

Summary Report on Partnership Theme¹
From Abu Dhabi Dialogue and OECD Regional Dialogue
September 2, 2020

This note provides a summary of the sessions 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. For reference, the Thematic Note on circulated ahead of the regional consultations is reproduced in annex 1.

A core objective of the 2020 GFMD is to establish *innovative partnerships* among countries, civil society, businesses and local governments. The multi-dimensional complexities associated with migration necessitate effective partnerships among key stakeholders. Viewing migration from a development and a humanitarian lens can be the basis for building effective partnerships on migration. 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. 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 **SDG 16.9** to provide legal identity for all.

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. The crisis has affected people all over the world at all levels; but it has affected migrants disproportionately. Many migrants have lost jobs. Many are stranded, they cannot even go back home. Supporting migrants through provision of health care is urgent not only to protect migrants, but also to protect citizens from contagion risks. This is especially true in cities and rural areas that have a high concentration of migrant workers. Also, stranded migrants must receive support in returning home. There is an urgency to mitigate the impacts of the crisis on remittances.

The effectiveness of any partnership critically depends on (a) the availability of financial resources, (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 to manage migration, there is a need for a **Financing Facility** to implement migration programs in many host and origin countries.

Guiding Questions

The Thematic Note on Partnerships set out five guiding questions (see annex 1): **What are the main challenges when *establishing* partnerships on migration; when *implementing* partnerships (what has worked and what has not); orienting partnerships *towards beneficial development outcomes*; *assessing* the outcomes of a partnership; and in *reporting* partnerships at a regional and global level?**

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OECD Regional Dialogue

Forty-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, 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 current call to action to "keep remittances flowing" including 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, recognition and certification of skills 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.

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. Pakistan's Remittance Initiative was mentioned as a successful effort to keep remittances flowing. Also mentioned was the Call to Action to Keep Remittances Flowing, led by Switzerland and United Kingdom, including twenty other member states, several international organizations, civil society organizations and private sector representatives.

While partnerships already include governments, private sector, civil society, women and youth are often missing from partnership arrangements; they should be included.

In conclusion, it is worth emphasizing again, that an effective partnership depends on (a) the availability of financial resources, (b) regular monitoring and evaluation of programs to improve outcomes, and (c) adaptability to changing circumstances.

Conclusion

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Finally, it is worth repeating a statement made at one of the breakout sessions on partnership: The biggest example of a successful partnership is the GFMD!

Annex 1

Fostering Partnerships to Realize Migration-Related Goals in the Sustainable Development Agenda and Managing the Future of Human Mobility

A Thematic Note²

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

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 and reducing remittance costs. 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 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) adapt to changing circumstances. While billions of

² Thematic lead: Dilip Ratha, KNOMAD/World Bank.

dollars are spent every year by countries to manage migration, there is a need for a **Financing Facility** to implement migration programs in many host and origin countries. In the medium-term, a possible format for regular monitoring and review of migration programs and policies could be a **review framework**, like the G20 Mutual Assessment Process, in which countries voluntarily outline policy initiatives relating to migration. Their outlines, compiled and checked for consistency, would be used as input for a report to be discussed at important global forums. More immediately, COVID-19 has altered the priorities for migration policy dialogues.

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.

Guiding Questions

A core objective of the 2020 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is to establish *innovative partnerships* among countries, civil society, businesses and local governments on: (1) The Governance of Labor Migration in the Context of Changing Employment Landscapes; (2) Skilling Migrants for Employment; (3) Leveraging New Technologies to Empower Migrants; (4) Addressing Gaps in Migrant Protection; and (5) Discussing Approaches to Prevent Irregular Migration.

The GFMD Concept Note sets out the following guiding questions for discussion on establishing partnerships, identifying partners, and challenges in reporting partnerships at a regional and global level.

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?