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Migration and development: Looking beyond 2015 – call for contributions to Migration Policy Practice

Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko¹

Welcome to the third issue of *Migration Policy Practice*. The focus of this issue is on Migration and Development. This special theme is informed by three articles by Kristof Tamas (on the EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility), Irena Omelaniuk (on the GFMD's achievements to date), and Ali Mansoor (on GFMD 2012's work programme).

The focus on migration and development is particularly timely given the current debate within the United Nations system and beyond, about the likely shape of the global development agenda after 2015.

Since their formulation in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have provided the global framework for much international development work. Under the auspices of the United Nations, 191 states adopted the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 and identified eight MDGs, which are due to be attained by 2015. As the 2015 deadline approaches, the United Nations has begun to discuss the future shape of the international development agenda. The likely shape of this new framework is as yet unknown. There are at least three main options under consideration: 1) simply extend the MDG deadline; 2) build on and extend or simplify existing goals; and 3) attempt to develop a new global development agenda. To date, very little of this discussion has included direct references to migration.

Migration, despite its huge implications for development (migrant remittances remain higher than official development aid), was not factored into efforts to attain the MDGs. Is there now a case for better integrating migration into a new global development agenda, particularly in a world where more people are likely to move due to factors such as climate change and increasing urbanization? If so, how could this be done, bearing in mind that there is currently no systematic framework for monitoring progress towards the achievement of migration and development goals at the global level?

At the global level, partly because migration is regarded as a politically sensitive issue, and partly due to lack of data, there has been a reluctance to develop anything similar to the MDG monitoring framework for migration

and development. Since 2007, the Global Forum on Migration and Development has significantly raised awareness about the linkages between migration and development, but it has deliberately steered clear of trying to put in place any kind of monitoring system with agreed targets and indicators.

One question for the future is whether setting and agreeing upon a set of migration and development benchmarks, even if non-binding, could be a useful means of promoting greater awareness and cooperation among policymakers at the international level, and thus perhaps make it easier to factor migration into a future global development agenda.

The MDGs have encouraged many countries around the world to achieve development targets. Significant progress has been made in a number of areas. For example, the world as a whole is still on track to reach the poverty-reduction target, and the global poverty rate is expected to drop to under 15 per cent by 2015, well below the target of 23 per cent. Most observers agree that the MDG framework has helped to raise global awareness about poverty, and to focus the attention of policymakers and the public.

However, in other areas, progress has been uneven, often with modest impact on the poorest and most vulnerable. The MDG framework has also been the subject of criticism for not being ambitious enough, or for ignoring the real causes of poverty.

The MDG framework has also been criticized for ignoring migration. As early as 2005, IOM published a report highlighting the linkages between "Migration and the Millennium Development Goals" (IOM, 2005). In this report, IOM discussed the linkages between migration and the eight MDGs, with specific focus on poverty alleviation, gender, health, environmental sustainability and global partnerships.

IOM found that the interlinkages between migration and the MDGs are complex and can be both positive and negative. For example, concerning MDG 1 - "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger", whilst international migration can contribute to a decline in the number of people living in poverty, the issue of brain drain may present a serious challenge to development efforts in some countries of migrant origin.

¹ Solon Ardittis is Managing Director of Eurasyllum Ltd and Frank Laczko is Head of the Migration Research Division at IOM Headquarters in Geneva. They are co-editors of *Migration Policy Practice*.

Concerning MDG 3 - “Promote gender equality and empower women”, migration can allow rural women to gain autonomy when they move to urban areas and take paid work outside their home. Qualitative studies in Ecuador, Mexico and Thailand have demonstrated such effects. However, migration can also pose problems for the achievement of gender equality. A whole set of issues concerning the vulnerability of female migrants, ranging from women’s access to legal channels of migration in countries of destination to counter-trafficking measures in countries of origin, needs to be addressed.

