**GFMD 2020 UAE Chair**

**Fostering Partnerships to Realise Migration-Related Goals**

**Background Paper on Theme 6**

[[Draft for Comments and Inputs by Tuesday October 27]]

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This background paper is a draft in progress. It draws on the discussions among member states and three mechanisms held on September 14, 2020, the OECD Regional Dialogue held on July 7, 2020 and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue on July 9, 2020. Thanks to the member states for providing inputs to various sections of this outline. Several sections would benefit from receiving inputs from member states, especially those who have not provided them yet. Inputs could be sent to the thematic lead copying the GFMD support unit.

The plan of the paper is as follows. Section 1 sets out the motivation behind theme 6 on partnerships. Section 2 describes key requirements for making partnerships effective. Section 3 sets out guiding questions on designing, implementing and evaluating partnerships. Section 4 contains selected policy recommendations.

1. **Motivation**

Viewing migration from a development and a humanitarian lens can be the basis for building effective partnerships on migration. Migration is integral to economic development since people need to move from lagging places and sectors and growing places and sectors require increased supply of labor and skills. Migration can be highly beneficial if the risks and challenges – some real, some perceived – are properly managed, through effective and innovative partnerships.

Migrants and their families tend to gain from migration the most in terms of increases in income and better access to education and health services. Migration empowers women. Child mortality is reduced after migration. However, these gains are hindered by the discrimination and difficult working conditions that immigrants face in the host countries. Origin countries benefit through increased remittances, investments, trade, and transfers of skill and technology, resulting in reduced poverty and unemployment. In 2019, remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries reached $554 billion, more than three times total development aid and larger than foreign direct investment flows. On the negative side, emigration of skilled workers can affect the delivery of health and education services in small economies. The high-income destination countries also benefit from migration through increased supplies of labor, skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Migrants also pay taxes and contribute to social security systems. However, evidence on the effect of immigration on the wages of native-born workers in destination countries remains mixed: some studies indicate small negative impacts on wages of lower-skilled native-born workers, whereas others indicate positive impacts when immigrants are skilled and complement the native-born workforce.

Migration is set to increase, driven by income gaps, demographic imbalances, and climate change. The multi-dimensional complexities associated with migration necessitate effective partnerships among key stakeholders. Such partnerships can be established among various stakeholders within a country, but often, they must involve many nations.

Discussions of future partnership solutions can build on the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, on **SDG 10.7**, to promote safe and regular migration and specific targets such as reducing recruitment costs paid by migrant workers (indicator **SDG 10.7.1**) and reducing remittance costs (indicator **SDG 10.c.1**). In addition, many SDG targets can be fully achieved only if migration and migrants are considered. Prominent examples are, **SDG target 8.8** to protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers and women migrants, and **SDG 16.9** to provide legal identity for all. According to the United Nations, the global community’s pledge to leave no one behind requires more than 24 SDG indicators to be disaggregated by migratory status.

The COVID-19 crisis has brought a new sense of urgency to forging partnerships in addressing immediate challenges facing migrants, host communities, and migrants’ families in sending communities. Supporting migrants through provision of health care is urgent not only to protect migrants, but also to protect citizens from contagion risks, especially in cities and rural areas that have a concentration of migrant workers. Cash transfers and social protection should be extended to migrants as well. Stranded migrants must receive support in returning home. Remittances are expected to decline by 20 percent, over $100 billion, in 2020, which would rupture a financial lifeline to households in poor countries. There is an urgency to mitigate the impacts of the crisis on remittances and remittance services. Travel bans have disrupted availability of workers in agriculture sector at the peak farming season, increasing risks of food price increases. There are additional risks to food security in Africa where locusts are already a concern.

1. **Requirements for effective partnerships**

The effectiveness of any partnership is critically dependent on (a) the availability of financial resources to support implementation of agreed policy measures, accompanied by (b) regular monitoring and evaluation of programs to improve outcomes and (c) adaptability to changing circumstances.

