

[Draft] Briefing Paper: The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)



What is it?

The GFMD is an initiative of the United Nations Member States, which intends to provide civil society organisations and governments with opportunities to address international migration and development issues. It was created at the September 2006 General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. It arose from an acknowledgement of the limits of a strictly national approach to migration issues and of the need to address migration policy implications and responses in a multilateral framework.

It is a voluntary, informal, non-binding and government-led process open to all State Members and Observers of the United Nations. It is not part of the UN system, but is closely linked with it as outcomes and reports of Forum proceedings are conveyed to the UN Secretary-General.

Objectives of the GFMD

To provide a venue for policy makers and practitioners to informally discuss relevant challenges and opportunities of the migration-development nexus and engage with other stakeholders including NGOs and experts to foster practical outcomes at a national and international level.

To exchange good practices and experiences which can be duplicated and adapted to maximise development benefits of migration flows.

To identify information, policy and institutional gaps to foster synergies and greater policy coherence at all levels between the migration and development policy areas.

To establish partnerships and cooperation between countries and between countries and others such as organisations, diaspora and migrants etc. on migration and development.

How does it work?

The Forum itself is a series of activities throughout each year that culminate in a week-long program of government and civil society meetings. The Forum's main purpose is to facilitate constructive dialogue among governments but it also tries to incorporate the expertise and input of academia, NGOs, trade unions, the private sector and migration and diaspora representatives. These groups participate through the civil society process which runs parallel with the government process. Each year, Civil Society Days are held before the final GFMD meeting of governments. The outcomes and recommendations of the Civil Society Days are presented at the start of the government meeting in order to contribute to the government debates. Since 2010, GFMD has included joint meetings of governments and civil society organisations to provide a 'common space' for both sectors to interact and provide input on the implications of policies and what types of actions are necessary within the migration and development sector.

Civil Society Involvement and Migrant Workers

Initially, there were concerns from civil society that the GFMD process was dominated by economic priorities rather than on the human questions of the treatment of migrant workers and their families. The fear was that the voices of migrant workers and their organisations were being excluded by the GFMD.

Over the eight year history civil society actors including trade unions and NGOs have worked hard to make sure the voices of migrant workers are heard and that the rights of migrant workers are acknowledged and respected.

How to get involved?

People from civil society groups including diaspora and migration organisations, human rights and development groups, labour unions, academia and the private sector can all apply to take part in the Civil Society Days that occur before each Forum. Applicants are selected on the basis of sectoral, geographic and gender diversity as well as relevant experience and knowledge on migration and development issues.

Applications to attend the Civil Society Days (CSD) of the 2016 GFMD are open until 3 August. Please see the following link:

<http://made.civ.im/civicrm/ mailing/view?reset=1&id=253>

Where is it held?

Each year it is chaired and hosted alternately by a developed country and a developing country. Most preparatory meetings are held in Geneva, while the final meeting is usually held in the host country.

Bangladesh 2016 GFMD

The 2016 GFMD is going to be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Civil Society Days for this GFMD will be on the 8th and 9th December 2016 and the GFMD Summit Meeting itself will run from the 10th-12th of December.

Useful Links

- To apply to attend the 2016 GFMD Civil Society Days in Bangladesh: <http://made.civ.im/civicrm/ mailing/view?reset=1&id=253>
- For more information on the GFMD: <http://www.gfmd.org/>
- To access “Platform for Partnerships”, an online database to facilitate exchange and showcase projects, programs and policies in the field: <http://www.gfmd.org/pfp>
- To see the results and outcomes of the Civil Society Days of the 2015 GFMD: <http://gfmdcivilsociety.org/the-results-and-outcomes-of-the-civil-society-days-of-the-global-forum-on-migration-and-development-2015/>