Global Forum on
MIGRATION & DEVELOPMENT
Civil Society

Achieving Migration and Development Goals

Movement together on global solutions and local action

EVALUATION

GFMD Civil Society Days 2015, Turkey

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Introduction

The Civil Society Days (CSD) of the 2015 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) were held on 12 and 13 October in Turkey, prior to the Common Space with Governments on 14 October and the GFMD Government Days on 15 and 16 October.

This 2015 GFMD took place at a time—and directly in the region— where the world sees the largest forced displacement of people since the Second World War. At the same time the GFMD took place just weeks after 193 governments at the UN adopted the ambitious 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): a 15-year full-planet agenda to "leave no one behind"—including migrants whatever their migratory status.

Under the overarching title *"Achieving Migration and Development Goals: Movement Together on Global Solutions and Local Action*", the GFMD Civil Society programme was built to identify solutions and actions to improve the situation for millions of individuals and families on the move. Structured around a mix of plenary and break-out sessions, the Civil Society Days aimed to look at global and local movement and progress since the United Nations (UN) High-level Dialogue (HLD) in 2013 and the next steps, the objectives of the "5-year 8-point Plan" that civil society launched at the HLD and the outcomes from the GFMD 2014.

The GFMD Civil Society Days 2015 (GFMD CSD) gathered a record number of 339 participants, out of which 225 selected civil society delegates from all around the world, many of them migrants themselves. Another 114 representatives of government, media and other guests and observers attended this years' GFMD CSD.

The civil society activities of the 2015 GFMD were organised by the Civil Society Coordinating Office, under the auspices of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), in partnership with the International Steering Committee (ISC) of 33 leading civil society organisations in migration, migrant rights' and development, representing migrants and diaspora groups, human rights and development organisations, academia and the private sector.

Shortly after the GFMD, the Coordinating Office invited all the participants to fill an Evaluation Survey to share their thoughts about the 2015 GFMD Civil Society Days and Common Space, to evaluate what could be done better, what one would like to see happen between now and the next GFMD in Bangladesh in December 2016, and what steps participants will take forward. The Survey was available in 3 languages and included 37 questions. **99 organisations** filled out the Evaluation Survey, amongst which 91 civil society representatives, 1 government and 7 international organisations.

This summary report highlights the main results of the Evaluation Survey. In the annex you can find the overview of graded questions.

Key Recommendations coming out of the Evaluation Survey

1. **On agenda, themes and methodology of the Civil Society Days**

- **To ensure continuity, progress and measurement of results**, by building the GFMD civil society programme on past civil society recommendations – in particular following the 5-year 8-point Plan and now also the migration-related targets in the UN 2030 Agenda.
- **To further identify key governments** to take part in the GFMD as panellists where relevant, in order to advance our recommendations in constructive dialogue with policy makers.
- **To ensure ample time for interactive discussions in smaller groups and "world café" settings** and limit time for extensive panel presentations.
- **To integrate a gender and a children perspective** throughout the programme, to supplement and strengthen the work of the women and children rapporteurs and to involve the rapporteurs earlier in preparing the working sessions.
- **For the final plenary sessions to be geared more strategically towards consolidating** and tying together the conclusions and recommendations from the two days.

2. **On preparations**

- For the Coordinating Office and the International Steering Committee (ISC) to keep playing a strategic role in preparing the programme, including working on Action Papers that include a consolidation of prior recommendations, progress, indicators, and suggested action steps.
- For the Action Papers to be prepared and sent around well in advance and for panellists and moderators to ensure their use throughout the sessions and beyond.

3. **On Common Space and interaction with governments**

- **To foster better and more interaction between governments and civil society during, before and after the GFMD**, for example by complementing Common Space with smaller meetings, and by piloting joint working/discussion groups throughout the year.
- **For civil society to be more audacious in its messages to governments** and maintain an emphasis on human rights frameworks and mechanisms.
- **To make sure that Common Space is co-owned by government and civil society**, including setting the agenda together with the Chair, having key speaker roles allocated to civil society organisations, and preventing panels being filled with ceremonial speakers.

