

## **GFMD Civil Society Days 2014**

*Shaping Migration and Development Goals:  
Global Movement, Change on the Ground*

# **Results of the Evaluation Survey**

August 2014

## Introduction

The seventh edition of the Civil Society Days (CSD) of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) were organized in Sweden on 12 and 13 May, just prior to the Common Space with Governments on 14 May and the GFMD Government Summit on 15 and 16 May 2014. This year's Civil Society Programme focused on "*Shaping Migration and Development Goals: global movement, change on the ground*". This theme reflected civil society's priority to translate the outcomes of the [GFMD 2012](#), and of the 2103 [High Level Dialogue](#) (HLD) - specifically civil society's [5-year 8-point action plan](#) - into concrete goals, targets and indicators. In total **356** people attended, of which **202** civil society delegates, 55 government representatives, 53 observers and 13 special guests.

Like previous years, the Swedish Chair of the GFMD for 2014, asked the GFMD Civil Society Coordinating Office, under auspices of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), to coordinate the organization of the Civil Society Days 2014 (CSD). The Coordinating Office worked closely together with an International Steering Committee (ISC) of 34 civil society leaders to set the agenda, invite speakers and appoint co-chairs. In order to better prepare for and follow up to future GFMDs, the Coordinating Office invited all participants of the CSD 2014 to fill out an online questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent out in 3 languages and included 31 questions structured around 5 sections:

1. Programme, breakouts and plenary sessions
2. Common Space and interaction with governments
3. Communication, participation and logistics
4. Outcomes, follow-up and future actions
5. Other questions, feedback and comments

In total **84 organisations** filled out this questionnaire, 67 representing civil society, 10 governments and 7 International Organizations. The number of respondents has never been as high, doubling last years' number (42).

This summary report will not go into specific scores per question, but we will aim to highlight the main results of the evaluation. In the annex you can find the list of graded questions for your information.

## Key Recommendations

### 1. On agenda, themes and methodology

- To ensure continuity and progress by building the GFMD programme upon past civil society recommendations on migration and development, including specifically using the 5-year 8-point plan and possible migration-related targets in the Post-2015 Agenda as starting points.
- To focus on concrete mechanisms for implementation, and to identify the appropriate policy level to continue these discussions at a later stage.

### 2. On preparations

- To start strategizing on themes, indicators and outcomes well ahead of the CSD, including early identification and effective preparation of Chairs, speakers and moderators.
- For Civil Society's International Steering Committee (ISC) to play a more strategic role in preparing sessions and participants by working on plans for action, indicators, and guidelines for concrete implementation prior to the event, to be shared with participants as early as possible.
- For civil society to prepare and organize on the regional level through regional networks.

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

- To foster better and more interaction between governments and civil society, for example by complementing Common Space with more small-scale and focused meetings between governments and civil society.
- To have an even more concise and audacious statement of civil society towards governments, to be handed out during the government days.

### 4. On participation

- To ensure more representative and diverse participation and qualitative discussions by inviting more:
  - Development organisations, diaspora and migrants organisations and grassroots organisations.
  - Delegates from Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America (other than Mexico), and from the next host country for the GFMD.
- To invest in regional and national consultation rounds of civil society prior to the GFMD to ensure coordinated representation from the regions.

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

- To have more strategic and more frequent communication between civil society worldwide and regionally in order to maintain the momentum created during the GFMD.
- To increase impact and measure progress of GFMD recommendations and the 5-year 8-point plan, by working through regional and national advocacy networks and tools, for example coordinated by the ISC or the MADE programme.
- To create country profiles by civil society that can help in measuring progress under the 5-year 8-point plan and/or the Post-2015 Agenda and that allow for civil society to monitor policy and advocate for change.

## Part 1: Programme, breakout and plenary sessions

### 1. Overall programme

Respondents were generally positive on the overall programme of the CSD. Most respondents seem to value the selected focus and themes, and for example pointed towards the ‘*intelligent*’ follow-up to the HLD and link to the current Post-2015 process. In particular the new “Davos-style” plenaries were received very positively.

