financial costs of migration: cooperative approaches to fair recruitment <u>and employment</u> practices and lower remittance fees <u>and living costs</u></p>
<p>RT 2: Migration as a factor in <u>human development</u></p> <p>2.1: Mainstreaming migration into planning at the sectoral level</p> <p>2.2: Private sector-government cooperation to support Facilitating migrant/diaspora <u>social entrepreneurship, with a focus on small and medium enterprises</u> <i>(moved here from 3.2)</i></p>
<p>RT 3: <u>Human development and human security in migration</u> Enhancing international cooperation on emerging issues in migration and mobility</p> <p>3.1: Enhancing human development and human security for forced migrants through international cooperation on labor market access, mobility and resettlement</p> <p>3.2: <u>Addressing mixed migration flows and protecting migrants in distress, in transit and at borders</u> <i>(new)</i></p>

2. Thematic preparatory meetings

- **Crosscutting themes:** Some civil society groups suggested that, instead of linking the themes of the preparatory meetings to a specific roundtable, to make them crosscutting throughout the GFMD agenda, and to make sure that government roundtable coordinators included the results of the thematic meetings in their roundtable preparations and sessions.
- **With regards to the thematic meeting on post-2015:** with negotiations for the final post-2015 SDG framework speeding along, civil society strongly suggests to the Turkish Chair to conduct this thematic meeting first.
- **With regards to the thematic meeting on public perceptions:** Civil society groups welcome this focus. Several suggested to include the **Media** as an important focus and stakeholder, and to include a focus

during the meeting on “ending the use of abusive terminology and discourse against migrants in media and by politicians and policy makers”³ It was also suggested to make sure migrants themselves are included in communication discussions.

- **With regards to the thematic meeting on migrant women**, it was strongly suggested to include migrant women themselves in the preparations for this meeting, and two groups emphasised that in particular exploitation and abuse in low-skilled jobs need to be discussed from a gender-based perspective.

Without implying a necessary link to migrant women, it was suggested to also include, either within this thematic meeting *or in a separate one*, a **specific focus on youth and children** in the context of migration, as among other things this will likely also be a focus in the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

3. We suggest to include a special plenary session for all delegations on post-2015

In addition to the suggestion to make the post-2015 SDGs crosscutting as an important point of reference for each Roundtable Session, civil society also suggests that the implications of all SDGs for migrants and migration should be explored collectively in a special plenary session with all delegations, as well as with civil society in Common Space. Civil society would like to refer the Turkish Chair and governments to the Civil society Stockholm Agenda⁴ for civil society recommendations on this topic.

4. We suggest to focus RT 1 on labour mobility and social protection

Almost all civil society respondents emphasised that all roundtables should include a human-rights focus. Therefore, instead of focussing a roundtable broadly on the protection of rights of migrants, a number of groups suggested for RT 1 to be structured more around labour mobility mechanism, labour matching and labour protection, with:

- session 1.1 focussed on: *Labour mobility mechanisms that ensure decent work, rights and social protection for migrant workers and*
- session 1.2 focused largely as foreseen, on: *Reducing the human and financial costs of migration: cooperative approaches to fair recruitment and employment practices and lower remittance fees and living costs.* [Adding “living costs” to this RT was suggested by two groups who stated that; *“While lowering cost of recruitment and remittance transfer is very valid (although accountability of recruiters is lacking), it is a rather narrow view of enhancing migrant economic capability and could thus be extended to housing, education, health and other social goods. Lowering the cost of these items would enhance migrant economic capability in far more significant way.”*]

5. We suggest that RT 2 on Migration as a factor in development includes the focus on diaspora and migrants as social investors and entrepreneurs.

Civil society applauds the continued focus on sustainable and human development in the concept paper, and how migrants and migration can be better integrated in sectoral planning and policies—including by using the SDGs as a framework. Civil society is also glad so see a renewed focus on the role of diaspora and migrants as entrepreneurs. As much work has been done around this theme in past years in GFMD government and civil society days⁵, civil society feels that this theme would fit better under the

³ See 2014 [GFMD CSD Recommendation 4, benchmarks 2](#).

⁴ Also see footnote 1 on the Civil Society “Stockholm Agenda”, or see: : <http://gfmddcivilsociety.org/stockholm-agenda-and-post-2015-sustainable-development-goals/>.

⁵ See for example 2014 [GFMD CSD Recommendation 6 and benchmarks](#)

“development RT” rather than under “emerging issues”. Civil society would also like to see a stronger focus on social contributions and social entrepreneurship; one group wrote *“growth and job creation by migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs do not always translate into human development outcomes down the road”*.

6. We suggest that RT 3 focus on human development and human security in migration

Many in civil society enthusiastically welcome the inclusion of human security and forced migration in the concept paper, as one put it, *“to bridge the anachronistic and increasingly fake divide between refugees and forced migration on one hand and economic and labour dynamics on the other hand - as they are profoundly connected, as cause, context and consequence of human mobility”*. Great care must be taken however that the current situation of Turkey and the surrounding regions do not dominate the entire GFMD discourse, which must remain both global and focused on the full spectrum of migration and development.