International migration has important consequences for all health-related MDGs – from reducing child and maternal mortality to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Remittances can improve child and maternal health by allowing the purchase of additional nutritional and medical inputs. On the other hand, the movement of health workers from Africa to richer countries can contribute to the loss of essential skills in the health sector and make it more difficult to improve infant, child and maternal survival rates.

In order to “Ensure environmental sustainability” (MDG 7), policymakers need to understand how environmental change is likely to affect the movement of people. They will also need to understand better how migration linked to environmental change will impact on the achievement of development goals.

Several questions are being asked about the future global development agenda: Are the MDGs still relevant? Should the new global development agenda focus on all countries, and not solely on the poorest countries? Are there new ways to conceive of development? Will there need to be more focus on factors which have become more important since 1990, such as climate change and urbanization? What are the changes at the global level that could have the largest impact on development (more aid, better trade rules and so on), and how could a new global agreement make a difference?

The importance of migration for development has not been completely ignored in this debate, but migration is often regarded as too politically sensitive an issue to factor into a global agreement about how to reach development goals. As a 2011 paper by the Overseas Development Institute/United Nations Development Programme (ODI/UNDP) put it: “Migration can bring huge gains to migrants, to source countries and to destination countries, but political pressures mean that migration is still highly restricted. One estimate has the potential gains to the global economy of liberalizing the movement of people at between 50 to 150 per cent of global GDP. These are astonishingly large numbers”.

We would very much like to hear your views on these issues and whether and how you think migration could be factored into a new global development framework.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Migration Policy Practice*. As always, we look forward to your comments, suggestions and possible articles for future editions of the journal.

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How comprehensive is the EU's Global Approach to Migration?

Kristof Tamas¹

In November 2011, the European Commission adopted a Communication with novel proposals to reinforce the Global Approach to Migration – the overarching framework of the European Union's external migration policy.² It argued that a more strategic phase of this framework should also be focused on mobility, rather than only on migration.

The starting point for the Global Approach when it was launched in 2005 was that migration should be managed with a comprehensive, balanced and coherent approach. EU leaders have considered that in order to fight irregular migration more efficiently, they should devote additional efforts to address legal migration, and the links between migration and development. It was expected that the countries of origin and transit of migrants would more readily engage in dialogue and commit to operational cooperation if the EU took better account of their interests and also provided more adequate financial support.

For more than half a decade, the Global Approach has been applied by the EU and its Member States to a growing number of political dialogue processes, programmes and projects. Indeed, the main achievement is that the dialogue with non-EU partner countries has intensified, diversified geographically and enhanced its thematic balance.

However, a number of fundamental questions remain for the next phase. To what extent has the Global Approach become the truly comprehensive approach to migration that EU leaders often claim? Does the Global Approach yield sufficient trust and solidarity among Member States and partner countries to cope with greater mobility? Can the EU speak with one voice on the global arena when its Member States continue to operate their national migration policies and parallel bilateral agreements?

Emerging migration dialogues with Southern partners

In 1999, the European Council adopted the Tampere Conclusions, which highlighted the importance of building partnerships with non-EU countries in the area of migration policy. The Hague Programme in 2004 further reinforced this political commitment. It paved the way for the adoption of the Global Approach to Migration by the European Council in 2005. The Stockholm Programme in 2009 reconfirmed that EU Member States were set to incorporate the Global Approach to Migration into EU foreign policy. To achieve greater coherence, the Lisbon Treaty created the new function of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and a subsequent Council decision established the European External Action Service (EEAS). As the *acquis communautaire* develops further, the EU is expected to speak with one voice on its external migration policy.

The Global Approach emerged in reaction to irregular migration, notably the migrants who started using the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco as stepping-stones to reach Spain and other EU Member States. A ministerial meeting in Rabat in 2006 launched an intergovernmental process which was followed by ministerial meetings in Paris in 2008 and in Dakar in November 2011, when the Dakar Strategy for the period 2012–2014 was adopted.³

Despite notable progress, there remains a gap between African countries' wish for more opportunities for study and work in the EU, and the rather limited job openings in EU Member States. There is a lack of willingness to make more far-reaching commitments beyond the fairly limited project initiatives. Being a voluntary process, there is no mechanism to monitor how key objectives are integrated into national policy, and funding contributions continue to be fragmented.