Respondents praised the attempts to **translate the outcomes of previous GFMDs and the HLD, in particular civil society’s 5-year 8-point plan into concrete goals and targets** as many believe it is time to translate global recommendations into more concrete mechanisms and measurement of progress. However, several respondents mentioned some factors that hampered the formulation of specific targets and indicators:

- ⇒ Some felt there was too little time to agree on and work out specific targets.
- ⇒ There seemed to be a lack of common ground on specific concepts (e.g. migrants in distress) which slowed down the process of generating convergence on specific issues.
- ⇒ There also seemed to be limited understanding or capacity of participants as to what a good indicator is, and what kind of “implementation mechanisms” could be put forward.

Some specific solutions at hand that were suggested are:

- ⇒ To ensure more in-depth preparation of participants, further in advance, including through the provision of specific background documents and targets and indicators already agreed upon previously and/or prepared by civil society, for example through the International Steering Committee.
- ⇒ To ensure better preparation and training of moderators of the breakout groups.

When asked to what extent the outcomes would lead to **local implementation and change on the ground**, respondents replied relatively positive. Respondents seem to agree that the GFMD CSD should mainly inspire and initiate discussions, but that it is up to civil society to take conclusions home and translate them into their national settings. Respondents did indicate that there is room for better networking and collective follow up after the GFMD, and platforms such as the new [MADE](#) programme could serve this purpose. In order to better foster the link between global discussions and local implementation, respondents had several suggestions:

- ⇒ To invite even more grassroots organisations who work directly on the ground.
- ⇒ To involve regional civil society organisations in all discussions to foster the link between the international and regional level.
- ⇒ To ensure that governments and civil society discuss local implementation together at the GFMD and afterwards.
- ⇒ To improve networking and communication in between GFMDs between civil society organizations.

### 2. Opening plenaries (Monday 12 May, 9h00 – 12h00)

In general, respondents were very positive about the various plenary sessions. Many indicated that these sessions were very informative, and good discussion ‘*openers*’, and that the sessions gave some good context with regards to the wider global development agenda. The main concern raised by respondents was that for some sessions speakers could have been better sequenced, guided and prepared.

### **3. Preparations**

The majority of respondents (89%) indicated that they prepared before coming to the CSD, and some had said having prepared on specific issues relating to their (or their organisations') interest. For most of them, the **background material** distributed beforehand was very helpful, although a few respondents pointed out the lack of reference materials to the Post-2015 discussions. Others requested to have background information sooner in order to prepare better. Two respondents stated that the background material could have more effectively captured previous discussions of civil society. Also, a few people were confused about the materials that were handed out to governments, but not to civil society, on May 14 during Common Space.

### **4. Breakout sessions (Monday 12 May – 13h30 – 15h30, Tuesday 13 May – 08h30 – 10h30)**

Most respondents found the **topics of the breakout sessions** relevant and pertinent. Many stated that the discussions they attended were animated and participatory. Some of the main observations from respondents are the following:

- ⇒ It was difficult to formulate actual indicators due to the lack of time.
- ⇒ Participants tended to focus more on the sharing of experiences than on building convergence
- ⇒ There was a lack of understanding on *'what good benchmarks and indicators are'*.
- ⇒ The moderation of some sessions could have been better in terms of time management and preparations.
- ⇒ For the future it would be nice to be able to provide written recommendations before, during and after the GFMD, on the different topics, which could then be taken into account when compiling the report. In that way organisations can have a say on the various issues on the agenda (as opposed to only on the session(s) they were able to attend).

### **5. Post-2015 Green Room (Monday 12 and Tuesday 13 May, 12h30 – 13h30)**

The idea of the Post-2015 Green Room was to provide a space for strategic discussions on how migrants and migration should be integrated into the Post-2015 development agenda, and what advocacy strategies civil society should follow. The Green Room took place during the two lunch-breaks, as well as parallel to the different breakout sessions. About half of the respondents visited the Green Room, and all found it relevant. Many found the methodology **innovative and ambitious**. Many respondents stated that there was not enough time for the discussions and therefore lacked immediate concrete output (e.g. a plan of activities). Also many of the respondents regretted that the Green Room sessions were parallel to the break-out sessions and lunch. It was proposed for future GFMDs not to have these kind of parallel themes, but rather reserve time on the 'normal' agenda.