4. **On participation**

- **To ensure more representative participation** by addressing gaps in participation from:
    - Delegates from **English-speaking Africa, the Middle East, and South America**.
    - **Key governments and local authorities**.
- **To invest in regional and thematic consultation rounds** of civil society prior to the GFMD to ensure coordinated representation from the regions.
- **To be more transparent on the selection procedure.**

5. **On follow-up and future actions**

- For the Coordinating Office and the ISC to compile and disseminate a **list of recommendations and follow up actions;** and to facilitate **follow-up meetings and webinars** with key governments and international organisations throughout 2016.
- For the Coordinating Office, the ISC and MADE to coordinate **civil society positioning on the future of the GFMD and the global governance of migration, including** the implementation and monitoring of migration-related aspects of **the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.**

Part 1: Programme, break-out and plenary sessions

1.1. Overall programme

The large majority of respondents overall evaluated the 2015 GFMD Civil Society Days Programme positively. In particular some of the innovations were welcomed, such as the **introduction of a women and a children rapporteur** as well as **the Action Papers** for the working sessions.

In terms of themes, respondents welcomed the introduction of xenophobia and social inclusion as one of the working session themes, as well as the inclusion of refugees and forced migration into the overall discourse of this GFMD. Participants also valued the powerful opening plenary, in particular appreciating the touching testimony from Abu Kurke Kebato and the inspiring poetry performance by Hollie McNish, as well as the diversity of the panel that followed. Consequently, quite a number of respondents recommended including more inspiring and artistic performances and material at future GFMDs.

Some critical observations and suggestions for improvements from respondents included:

- **On impact and continuity**: quite a number of respondents felt discussions sometimes tend to repeat what has been said in prior years, without a focus on what to do next. Despite the valuable efforts of the Action, and Bridging Papers, civil society needs to focus more on gearing the GFMD Civil Society Days towards impact and follow-up, and that includes work and positioning throughout the year.
- **On themes:** Although many respondents welcomed the introduction of new areas like xenophobia and forced migration some also cautioned against widening the agenda, as it would take away the attention on the 5-year 8-point Plan, and tends to diffuse civil society's agenda.
- **On linking and reporting back:** Some respondents suggested to ensure that the final plenary sessions dedicate more time for reporting back and for tying together and consolidating the conclusions and recommendations from the two days.
- **On human rights and development:** Some respondents stressed the importance of continuing to use the human rights framework and existing human rights mechanisms as a guiding thread throughout all discussions, and to make this concrete. On the other hand other respondents noted that there should be more focus on the development contributions of migrants and migration, beyond the "narrower focus of migrant rights", as one respondent put it. Some said that there is too much focus on the victimization of migrants, and not enough on the positive aspects of migration.
- **On local and national governments:** some respondents suggested that for the GFMD Civil Society Days to have more impact, a few selected governments and local authorities should be involved in the discussions to work on action plans and steps to take.

1.2. Preparations

Following last years' outcomes of the evaluation survey, the Coordinating Office and the ISC drafted and translated Action Papers for each of the working sessions, including references to the 5-year 8-point Plan, recommendations from last year, guiding questions and suggestions for next steps. In addition, Bridging Papers were also drafted on Women and on Children. The large majority of participants welcomed the Action Papers, but strongly recommended that they would be send around much earlier. Some respondents also suggested that Papers should be used more deliberately throughout the working sessions and beyond. Action Papers should start with a

definition of terminology where relevant, for example in the discussion on migrants in crisis and transit.

1.3. Opening plenaries (Monday 12 October, 9h00 – 12h00)

Overall the opening plenaries, in particular the "setting the scene" session, as well as the "Safe Migration" panel were evaluated positively. In particular the testimony from Abu Kurke Kebato and the poetry from Hollie McNish were applauded.

However, a number of respondents felt that the opening plenaries should focus more deliberately on ensuring continuity from previous GFMDs. As one respondent noted: *'Generally good, but sometimes I think the opening panel should be constructed more deliberately to present a hypothesis/proposal from the leadership/planners of the CSD, especially moving an agenda forward with some continuity from previous CSDs.'*

1.4. Parallel working sessions (Monday 12 October – 13h30 – 17h00/ Tuesday 13 October – 09h00 – 12h30)

Generally, the working sessions were evaluated quite positively, with varying scores between the different sessions. The themes were mostly considered pertinent, including the inclusion of xenophobia, forced migration and post-2015 (UN 2030) as separate working sessions. A few observations include:

- Having 4 instead of 3 parallel working sessions seems to have had a positive effect on participation and interaction amongst participants, however some also cautioned against diffusing the focus of civil society by having too many separate sessions.
- Some respondents noted that having too many panellists overcrowd the working sessions, which results in not having enough time for discussions with the floor and in smaller groups.
- The fact of having invited governments to one of the parallel sessions was considered an asset, but respondents noted that generally moderators might need to be better prepared in order to ensure that governments do respond to civil society concerns from the floor.
- As for the gender and children perspective, some respondents recommended that this should be integrated more deliberately into the working sessions - the interventions made by children and women spokespersons this time, were not always clearly linked to theme on the agenda.