While billions of dollars are spent every year by countries in efforts to manage border policies and enforcement of visa regulations that bring in a certain number of migrants with the right skill mix needed by the economy, evidence – in the form of irregular migration, exploitation of migrant workers, adverse public perception of immigration - points to misallocation or inadequacy of financial resources. States have implemented thousands of migration programs, but there has not been any systematic evaluation of such programs, to understand how many programs did not work, why not, and how they could be improved. Basic data on migration that are needed for critical decision making and evaluation are not available, or they are not available soon enough. For example, the current COVID19 crisis has left millions of migrants stranded and in precarious situations, but there are no systems for high-frequency monitoring of relevant data. Even before the crisis, millions of migrants had been detected by authorities to be undocumented, yet data on return migrants and their reintegration back into the home economies are lacking. Also, the crisis has underscored the importance of making migration programs adaptable to changing circumstances, such as pandemics, natural disasters and political conflict.

1. **Guiding questions**

The GFMD Concept Note sets out the following guiding questions:

**Q1: In your experience, what are the main challenges when *establishing* partnerships on migration?**

Having clearly identified objectives and outcomes and a workable work program – not too general, not too specific – strengthens partnerships. Are adequate financial and human resources available for implementation? Does the partnership adequately address conflict of interest among stakeholders (e.g., between sending and receiving countries, between migrant workers and employers, trade-offs between quotas for immigration and rights of migrants granted by destination countries)?

* To what extent does diverse participation by multiple stakeholders assist in the establishment of partnerships? Is it a challenge to find counterparties with whom to establish a partnership?
* In your experience, what are the challenges when seeking adequate financial and human resources? What interesting case studies can you share on overcoming these challenges?
* Does a clear focus on outcome make a difference when establishing a partnership? How important is finding the right partner?
* What governance structures are important to consider when establishing partnerships?

**Q2: In your experience, what are the main challenges when *implementing* partnerships on migration? What has worked and what has not?**

* To what extent have the financial and human resources available for implementation determined the outcomes from the partnerships?
* Are partnerships designed to achieve specific outcomes more successful than those that address common concerns / challenges irrespective of specific outcomes?
* Does the value added by each partner receive sufficient recognition, and are there conflicts of interest among stakeholders (e.g. sending and receiving countries, workers and employers, trade-offs between quotas for immigration and the rights of migrants etc.)?
* Are partnerships most effective at the local, regional or global level?

**Q3: How can partnerships be *oriented towards beneficial development outcomes*, keeping in mind the future of human mobility and future of work?**

* How can we design innovative partnerships in the face of the changing nature of work and technological change?
* What data sources and insights can be brought to bear when designing and implementing partnerships?
* What key trends relating to changing nature of work and technological change need to be taken account?
* What role can technology play in developing and sustaining partnerships? Can technology be counterproductive under certain circumstances – and if so, what circumstances?

**Q4: How can we *assess* the outcomes of a partnership and identify what works and what doesn’t?**

* What indicators/results frameworks are valuable when assessing the outcomes of partnerships?
* How can monitoring and evaluation mechanisms be established at the outset of a partnership?
* How can concerns relating to confidentiality and privacy be addressed when monitoring outcomes?

**Q5: What are the challenges when reporting partnerships at a regional and global level?**

* What confidentiality issues need to be addressed when reporting on partnerships? How can these successfully be navigated?
* What quality control mechanisms need to be put in place when assessing the outcomes of partnerships for reporting at a regional and global level? What role can / should third parties play?
* How can reputational risks relating to the communication of partnership outcomes be managed? Is this a concern?
* What frameworks can be put in place to ensure that partnership outcomes are coherent with wide national, regional and global policy?
1. **Recommendations**

This section contains recommendations for the global community, various levels of government, and other stakeholders.[[1]](#footnote-1) It starts by summarizing the discussions on fostering partnerships at two regional consultations organized by the GFMD – the OECD Regional Dialogue on July 7, 2020 and Abu Dhabi Dialogue on July 9, 2020.