¹ Kristof Tamas was a Seconded National Expert in DG Home Affairs of the European Commission in 2007–2011. He contributed to two EC Communications on the Global Approach to Migration (and Mobility) in 2008 and 2011. He is currently working as an independent research consultant before returning to the Ministry of Justice in Sweden, where he has served as a deputy director.

² The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, COM(2011) 743 final, 18.11.2011 (Brussels, European Commission, 2011).

³ http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/Dakar%20strategy_%20Ministerial%20declaration%20migration%20and%20development_%20EN.PDF.

There is some duplication between the Rabat Process initiatives and those under the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME) adopted at a summit in Lisbon in 2007. A Joint Africa–EU Declaration on Migration and Development in Tripoli in 2006 paved the way for migration to become one of the eight areas of partnership between Africa and the EU. A summit in Tripoli in November 2010 tabled a second Action Plan for the period 2011–2013. However, concrete action within the MME has been somewhat sluggish: several projects overlap with those listed as Rabat Process initiatives and some have been remarkably delayed, for example, the setting up of the African Remittances Institute.

In addition, there has also been a rather open-ended dialogue between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States based on article 13 of the Cotonou Agreement. In May 2011, the ACP–EU Council of Ministers agreed that the ongoing ACP–EU dialogue on migration should be more focused on concrete results to reinforce operational cooperation in the next few years.

A differentiated approach

The 2011 Arab Spring triggered defensive measures against irregular migration flows, but it also brought support to the burgeoning democratization process in that region. Internal disputes on how to better govern the Schengen area soon overshadowed the EU's attempt to launch more far-reaching commitments. However, the EU quickly began setting up dialogues on “Migration, Mobility and Security”. These were launched with Morocco and Tunisia in October 2011, with a view to putting in place Mobility Partnerships by late spring 2012.

Mobility Partnerships in this region would potentially be attractive for both parties, as they could address all relevant migration and asylum matters through a set of concrete projects. There is already a blueprint for Mobility Partnerships, as they have been tried in the past few years with the Republic of Moldova, Cape Verde, Georgia and, most recently, Armenia.

The broader political priorities for EU cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean were outlined in a Joint Communication on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) adopted in May 2011, and followed by two Communications on migration.⁴ Provided that the Southern Mediterranean countries take steps to improve the general security situation – including justice and police cooperation, border controls and readmission, and measures against trafficking and smuggling – they

⁴ European Commission, Communication on migration, COM(2011) 248 final, 4.5.2011 (Brussels, European Commission, 2011); A dialogue for migration, mobility and security with the southern Mediterranean countries, COM(2011) 292 final, 24.5.2011 (Brussels, 2011).

would gain access to more opportunities for mobility in the EU through visa facilitation, for example, for students and researchers.

The “more for more” principle as well as greater differentiation based on a country-by-country assessment is in line with the broader ENP, where it is now a key principle. Differentiation in cooperation with various partners enables the EU to adapt its demands as well as its assistance to the progress and needs of each partner country.

In addition to engagements in the South, and reflecting the interests of various EU Member States, the EU also maintains dialogue and cooperation with its neighbours to the East through the ENP and the Eastern Partnership (EaP). South Eastern and Eastern Europe, as well as Central Asia, are covered by the Prague Process that was set up in 2009 and reconfirmed through a second ministerial conference in Poznan in November 2011. EU Member States also take part in the Budapest Process, which, under the current chairmanship of Turkey, is focusing on Silk Route countries, including Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq.

Besides a structured migration dialogue with Latin America, the EU also continues close bilateral dialogue and cooperation with Russia and the United States of America. A high-level dialogue has started with India, and might soon intensify with China as well. Finally, EU Member States also pursue their own national policies and agreements with various non-EU countries due to historical, cultural or geographic ties.