1.5. Reporting back and concluding debate (Tuesday 13 October, 14h30 – 17h30)

While the reporting back session was not graded badly, quite a number of respondents suggested dedicating more time and adopting a more interactive methodology for this sessions to allow for discussion from the floor on fleshing out the most important messages from civil society.

Regarding the concluding debate, the theme "*Realising development beyond 2015 for migrants and communities – what do we do now*" was mostly welcomed, as it focussed on the way forward, had a multi-stakeholder panel and ended on a positive note. However, some respondents thought the links to the conclusions of the parallel working sessions should have been better; and that the tone of the debate should have been more 'audacious' in formulating clear messages to governments.

Part 2: Interaction and Common Space with Governments

2.1. Statement from the Civil Society Days

The statement delivered by Ignacio Packer, Secretary General of Terre des Hommes and the 2015 GFMD Civil Society Chair, was well received by most respondents, and most thought it was inspiring and to the point. As one respondent said, it was *'a bright moment in an otherwise poor panel'.*

However, some respondent remarked that the Report did not necessarily reflect all discussions that had taken place during the Civil Society Days, or did not include enough practical suggestions to take forward; this illustrates the difficult task of the Civil Society Chair to produce a statement that does justice to the 2-day discussions, while conveying only key messages and keeping it short. A suggestion was made to (also) make civil society reports for each of the government roundtable sessions.

2.2. "Bilateral" meetings with governments

Out of the 74 respondents who filled in this question, 45 indicated that they had a side/bilateral meeting with governments during the GFMD. An overwhelming majority of 96% found this meeting to be useful, in particular to convey priority issues to governments and establish new working mechanisms. Here is the list of governments (in alphabetical order) mentioned by respondents:

> *Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mali, Morocco, Mexico, Nepal, The Netherlands, India, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United States of America, and the European Union*

More generally, some respondents stressed that small-scale spaces with governments should be planned in advance and would welcome a role of the Coordinating Office and the ISC in this regard.

2.3. Common Space (Wednesday 14 October, 11h00 – 19h00)

Respondents, also in comparison to previous years, did not rate this year's Common Space positively. Despite having more time available for Common Space as compared to previous year, the way Common Space was organised let to disappointment and critical reflections by respondents:

- The opening session of Common Space was overcrowded with speakers (on top of the opening ceremony already having too many ceremonial speakers), and none of these speakers were from civil society, except for one of the co-moderators.
- Respondents felt that the opening plenary should be much shorter, and much more time should be dedicated to parallel break-out sessions, and perhaps even smaller focussed meeting between civil society and government to engage in a true dialogue; and there should not be any overlap with side events and other programme elements, which diffuses focus and attention.
- The balance between government and civil society was better in the breakout sessions, but some respondents were still disappointed with civil society roles being limited to rapporteurs.

Part 3: Participation, communication, and logistics

3.1. Pre-event information

According to most respondents, information sent prior to the event and on the website is essential and useful. In practice it is not always easy though to find the right information due to the structure of the website. Some also felt that information was sent too much at once and rather late in the process, which hampered preparations. One participant requested for the attendance sheet in the folders to display email addresses, which could facilitate the networking between organisations during and after the GFMD.

3.2. Conference centre, logistics and supporting staff

The working conditions in the venue were evaluated positively, but some participants requested more space for bilateral and side-meetings. Others said that it would be better to have the meeting in the same venue as the government meeting.

3.3. Participation and selection procedure[1]

Although the majority of respondents applauded the diversity in organisations present, a number of respondents expressed concern about underrepresentation from certain regions and sectors, e.g.:

- Organisations from South America, English speaking Africa and the Middle East
- Labour unions
- Youth

Quite a number of respondents expressed concern about the selection procedure for participation and for funding allocation, and recommended a more transparent and simpler procedure to be led by the ISC, including making sure there is enough space for critical voices, grassroots participation and participation from the various regions. MADE could play a bigger role in regional selection and diversity.

3.4. Payment of a fee

60% of the respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay a fee to participate in the GFMD Civil Society Days, depending on how much it would be. Some participants indicated that observers should pay a fee as a general rule. Other respondents felt that they already have to invest a lot in ticket and accommodation, and wanted more information on what the fee would be for. From some of the responses, it seems that it is not clear to all participants that the fundraising and costs for the GFMD Civil Society Days are shouldered by the Coordinating Office and are not covered by the hosting government.

