

GFMD Civil Society Days 2014
*Shaping Migration and Development Goals:
Global Movement, Change on the Ground*

**Recommendations
&
Benchmarks**

The GFMD Civil Society Programme 2014

Shaping Migration and Development Goals: *global movement, change on the ground*

GFMD in Sweden

The 2014 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) was held in Stockholm, Sweden from 12 to 16 May. As the civil society component of the GFMD, the seventh Civil Society Days (CSD) were organized in Sweden on 12 and 13 May, just prior to the Common Space with Governments on 14 May and the GFMD Government Days on 15 and 16 May.

GFMD Civil Society Coordination

Following the invitation by the government of Sweden, GFMD Chair for 2013-2014, the GFMD Civil Society Coordinating Office, set up under the auspices of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) continued its role in 2013-2014. ICMC worked directly together with an International Steering Committee (ISC) of 34 civil society leaders in migration and development worldwide and in close cooperation with a broad range of civil society partners representing migrants and diaspora groups, human rights and workers organizations, development agencies, academia and the private sector.

Participation in the Civil Society Days 2014

The GFMD Civil Society Days 2014 brought together some 202 civil society delegates from 50 countries across the world, of which more than half were migrants themselves. Another 125 representatives of governments, international organizations, media and other guests and observers were also welcomed as participants in the GFMD civil society programme. Further information is provided in the snapshot below (Figure 2).

Civil Society Programme 2014

Over the course of two days set for the Civil Society meeting, delegates deliberated in plenary and working sessions on the central theme “Shaping Migration and Development Goals: global movement, change on the ground”. This theme reflected the priority of civil society for the 2014 GFMD to translate the outcomes of the GFMD 2012, and 2013’s High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, in particular civil society’s 5-year 8-point plan into concrete goals, targets and indicators, aiming for local implementation, practices and change. The programme was structured around the following themes:

Recommendations and benchmarks GFMD Civil Society 2014

- Labour mobility, labour rights and decent work, with sessions on social protection and migrant labour recruitment
- Protection of migrants and their families, with sessions on migrants in distress and children
- Empowerment of migrants and communities for social inclusion and human development, with sessions on job creation and transnational social investors
- Ensuring migrants and migration are integrated into the post-2015 global development agenda (the new Millennium Development Goals)

The GFMD Civil Society Days 2014 resulted in a GFMD 2014 Civil Society Statement presented to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and governments in the Opening session of the GFMD government days by GFMD 2014 Civil Society Chair, Michele LeVoy, director of the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM). *“Our discussions have been grounded”*, LeVoy began. *“We have sought to identify promising practices where change has been possible in recent years – using our 5-year 8-point action plan as a starting point - as well as benchmarks of how we will measure progress in the coming years”*.

The statement stresses changes that are needed to better organize labour mobility, protect migrants and forge inclusive development. This report presents the seven main recommendations and corresponding targets that civil society put forward to governments to collaborate on. *“Civil society is increasingly being recognized by states as well as UN bodies as a key partner in dialogue on migration and development”*, LeVoy concluded in her statement, *“we look forward to further recognition of how civil society can work in partnership with you, to ensure that human dignity as well as accountability are cornerstones of policies on migration and development in the next 15-year period.”*¹

¹ In addition to the statement and this set of 7 key recommendations, an evaluation report of the GFMD CSD 2014 is also available on www.gfmdcivilsociety.org. The broadly positive results of the evaluation survey set out a number of recommendations to improve the process, institutional set-up and dialogue between governments and civil society within the GFMD.

Figure 1: Main Civil Society Recommendations GFMD 2014

Main Civil society Recommendations GFMD 2014

1. To ensure **decent work and social protection** for migrant workers and families
2. To **reform the migrant labour recruitment industry** and better regulate placement and employment practices
3. To create and better implement **protection frameworks for migrants in distress, in transit and at borders**
4. To ensure laws and mechanism that **create alternatives to irregular migration and detention**
5. To ensure **protection and empower children** in contexts of migration
6. To facilitate **migrants and diasporas' contributions to job creation and public policy changes** for development in sending and receiving countries
7. To include migrants and migration in **post-2015 development agendas at global and national levels**

Figure 2: Snapshot of GFMD Civil Society Days 2014

Civil society delegates and other participants

- **Record number of 356** participants in total, **202** civil society delegates, from over 50 countries:
 - o **52** of them speakers in the Civil Society Days programme
 - o **201** female, **155** male
- Of the 202 civil society delegates:
 - o **103** migrants themselves and **44** diaspora/migrant-led organizations
 - o **56** development groups, **80** human rights organizations, **37** labour organizations, **22** academia and **7** private sector
 - o **13** from Africa, **51** from Americas, **24** from Asia Pacific, **104** from Europe, **10** from the Middle East
 - o **25** Swedish civil society organizations
- **53** observers from regional and international organizations
- **17** special guests and media representatives
- **55** government representatives of **20** countries