### **6. Reporting back and concluding debates (Tuesday 13 May, 13h30 – 17h30)**

In general respondents found that the reports back reflected the discussions adequately. However, many also said that this session was not very engaging, and the reports back rather dry. The concluding debate, which included leaders from civil society, governments and Peter Sutherland, was received extremely positively; one respondent called it *'the best of all sessions'*. However, some respondents would have liked to receive more **practical information and ideas** to take forward at the national or regional level.

## Part 2: Common Space and interaction with governments

### 7. *Report from the Civil Society Days*

During the opening ceremony of the government days on 14 May, the civil society Chair, Michele LeVoy presented civil society's report and recommendations to governments. In general respondents were very positive about [the report](#), describing it as a document reflecting all discussions, and being powerful and succinct. Some respondents suggested that the report should have been made available in printed copies during the government days. With regards to the presentation of the report, respondents were also positive, but suggested that it could have been a bit shorter and more audacious towards governments.

### 8. *"Bilateral" meetings with governments*

79% of all respondents did indicate to have had a meeting with governments during Common Space and/or the government days. These is the list of governments (in alphabetical order) mentioned by respondents:

- ⇒ National level: Bangladesh, Cameroon, Canada, Congo, France, Germany, Guatemala, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The Philippines, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, United Arab Emirates, Zambia.
- ⇒ Regional level: The Economic Community of Central African States, The European Union.

An overwhelming majority (78%) found this meeting to be useful, in particular to convey priority issues to governments and establish new working mechanisms.

### 9. *Common Space (Wednesday 14 May, 14h30 – 18h30)*

In general, respondents said Common Space was better than previous years: the **breakout sessions** offered the possibility to focus on specific themes. Still many believed the time was too limited, and interventions were too long. This shortened the time for interaction and questions from the floor. Respondents felt that civil society should be more **strategic** regarding its positioning and interventions during Common Space, with a constant focus on concrete progress, results and initiatives. It was also felt that moderators should facilitate and make sure the floor enters into real debate, instead of having official statements. More generally, some respondents felt that there should be more space and time for interaction between governments and civil society organizations, and made an appeal to open up the government days for some representatives of civil society.

## Part 3: Communication, participation and logistics

### 10. *Pre-event information*

According to most respondents, information sent prior to the event and on the [website](#) was useful, as was the information published. However, some felt that some of the information was sent too late, which hampered preparations prior to the CSD. Some participants also specifically mentioned that it would be nice to have the **social media**<sup>1</sup> pages more frequently updated and better used.

### 11. *Conference centre, logistics and supporting staff*

The venue was rated very well. The only observation of some participants was that they could not find separate space to meet and work. Respondents said that the staff and volunteers of the Coordinating Office during the Civil Society Days were excellent, supportive and friendly. However, there was some confusion on the roles and responsibility of staff organizing the civil society days and those organizing Common Space and the government days.

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<sup>1</sup> GFMD Civil Society Days is on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

## **12. Participation**

Many respondents had concerns regarding geographical representation, with several stating that there were not enough organizations from the Americas (except from Mexico and the United States), Africa, the Middle East and Turkey. Some respondents also stated that they would like to see more development, diaspora and grassroots organizations. Others would have liked to see more labour unions present, others the private sector, in particular representatives from Small and Medium Enterprises.

## **Part 4: Outcomes and future actions**

### **13. Takeaways and follow-up actions**

For almost all respondents establishing new contacts with other civil society organizations and with governments is the most concrete and main takeaway of the GFMD. Additionally, respondents also pointed out that the GFMD CSD allow civil society organizations to follow current international debates and learn from interesting initiatives happening on the ground. Regarding concrete follow-up, these are the main priorities mentioned:

- Many respondents stated that follow up on GFMD CSD recommendations (and preparations) is particularly relevant on the regional level. Some suggested that the International Steering Committee and/or together with the MADE programme could fulfil a role in identifying and defining regional and national mechanisms and networks to move issues forward and measure progress. Regional and national meetings should also take on a multi-stakeholder approach to increase impact and ownership.
- Some respondents suggested for civil society to create “**country profiles**” that could help in measuring progress on the 5-year 8-point plan (using targets that civil society is developing in the framework of the campaign to include migrants and migration in the Post-2015<sup>2</sup> for example) would allow for civil society to measure progress and advocate for change.
- Civil society needs to improve its national coordination prior to the next GFMD to coordinate the application process in order to ensure targeted and strategic representation of civil society.