**OECD Regional Dialogue**

Fourty-six organizations -- including 19 governments, 8 civil society organizations, 8 mayors and local authorities, and two business representatives -- participated in the breakout session on partnerships, on July 7. Several initiatives were mentioned as successful examples of partnerships.

Lessons from EU mobility partnerships include the need for **a common framework and funding**, and a **robust coordination mechanism**. Key elements for success are political will, trust, joint objectives, balance of interests and prioritization, and last but not the least, funding.

Lessons from City-to-City Partnerships include the importance of **relationship between the national and local level, capacity building, reshaping financial flows** from regional to local levels, and integration of migrants.

Humanitarian initiatives to host Venezuelans in Ecuador was mentioned. Also, member states mentioned a **Call to Action** to "keep remittances flowing," launched by Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and KNOMAD, which includes the need for increasing access to banking for migrants in foreign countries and their families back home. Also mentioned as a successful partnership example was ILO, IOM and AUC’s Joint Labour Migration Programme.

In these times of financing difficulties, some initiatives that could be helpful, participants mentioned, were a **remittance matching fund** as part of the Africa Diaspora Investment Fund and the use of **diaspora bonds** as a generic funding mechanism, to mobilize investments from the diaspora.

Some issues that need further consideration are impact of migrant workers on local workers, how to deal with undocumented migrants, the Future of Work, and the challenges of scaling up skills partnerships.

While partnerships already include governments, private sector, civil society, and women and youth are often missing from partnership arrangements, and they could be included, although they are not a homogenous group.

**Abu Dhabi Dialogue**

Thirty-eight organizations -- including 18 governments, 11 civil society organizations, and four business sector representatives -- participated in the breakout session on partnerships, on July 9.

The main take-aways from the discussion were as follows:

First, partnerships among origin and host countries are needed to support stranded migrants. Such support may include a **fund to support employers** to continue business without terminating workers or cutting wages. The need to **prevent wage theft** and facilitate migrant workers’ access to compensation and benefits has become even more pressing during the current crisis. Partnerships are also critical to ensuring protection of informal workers and their access to social protection, healthcare and other services.

Second, many participants mentioned skill mapping, skill upgrading, **mutual recognition of skills** and certification as a way of ensuring appropriate remuneration to migrant workers and facilitating their job market mobility, including their ability to return home with the skills acquired abroad. It was mentioned that skill mapping with UAE Certification and mutual recognition of skill between country of origin and country of destination is an important step to ensure that workers receive job opportunities in accordance with their skill levels and receive adequate remuneration for the same.

Third, participants highlighted the need to work together to facilitate the reintegration of returning migrant workers, including through documentation of returnees and their needs, ensuring psychological and social support, recognizing their skills and creating decent work opportunities commensurate with qualifications, ensuring access to justice, and facilitating return to jobs in Countries of destination if these jobs become available again. The success of these partnerships requires the concerted efforts of the countries of origin, destination, local authorities, civil society and the private sector.

Some participants mentioned that the guidelines developed under the **Migrants in Countries in Crisis initiative (the MICIC initiative)** are helpful.

As in the OECD Regional Dialogue, participants mentioned once again the remittance matching fund as part of the Africa Diaspora Investment Fund and the use of **diaspora bonds** as a generic funding mechanism to mobilize investments from the diaspora. Pakistan’s Remittance Initiative was mentioned as a successful effort to keep remittances flowing. Also mentioned, again, was the **Call to Action** to Keep Remittances Flowing, led by Switzerland and United Kingdom – the CtA now includes nearly thirty member states, and the coalition is growing.

**Inputs from member states and mechanisms[[2]](#footnote-2)**

Migration is multi-causal. Its management and governance must be carried out in a multidimensional manner, involving different stakeholders.[[3]](#footnote-3) Successful coordination of global processes depends on a national-level coordination, where the state must create a common platform that brings all the players involved in migration management: government entities (law-enforcers, economic block, education & culture, etc.), international partners, civil society, private sector, academia, municipalities, human rights defenders and migrants themselves, who will be able to correctly translate terms and convey them to their own community – i.e. run a **Whole of Government Approach**. Such a mechanism on the one hand can able to come up with, plan, coordinate and successfully manage a national policy of migration. On the other hand, it can prevent miscommunication between national and global levels and create basis for the partnerships from national to the top regional and global levels.