Programme highlights and special features

- Plenary session on **Movements and Momentum** connecting civil society organizing from the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, global civil society's 5-year 8-point Plan of Action, and the People's Global Action on Migration, Development and Human Rights to the GFMD 2014 and beyond
- Plenary and Green Room sessions exclusively focused on the inclusion of migration in the **post-2015 development agenda**
- Break-out sessions on **decent work, reforming migrant labour recruitment and employment practices, children in migration, migrants in distress, and migrants and diaspora as job creators and transnational policy advocates**
- The **longest Common Space** in the history of the GFMD, with plenary and break-out sessions of civil society and governments
- Introduction of **Breakfast Roundtable Sessions** between small focused groups of governments and civil society on specific themes (5 tables, 17 governments)
- Launch of the **Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE)**. A programme to help civil society worldwide to connect and campaign on migration and development throughout the year

Recommendations on Labour Mobility, Labour Rights and Decent Work

Recommendation 1

To ensure decent work and social protection for migrant workers and families

Corresponding to points 5 and 8 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society reiterated its call for political commitment to ensure decent work and access to social protection and social rights, such as the access to education for migrant children, access to basic health care and justice and due process for all people regardless of status and the portability of benefits. Civil society emphasized again that government policies and practises should ensure the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Civil society repeated the call for governments to ratify, implement and monitor UN and ILO Conventions, such as the 1990 UN Migrant Workers Convention.

This year civil society specifically called for rapid implementation of the new protocol (2014) to the ILO Forced Labour Convention to advance prevention, protection and compensation measures, to effectively achieve the elimination of forced migrant labour. Civil society also discussed the need for coherence between migration policies across government departments, and stated that the municipal and city levels should be involved more directly in policy formulation and implementation regarding the protection of migrants.

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ Increased ratification and enforcement of international instruments, including the ILO Domestic and Workers Convention 189, as well as the 1990 UN Migrant Workers Convention
- ∞ Rapid translation of the protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention into national law and implementation
- ∞ More states, municipalities and cities are involved in protecting migrant labour and social rights through campaigns, and help desks that provide clear information to migrants and city-networks

Recommendations on Labour Mobility, Labour Rights and Decent Work

Recommendation 2

To reform the migrant labour recruitment industry and better regulate placement and employment practices

Corresponding to point 7 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society renewed its call to accelerate momentum to better license, regulate and monitor recruitment actors, and to ban recruitment fees, passport retention and other abusive practices. Governments were invited to work together with civil society and the private sector on this. Civil society also emphasized the responsibility of the private sector to protect migrant working rights. Civil society further highlighted the need for comprehensive data on migrant workers such as on working conditions, visas, complaints by migrant workers, sub-agents and application of fair recruitment policies, with data broken down by gender.

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ More countries have removed systemic policies and practices which create the conditions that enable employers to exploit and abuse migrant workers, such as systems that tie the migrant worker to one employer (e.g. the *Kafala* system)
- ∞ Increase in national and regional multi-stakeholder platforms of civil society, governments and the private sector to evaluate and change existing laws and practices to regulate recruitment and employment practices
- ∞ More businesses endorse and operate by [the 10 Dhaka Principles](#) for Migration with Dignity, which enhance respect for the rights of migrant workers throughout the entire recruitment process, and complement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Recommendations on Protection of Migrants and Families

Recommendation 3

To create and better implement protection frameworks for migrants in distress, in transit and at borders

Corresponding to point 3 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society commended those government who have recently taken the initiative to protect and repatriate migrants caught in distress in countries experiencing disasters, conflict or war, and strongly encouraged other governments to follow these initiatives. At the same time civil society urged governments to step up their efforts to protect migrants in other distress situations, such as migrants in transit and at borders, including increased efforts to put an end to death, disappearances, and physical abuses en route and at borders. Civil Society underscored that states need to put the human dignity of migrants at the forefront of their migration management and should work closely with civil society to create mechanisms and develop indicators which facilitate, monitoring and gather information on migrant's movements and situation in transit and at borders to be better able to protect migrants.

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ More governments have created and acted upon protection frameworks for migrants in transit, in distress, and at borders
- ∞ The soon-to-be-released Principles and Recommendations of the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the Human Rights of Migrants at Borders are increasingly being used as a tool by civil society and states
- ∞ Civil society has worked with the international community to develop and implement training for state actors concerned with protecting migrants at borders

Recommendations on Protection of Migrants and Families

Recommendation 4 **To ensure laws and mechanisms that create alternatives to irregular migration and detention**

Corresponding to point 5 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society called for better protection of undocumented migrants, for example by ensuring a “firewall” between service providers and immigration enforcement authorities, by ensuring access to due process, and by creating alternatives to detention. It also called for governments, politicians and media to refrain from the terminology that criminalize undocumented migrants, and concretely to stop using the word “illegal”.