### **14. Suggested focus for the next GFMD**

Responding to the question on what should be on the agenda for the next GFMD, the following ideas were put forward by respondents:

- Operationalizing recommendations as an overall focus.
- The Post-2015 agenda – including monitoring progress regarding migrants and migration targets in the agenda.
- Social protection of migrants and their families.
- Changing perception on migrants and migration to combat racism, discrimination and xenophobia.
- Creating an enabling environment for diaspora entrepreneurs.

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<sup>2</sup> Currently reformulated in the Civil Society ‘Stockholm Agenda’: <http://gfmdcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Civil-Society-Migration-Stockholm-Agenda-June-2014.pdf>

## Annex: Overview of graded questions<sup>3</sup>

Nr.	Questions	very poor	poor	average	good	excellent
1	What is your overall evaluation of the GFMD Civil Society Programme?	0%	0%	16%	58%	26%
2	To what extent do you believe the objective to translate the outcomes of the GFMD 2012, and of last year's High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development into concrete goals, targets and indicators has been achieved? (In particular civil society's 5-year 8-point action plan).	3%	3%	35%	48%	12%
3	To what extent do you believe that the 2014 GFMD and its outcomes, will lead to local implementation, a reproduction of practices, and change on the ground?	0%	15%	51%	29%	5%
4	Did the background material distributed beforehand (agenda, GFMD CSD recommendations 2012, Declaration HLD 2013, 2-paged background document with Guiding Questions) help you prepare for the meeting?	0%	1%	17%	55%	27%
5	What did you think of the opening session that presented the programme and objectives for the Civil Society Days 2014?	0%	0%	15%	55%	30%
6	What did you think of the Opening plenary session: Movements and momentum (with William Gois, Jille Bellisario, John Bingham, and Berenice Valdez)?	0%	0%	25%	47%	29%
7	What did you think of the opening plenary session: Migrants, migration and the post-2015 development agenda (with Gregory Maniatis, Fatumo Farah, Ignacio Packer, Per-Olof Sjöo)	0%	0%	28%	56%	17%
8	What is your overall rating of the breakout session you attended on Monday? (E.g. in terms of: guiding questions, moderation, discussion starters, relevance, outcomes). Please only rate the breakout session you attended.	0%	6%	27%	49%	19%
9	What is your overall rating of the breakout session you attended on Tuesday (e.g. in terms of: guiding questions, moderation, discussion starters, relevance, outcomes). Please only rate the breakout session you attended.	0%	4%	25%	49%	23%
10	If you visited the Post-2015 Green Room, what did you think of the initiative?	0%	3%	28%	46%	23%
11	What did you think about 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 break-out session?	0%	3%	21%	56%	21%
12	What did you think about the concluding debate? (with Peter Sutherland, Riaz Hamidullah (government of Bangladesh), Pietro Mona (government of Switzerland), Efrain Jimenez, Cathy Tactaquin, William Gois)	0%	3%	20%	52%	25%
13	What did you think about the report from the Civil Society Days, delivered by our Chair Michele LeVoy to governments during Common Space?	0%	0%	13%	54%	33%
14	What is your general evaluation of the format and theme of Common Space between government and civil society (Wednesday 14 May)?	1%	3%	26%	59%	10%
15	What did you think of the Common Space breakout sessions?	1%	7%	28%	43%	21%
16	How useful was the content of the pre-event e-mails that were sent?	0%	0%	24%	62%	14%
17	To what extent was the website useful for your preparation?	0%	3%	24%	67%	7%
18	What did you think of the working conditions at the Münchenbryggeriet Conference Centre?	0%	1%	14%	49%	36%
19	What did you think of the support from the organizing staff and volunteers before and during the event?	0%	0%	7%	43%	50%
20	What did you think about the number and composition of participants?	0%	4%	22%	52%	22%

<sup>3</sup> Note that some questions could only be answered qualitatively or with yes or no. These results have not been included in this table but are included in the analysis.