[1] Out of the 339 participants, 225 were selected and participated as civil society delegates. Out of the 225 organisations, 97 were diaspora/migrant-led organisations. Furthermore the following number apply:
Regions: **50** from Africa, **36** from Americas, **49** from Asia Pacific, **71** from Europe; **19** Turkish civil society organisations;
Sectors**: 76** migrant/diaspora NGO, **39** development groups, **57** human rights organisations, **22** labour organisations, **26** academia and **5** private sector

Part 4: Outcomes and future actions

4.1. What did you take home?

Like in previous GFMDs, respondents in particular pointed towards new contacts with civil society organisations and with governments as a take-away, as well as new knowledge of current international debates and interesting initiatives happening on the ground. Here are a few follow-up's that were mentioned:

- One respondent said that the GFMD had inspired them to set up a network at the Southern African level on migration, in particular to look at implementing and monitoring the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, as well as promoting existing human rights mechanisms (e.g. from the African Union and the UN) with national governments and through the South African Development Community (SADC).
- Some respondents noted that this GFMD has given them an increased understanding on the need to advocate globally on specific issues. One respondent stated that the GFMD showed him/her the need to lobby for a global organisation within the UN that has a strong mandate on migration.
- Some mentioned that the discussions gave them food for thought to move forward some of the recommendations at the national level, e.g. in Bangladesh.
- A few respondents specifically mentioned future action on the UN 2030 Agenda, e.g.:
  - *'I take home that there is an urgent need to identify and create initiatives and partnerships to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, and that we now have a key legal document at our availability that stands high on the political agenda and that puts multi-stakeholder governance at the centre of its governance structure.'*
  - *'I have conveyed the information provided on this important process to my colleagues at home. I think this is a key issue that civil society needs to work on and I would be interested to be involved in follow-up actions on this matter between now and the next GFMD.'*

4.2. What should happen between now and the next GFMD, and how do you see the future of the GFMD?

Many respondents provide ideas for actions and the future of the GFMD in this open-ended question, such as:

- In order to capitalize on the ideas and actions identified during the working sessions, respondents suggested ICMCs Coordinating Office and **the ISC to compile and disseminate a list of recommendations and follow up actions as soon as possible**; **and to facilitate follow up meetings and webinars, including with key governments and international organisations throughout 2016.** One respondent called for civil society to be better organised ahead of regional intergovernmental processes, such as ASEAN.
- Quite a few respondents suggested more **strategic positioning on where civil society wants the GFMD to go vis-à-vis other questions of global governance of migration and development**, also in relation to implementing and **measuring the migration related goals on the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**. Some respondents called for a strong migration-mandated organisation within the United Nations to move this forward, where others indicated the GFMD should play a significant role in monitoring and implementation. Respondents called for civil society to be involved in monitoring and

implementation, and a number of respondents highlighted the added value of MADE on advancing these discussions at national, regional and international levels.

- Several respondents asked for **more genuine interaction between civil society and governments throughout the year**, as well as during Common Space; it was emphasized that civil society should be an equal partner in defining the outline and methodology of that Space, and that International Organisations need to take a back seat in this process.
- A few respondents emphasized that civil society should continue to focused on the **5-year 8-point Plan of Action,** and formulate specific **advocacy targets that are SMART and thus Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-related**. Some respondents welcomed the structure MADE offers for this work, and asked for more outreach and involvement from MADE.

Annex: Overview of questions and percentages

Nr.	Questions	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
1	Overall, how would you rate the GFMD Civil Society Programme 2015?	0%	1%	17%	69%	13%
2	How would you rate the background papers provided for the breakout sessions (action and bridging papers)?	0%	1%	33%	48%	18%
3	How would you rate the Opening Ceremony (with speeches by Ignacio Packer, Fatumo Farah, Esen Altug, Gülay Toksöz and the poem by Hollie McNish)?	0%	2%	42%	40%	16%
4	How would you rate the opening plenary session: Safe migration, root causes, route choices and alternatives to forced and dangerous migration (with the poem of Hollie McNish and the panel of with Abu Kurke Kebato, Carolina Jimenez Sandoval, Sumitha Shaanthinni, Odile Faye, Michael Diedring, and Peter Sutherland)?	0%	0%	8%	72%	20%
5	How would you rate the "Setting the scene" session (with presentations by Wies Maas, John K. Bingham, Gibril Faal and Ellene Sana)?	0%	1%	13%	78%	8%
6	What is your overall rating of the breakout session you attended on Monday 12 October? (E.g. in terms of: guiding questions, moderation, discussion starters, relevance, and outcomes). Please only rate the breakout session you attended					
	1.1. Civil Society´s role in fashioning global, national and thematic indicators	0%	0%	29%	46%	22%
	2.1. Protecting migrants in crises and transit	0%	7%	36%	39%	19%
	3.1. Reforming migrant labour recruitment policies and practices	0%	0%	16%	52%	32%
	4.1. Beyond xenophobia: materializing social inclusion of migrants and diaspora	0%	4%	43%	43%	10%
7	What is your overall rating of the breakout session you attended on Tuesday 13 October? (E.g. in terms of: guiding questions, moderation, discussion starters, relevance, and outcomes). Please only rate the breakout session you attended:					
	1.2. Civil society's role in implementing and monitoring the SDGs at home	0%	10%	23%	50%	17%
	2.2. Development solutions for forced migrants	0%	0%	23%	67%	10%
	3.2. Reforming migrant labour employment policies and practices	0%	10%	10%	35%	39%
	4.2. Diaspora and migrant action on job creation, social entrepreneurship and public policy	0%	0%	10%	59%	31%
7	How would you rate the report back by the rapporteur from the breakout session you attended? To what extent did the report reflect the discussion, recommendations, practices and indicators that came out of the breakout session?	0%	5%	25%	60%	10%
8	How would you rate the report of the Rapporteur on Children?	0%	7%	18%	68%	4%
9	How would you rate the report of the Rapporteur on Women?	0%	1%	8%	63%	23%