In this direction, Civil society agrees that the 2015 GFMD must continue to take forward its recent attention to the fuller spectrum of mixed migration dynamics, looking beyond labor market access, mobility and resettlement. This would do justice to wider forces and circumstances that create the conditions for people to become refugees, asylum seekers or displaced migrants: amongst others poverty, conflict and the adverse impacts of economic development, and climate change.

Therefore, as a complement to session 3.1 and directly following from 2014 GFMD CSD recommendations⁶, civil society suggests focusing session 3.2 on *addressing mixed migration flows and protecting migrants in distress, in transit and at borders*.

In the preparations for these RT 3 sessions, civil society encourages the Turkish Chair and government Roundtable coordinators to actively connect with civil society working on refugees, displacement and forced migration, and to link to the KNOMAD Working Group on Forced Migration and with the newly founded ‘Solutions Alliance’ of UNHCR. It also encourages the coordinators to start from existing conventions and frameworks, in particular the recently released OHCHR “Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders”, and UNHCR’s “10-point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration”.

B. Suggestions on GFMD modalities and civil society-government cooperation

Most civil society respondents expressed appreciation for the objective of the Turkish Chair to connect the GFMD Roundtables with other processes, in particular the World Humanitarian Summit and the Budapest Process, and hopes that other governments will also make specific links to other regional migration processes. Civil society feedback emphasizes (1) ensuring a multi-stakeholder approach; (2) inclusive language approach, (3) a maturing of government-civil society relations with the GFMD.

7. Language

Civil society has been concerned to see that French and Spanish interpretation and translation has been less and less available in the GFMD context of background materials, as well as during Roundtable Sessions, and hopes that, in order to foster active participation of all regions, the Turkish Chair foresees—at a minimum—French and Spanish interpretation in all GFMD sessions.

⁶ See 2014 [GFMD CSD Recommendation 3 and benchmarks](#)

8. Multi-stakeholder approach

In addition to cooperation with civil society, as well as the private sector, civil society wants to emphasize the importance of continuing to engage *cities* in GFMD processes. Working on the ground all over the world, civil society sees and regularly partners in the ground-breaking work of cities and regions in concrete, replicable practices, many directly relating to important GFMD discussions and recommendations.

9. Connecting and collaborating with Civil Society

Civil society appreciates the concept paper's reference to interaction with Civil society regarding the coordination of the Civil society Days and the planning of the Common Space, and looks forward to working together with the Chair and governments on this.

The concept paper observes that the government GFMD process has “matured”. The Civil society process and organizing has also matured, and constructive interactions between government and civil society segments have increasingly proven successful, including in Common Space, this year's innovative breakfast sessions between smaller groups of governments and civil society at the GFMD in Stockholm (17 states, 22 civil society leaders, 5 issues), and the occasional participation of civil society spokespersons in government roundtables (e.g. during the post-2015 and diaspora session last year). Therefore, and under the central theme of “Strengthening Partnerships” the next step is to mature the relationship between civil society and governments. In that direction, *civil society formally renews two proposals to the GFMD Chair*:

Formal proposal # 1: More government participation in the Civil Society Days

Civil society proposes to increase states' participation in the CSDs, i.e. in plenaries, roundtables and innovative formats like the breakfast tables this past year.

Formal proposal # 2: Civil Society Spokespersons in the Government Roundtables

Civil society proposes that, following the effective model of the UN High Level Dialogue last year, a selected number of civil society spokespersons participate in the states' Roundtables to present the conclusions of the CSD and participate in the discussion —e.g., the Civil Society Chairs and the rapporteurs from related civil society Roundtables.

More generally, civil society would welcome a conversation with the GFMD Chair, Troika and/or Steering Group on how civil society and migrants can more systematically be included in consultations, preparations, and future planning, including for the thematic meetings, RT preparations and multi-annual planning for the GFMD.

Lastly in these regards, the role of civil society in these matters and the Civil Society Days as an integral part of the GFMD since 2007 merits more explicit reference in the concept paper. A few extra words will do that, e.g., inserted in the following parts of the concept paper and perhaps simply with the wording underscored:

- Introduction, 3rd paragraph: *Migration is a force whose positive contributions to development can be enhanced by the cooperative efforts of states and civil society organizations at every point along the spectrum of the migration experience—origin, transit, temporary sojourn, destination and return.*

- p. 5, 3rd paragraph: *Because of the timeline of the post-2015 agenda, it will be important for a thematic meeting earlier in the Turkish Chairmanship to consider a collaborative approach to advocacy for an appropriate place for migration in the SDGs. A consolidated position coming from many state participants in the GFMD, including the input of Civil society organizations, could influence the final shape of the agenda – while still respecting the non-binding and informal character of the GFMD.*

10. National and regional civil society consultations

Civil society organizations from around the world would also like to know how Turkish civil society will be involved in the consultative process running up to the GFMD. As in past years and consistent with the practice of GFMD chairs since 2008, it is hoped that the Chair for the 2015 GFMD will stimulate, support and connect to the GFMD fresh interaction with a range of national and local civil society organizations active in migration and development.