Identifying skills gaps and skills matching as well as skills certification are key areas of partnerships between businesses and governments. The COVID19 crisis has highlighted glaring skill gaps in the health sector. Identifying skill gaps in the medium to long term cannot be done by the government or the business sector alone, especially considering the changing future of work scenarios and fast development of information technology. There is also a need for partnership with local governments. Again, the COVID19 crisis has highlighted the concentration of migrants in urban economic centers even as there seems to be a concern about vulnerability to contagion in crowded workplaces in cities.

The GFMD’s promotion of informal discussions between diverse actors can play a valuable role in opening the door for the establishment of concrete partnerships and cooperation. As an example, Canada, Ecuador and the GFMD Mayors Mechanism are currently working together to co-chair the GFMD Ad Hoc Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration.

Effective responses to the challenges and opportunities of global migration and refugee protection increasingly require international cooperation. In the unprecedented environment brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, international cooperation may be more important than ever as countries seek to meet their human rights obligations towards migrants and, simultaneously, recover from the economic damage caused by the pandemic, potentially looking to migration as one way in which to do so. Strengthening collaboration between humanitarian and development actors in the context of large cross-border movements is a key area of the Global Compact for Migration that could use more attention and support.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**[[Further specific inputs that member states and the three mechanisms could consider:**

The Gambia: On transit migration and implications of mobility restrictions imposed through mobility partnerships

Bangladesh and El Salvador: on facilitating the flow of remittances, and on reintegration of return migrants

Canada: on National Settlement and Integration Council and Local Immigration Partnerships

UK: on the GCM/GFMD processes for fostering successful partnerships

Nigeria: on mobilizing diaspora investments via diaspora bonds

UAE: on skill certification for foreign workers

Civil Society mechanism: on gaps in protection of migrants, and more recently, on wage theft by employers during the COVID19 crisis

Mayoral mechanism: on fostering partnerships at the city level, among cities and with provincial and national governments, and on burden-sharing (of financial and non-financial challenges associated with hosting migrants).

Business mechanism: on skill certification and skill upgrading

ICMPD: on EU mobility partnerships

KNOMAD: on policy coherence dashboard

UNDP: on mechanisms of collaboration and partnerships in Latin America around the Venezuelan crisis.]]

A potentially lucrative area of partnership among stakeholders in origin and host countries is in the area of mobilizing diaspora resources – remittances, investments, skill and technology transfers, trade promotion, and philanthropic contributions. Facilitating the flow of remittances has been identified as a means of financing for development (SDG indicator 17.3.2). Remittances surpassed $554 billion in 2019, exceeding foreign direct investment flows to low- and middle-income countries. In 2020, due to the COVID19 crisis, remittances are expected to decline significantly, but the decline in FDI is expected to be even sharper. Thus, the poor countries’ dependence on remittances will continue to increase. Remittances are already more than three times the total of official aid.

The **Call to** **Action to Keep Remittances Flowing (** mentioned above, launched by Switzerland and the United Kingdom in partnership with KNOMAD and [30] member states has organically grown into a coalition of important stakeholders on remittances. This coalition can be leveraged for facilitating and increasing the flow of remittances worldwide.

In response to a call for global solidarity in addressing the COVID pandemic, the United Nations Secretary General, IFAD launched the Remittance Community Taskforce to come up with immediate and short-term measures to really address the impact of COVID on remittances. This task force has extensively contributed to the discussion within the Financing for Development Process recently launched by the Prime Ministers of Canada and of Jamaica.