10	What did you think about the concluding debate "Realizing development beyond 2015 for migrants and communities – what do we do now?" (with Thomas Gass, Shahidul Haque, Sönke Lorenz, Michele LeVoy, Efrain Jimenez, Fatumo Farah)?	0%	7%	31%	45%	17%
11	Did you attend any of the side-events during the lunch-breaks (or late-afternoon)? For those side-events that you attended, please let us know what you thought about them.					
	i. 12 October: Engaging Business: the role of the Private Sector in Promoting Safe and Fair Migration	0%	0%	28%	72%	0%
	ii. 12 October: Women and Migration strategy caucus	0%	0%	2%	54%	43%
	iii. 12 October: The "Migration crisis" and Europe´s Response	0%	0%	42%	23%	2%
	iv. 13 October: Children´s rights criminalization and border security	0%	0%	39%	15%	12%
	v. 13 October: Women in migration: we go, we stay, we come back, we walk	0%	0%	33%	26%	41%
	vi. 13 October: Human mobility and the Sustainable Development Goals: Understanding migration as an integral part of sustainable developmental processes and enhancing partnerships for sustainable development	0%	0%	14%	66%	19%
12	How would you rate the Plenary Session for the GFMD Government on (Wednesday 14 October)?	3%	18%	25%	42%	12%
13	How would you rate the report from the Civil Society Days, delivered by our Chair Ignacio Packer to governments during Common Space?	1%	1%	39%	47%	14%
14	How do you rate the format and theme of Common Space between government and civil society (Wednesday 14 October)?	2%	17%	46%	35%	1%
15	How would you rate the amount of time devoted to Common Space with governments, on Wednesday 14 October?	14%	32%	44%	9%	1%
16	How would you rate the Common Space breakout sessions? Please respond only for the break-out session you attended?					
	I. Partnerships and action for the protection of migrants in crises and transit	0%	3%	43%	44%	10%
	II. Partnerships and action for decent migrant labour recruitment and employment	2%	5%	24%	50%	20%
	II. Beyond xenophobia and exclusion: local partnerships and action for the social inclusion of migrants and diaspora	0%	0%	27%	68%	5%
17	Did you have meetings with a/your government before or during the GFMD?	29% no			45% yes	
18	Was it a useful meeting?	4% no			96% yes	
19	How do you rate the selection procedure for the civil society delegates of the 2015 GFMD Civil Society Days?	1%	22%	19%	39%	20%
20	How would you rate the number and composition of participants?	1%	8%	29%	60%	2%
21	How useful was the content of the pre-event e-mails that were sent?	0%	1%	18%	46%	35%
22	To what extent was the website useful for your preparation?	1%	8%	32%	41%	18%
23	What did you think of the working conditions at the venue, Lütfi Kırdar Exhibition Centre?	0%	1%	13%	59%	26%
24	What did you think of the support from the organising staff and volunteers before and during the event?	0%	0%	9%	49%	42%
25	Would you consider paying a fee to participate in next year's or future editions of the GFMD Civil Society Days?	39% no		49% maybe		11% Yes,

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Principal funding and resources provided by:

European Union

International Catholic Migration Commission

The Governments of:

Australie | Bangladesh | Canada | Allemagne | Pays-Bas | Turquie | Suède | Suisse | Émirats Arabes Unis

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