At the same time civil society re-emphasized that the best way to protect and empower undocumented migrants, is by regularizing their status, and creating more channels for safe and regular migration.

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ More governments are implementing alternatives to detention of irregular migrants, and putting an end to the immigration detention of children
- ∞ Campaigns and monitoring mechanisms to end the use of abusive terminology and discourse against migrants in media and by politicians and policy makers
- ∞ More channels for regular migration and targeted mechanisms for the regularization of undocumented migrants

Recommendations on Protection of Migrants and Families

Recommendation 5 **To ensure protection and empower children in contexts of migration**

Corresponding to point 4 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society zoomed in on the protection and empowerment needs of children in the context of mobility as a whole, and emphasized the need to focus on specific categories of children including child victims of trafficking, children left behind, unaccompanied minors and children in countries of destination. Every child in the context of international migration should be regarded, first and foremost, as a child. Civil society urged governments to review and follow up on the [36 recommendations put forward by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child](#). Most urgently, states need to put an end to the immigration detention of children, as detention is never in the best interest of a child.

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ More governments have followed up and reported to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on laws and practices that put the best interest of the child first and provide access to fundamental services for migrant children, such as health care and education
- ∞ More countries are upholding the principle of family unity and non-separation of children from their parents, unless it is in the best interest of the child
- ∞ More civil society organizations are supporting campaigns and more states are enacting laws to end the immigration detention of children

Recommendations on the Empowerment of Migrants and Communities for Social Inclusion and Human Development

Recommendation 6

To facilitate migrants' and diasporas' contributions to job creation and public policy changes for development in sending and receiving countries

Corresponding to point 2 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society called for the creation of adequate policy frameworks and mechanisms in both sending and receiving countries to facilitate contributions of diaspora to development, including job creation, business development and public policy change. As a prerequisite for development, decent work opportunities should be guaranteed for all and the rights of migrant workers should be upheld. Possibilities for political participation at local and national levels are essential in order for migrants and diaspora to contribute to public policy changes.

Civil society also emphasized the need to ensure the portability of skills and benefits by implementing mechanisms that recognize migrants' professional and vocational qualifications in countries of origin and destination. Improve data collection and evidence on migration and development remains a concern too.

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ Increased cooperation between diaspora, migrant rights and other civil society organizations to transform public policies in countries of origin and destination to ensure access to decent work, health, education and rights for all, and set up a sound regulatory framework for migrants and diaspora to invest in development and job creation
- ∞ Increased harmonization and transferability of education, qualification and training standards
- ∞ Creation of an Observatory to collect data that systematically documents and measures the impacts of migrants and migration on development and job creation in countries of origin, transit and destination

Recommendation on Governance and Development

Recommendation 7

To include migrants and migration in post-2015 development agendas at global and national levels

Corresponding to point 1 in civil society's 5-year action plan

Civil society called upon governments to work together locally, nationally and internationally to make sure that migrants and migration are meaningfully integrated in national and international development plans. In particular civil society urged governments to follow through their commitment made in their 2013 UN High Level Dialogue Declaration on Migration and Development, to ensure a meaningful place for migrants and migration in the post-2015 development agenda, as actors, changers and subjects in human and economic development.

Civil society stressed that the post-2015 agenda should start from a people-centred and rights-based approach. Goals and targets related to migrants and migration should include: decent work and social protection for all; safe and regular migration; access to health care regardless of status; access to education for migrant children; portability of skills and benefits; reduction of costs of sending remittances; access to justice and due process; participation of migrants and diaspora in policy planning; gender equality.²

Benchmarks to measure progress:

- ∞ Widely supported civil society campaigns towards governments to include migrants and migration in development planning and agendas
- ∞ Inclusion and monitoring of specific goals and targets on migrants and migration in post-2015 global and national development agendas

² Within and as a direct follow-up outcome of the GFMD Civil Society Days 2014, civil society groups compiled the “Civil Society Stockholm Agenda” that puts forward a set of principles and targets connecting migrants, diaspora and migration with human and economic development across nine goals, for governments to include in the post-2015 and national development agendas. As of 1 September, 260 civil society organizations around the world had signed this civil society “Stockholm Agenda”, half of them migrant-led or diaspora organizations. See: <http://gfmdcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Civil-Society-Migration-Stockholm-Agenda-June-2014.pdf>



**Civil Society Coordinating Office
Global Forum on Migration and Development**

ICMC
Rue Varembé 1
Case Postale 96
CH-1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland

Tel: + 41 22 919 1026
E-mail: contact@gfmdcivilsociety.org

www.gfmdcivilsociety.org