Significant financing for development can be mobilized by issuing **diaspora bonds**. Savings of the diasporas from low- and middle-income countries are estimated to be in excess of $500 billion. Israel since 1951 and India in 1998 and 2000 have successfully issued diaspora bonds to raise billions of dollars of financing. Nigeria raised $330 million via a diaspora bond in 2017. Issuance of diaspora bonds could be facilitated through partnerships between origin and host countries and various regulatory and development bodies within each country.

1. **Financing Facility on Migration – A Proposal**

To be more effective, migration governance must embrace the power of partnerships and leverage available financing resources which are not necessarily scarce but are presently spent in an ad hoc, piecemeal, uncoordinated manner. To channel resources in a more efficient and coherent manner and to make partnerships between host and origin countries effective, innovative and adaptable to changing circumstances would require a **Financing Facility** with adequate funding and a carefully designed governance structure to ensure equal and voluntary participation.

Financing facilities have been created with some degree of success in managing (containing) refugee movements to Europe. For example, the Global Concessional Financing Facility combines grants from supporting countries with loans from multilateral development banks to provide concessional financing to middle-income countries (such as Jordan, Lebanon or Colombia) hosting a large number of refugees and displaced persons from other countries. [Add more information including lessons if any that can apply to migration financing facility.]

For addressing migration, however, there is no dedicated financing facility even though for migrants outnumber refugees by a factor of ten (that is, for every refugee, there are nine migrants). The UN Network for Migration launched a Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) in May 2019. And the World Bank created the KNOMAD-Migration Umbrella Multi-Donor Trust Fund in June 2020. Both Trust Funds have limited funding so far.

The proposed Financing Facility would support programs and policy implementations in all six themes identified by the GFMD: governance of labor migration, skilling migrants for employment, leveraging new technologies to empower migrants, addressing gaps in migrant protection, preventing irregular migration, and fostering partnerships to realize migration-related goals. It would support technical assistance, peer learning, improving data and evaluation of programs, implementation of migration programs, including those that support the migration-related SDGs (reducing recruitment and remittance costs, increasing the volume of remittances), and pandemic or disaster-response programs.

Migration management is often tied to states’ concerns about their sovereignty. Therefore, voluntary participation in the proposed Financing Facility is likely to be more effective than making participation conditional on either migration outcomes or other economic outcomes.[[5]](#footnote-5),[[6]](#footnote-6)

Similarly, an equal partnership is more likely to be sustained than an unequal partnership among member states. It is proposed that all member states participating in the Financing Facility would have equal voting power. To enable all member states (large and small) to join the Facility, a two-tier membership fee structure could be considered, with Part I countries paying a higher fee.

1. Accordingly, recommendations could be grouped under (a) Multilateral/Regional/Bilateral partnerships (including any inputs on the GFMD as a successful partnership), and (b) Partnerships within a country: at National/Provincial/Local levels. A useful reference on strengthening cooperation between local governments and civil society organizations is the background paper prepared by JMDI for the roundtable 3.2 co-chaired by Canada and Mexico for GFMD 2017-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Based on contributions from Canada, El Salvador, Georgia, Nigeria and the Business Mechanism. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. An example of the inter-institutional and inter-sectorial coordinated approach is El Salvador’s COMIGRANTES program (National Council for the Protection and Development of Migrants and their families, 2011). El Salvador’s programs have a special focus on reintegration of return migrants and promoting economic and social inclusion of the diaspora in the countries of destination. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. One example of a successful partnership is Canada’s work in addressing the Venezuela crisis and its migratory impacts. Canada is working to this end with regional partners to address the needs emerging from the exodus of Venezuelan migrants and refugees through a range of humanitarian and development projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For example, conditionalities attached to official aid policies for achieving migration outcomes are likely to result in economic and political distortions and raise risks to sustainability of the partnership structure. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. A limited partnership arrangement could be formulated for regular monitoring and review of migration programs and policies, and peer-learning, by establishing a voluntary review framework, similar to the G20 Mutual Assessment Process, in which countries voluntarily outline policy initiatives relating to migration. Their outlines, compiled and checked for consistency, could be used as input for a report to be discussed at international and regional global forums including the GFMD. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)