Thematic inconsistencies and imbalances

The Commission's Communication on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility made bold suggestions on how to move these dialogue processes forward. EU action could be further improved by better integrating migration matters into external policies (foreign policy and development) as well as internal policies (employment and education policies) both at EU and Member-State levels. Potential progress, however, depends on the willingness of the Council to move ahead with these proposals and to further deal with the remaining inconsistencies.

There has clearly been a bias in thematic priorities, although it is hard to make direct comparisons as funding towards migration comes from a broad range of thematic and geographical instruments. In 2007–2010, the Thematic Programme on Migration and Asylum spent relatively less on labour migration (17%) than on irregular migration (31%) and migration and development (28%). While the EU has reserved more development funds for the period 2008–2013 for migration in various National

and Regional Indicative Programmes,⁵ it is not likely that there will be a significant increase in funding for labour migration.

The imbalance between the thematic dimensions of the Global Approach also has to do with the lack of interest among Member States in the short term to promote labour migration from non-EU countries. As the Lisbon Treaty acknowledges the right of Member States to decide on the volume of labour immigration, the economic crisis and high unemployment led to a 17 per cent drop in temporary migration from non-EU countries and a 36 per cent decline in free circulation of labour within the EU between 2007 and 2009.⁶

In the long term, however, the Europe 2020 Strategy recognizes that there is a role for immigration and improved economic integration of migrants in response to labour shortages in an ageing continent. The Commission will present a paper on this matter in 2012. When labour shortages become more apparent, the EU Blue Card and the single permit directive, as well as other potential EU legislation, could facilitate recruitment from non-EU countries.⁷ To really match the right skills with future jobs, however, much more will need to be done to better coordinate migration policy with EU education policy.

It also remains a challenge for the EU to better link the thematic priorities of the Global Approach as they have developed mainly within their respective spheres of logic, but less so in tandem. Media and public opinion tend to focus on one issue at a time. Recent populist-party victories in European countries have pushed governments to exaggerate the focus on the fight against irregular migration. The EU will need to explain more vigorously to the general public that regular and close dialogue with partners and a more active visa policy can be used simultaneously to better organize mobility, reduce irregular migration and promote mutual development between partner countries in the long run. Proposals for an entry/exit system and a registered traveller programme, for example, could facilitate such a development.⁸

The EU's notion of Policy Coherence for Development⁹ has helped consolidate the migration and development policy agenda around remittances, brain drain and

diaspora communities as the three key issues. However, there remain a number of gaps, such as the need to focus more on the role of migrant entrepreneurs and access to credit, as well as the downsides of migration such as social costs, separation of families, and dependency on foreign labour markets. The Commission has highlighted these gaps and also suggested that the EU develop Migration and Mobility Resource Centres, as one-stop shops to empower migrants with access to relevant information on risks and opportunities, as well as the tools to find vacancies that match their skills.¹⁰

Empowering migrants to move safely so they can make the most of their foreign sojourn, and ensuring their fundamental rights, are indeed of key importance in order to maximize the mutual benefits of migration. In order to support vulnerable individuals, it is also part of a comprehensive policy to incorporate international protection and asylum. As a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) is supposed to be in place by end of 2012, the Commission's proposal to also upgrade this dimension within the Global Approach is very timely.¹¹

Way forward and recommendations

With the Global Approach as the overarching framework and the EEAS in place, the EU ought to be well equipped to reinforce its comprehensive migration policy. It should become a more accommodating partner, more successful in promoting its agenda and increasingly visible, speaking with one voice on the world scene. A number of measures could help realize such an endeavour:

1. Explain the policy framework and the principle of differentiation: The Global Approach is still relatively unknown to EU partners. Each partner country is mostly aware of the dialogue processes it maintains with the EU, but has limited insight into how these compare with those of other EU partners. Increasingly, however, partners question the EU's differentiated approach which, in their eyes, may raise issues of legitimacy and trust.
2. Apply a more consistent whole-of-government approach to migration policy: Inconsistencies remain across EU institutions and EU Member States as none of these stakeholders are unitary actors. There is a whole range of objectives and agendas to guard and implement by the directorates-general, ministries and authorities involved. It should be acknowledged that the organization of portfolios and responsibilities at the national and EU levels shape EU decision-making and policy outcomes. The predominance of Justice and Interior ministers in the Justice and

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/migration-asylum/documents/strategy_2011-2013_en.pdf.

⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Migration Outlook: Trends in International Migration (Paris, 2011).

⁷ The EU Blue Card entered into force in mid-2011, while agreement was reached on the single permit directive by the end of 2011. Negotiations in Council and the European Parliament are still ongoing on the draft directives on seasonal workers and intra-corporate transferees.

⁸ European Commission, Smart borders – options and the way ahead, COM(2011) 680 final, 25.10.2011 (Brussels, 2011).

⁹ Reports covering migration were published in 2009 and 2011.

¹⁰ European Commission, The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, COM(2011) 743 final, 18.11.2011 (Brussels, 2011).

¹¹ *ibid.*

Home Affairs Council undoubtedly influences the agenda-setting and character of discussions. This has led to a selective comprehensiveness, impeding the efficiency as well as the legitimacy of EU action.

3. Introduce a coordination mechanism for Member States' bilateral action and EU action: Ongoing bilateral migration policies and agreements that EU Member States have with various non-EU countries create inconsistencies. For instance, some negotiations at the EU level with partner countries have become harder in cases where the partner country has already been given specific advantages at the bilateral level with one or more Member States. Meanwhile, there are also cases where the EU refused to negotiate an EU-level arrangement with a partner country that was later agreed at the bilateral level with various Member States. Better coordination and pooling of resources could avoid duplication of work, increase intra-EU solidarity and benefit partner countries as they gain access to cooperation with several Member States instead of just one or a few.
4. Make more evident the benefits of well-organized mobility and migration: Better and easier access to knowledge on migration patterns and realities would help policymakers maintain a regular and transparent dialogue with the general public as well as with partner countries. The Commission has suggested issuing a Report on the Global Approach to Migration every second year. There would also be merit for a more comprehensive Biennial EU Migration Report, similar to the International Migration Outlook, the flagship publication on migration of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
5. Become a more visible EU actor in regional and global migration governance: The EU's leading role in regional and global migration governance could be strengthened if it continues to develop a more structured and consistent long-term strategic framework in its dialogue and cooperation with partner countries. The EU could then have a fair chance to set a good example for other regions and states that face complex migration challenges. The upcoming United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in 2013 presents such an opportunity.

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD): What has it achieved to date?

Irena Omelaniuk¹

What is the GFMD?

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), which has just entered its sixth year of operation, has become a *tour de force* in the field of migration and development. It has matured as a process, extending beyond a traditional annual conference, with the customary general conclusions or declarations, and reaching more into the depths of government structures and policies to inform, change attitudes and help redefine policies. It has also opened up serious global debate on how governments, civil society, the private sector and international organizations can and should best work together for optimal development outcomes of migration.

The Forum was conceived at the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) in New York in 2006 at the proposal of the United Nations Secretary-General and by majority agreement of United Nations Member States as a “voluntary, intergovernmental, non-binding and informal consultative process open to all States Members and Observers of the United Nations. UN agencies and other international and regional bodies may be invited as observers.”² This followed more than a decade of relative inertia by governments in response to the call of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994 for more global action on a range of migration and development issues.³

A renewed interest in migration by international organizations and some governments around the turn of the millennium paved the way for the Forum to be created by 2007.⁴ The trigger for the GFMD was given by the United Nations-created Global Commission on International Migration (2003–2005), which recommended the possible establishment of an

inter-agency “Global Migration Facility” (GCIM, 2006) to help coordinate migration policies at regional and, eventually, global levels. Belgium took the lead in 2007, and gave shape to this broad concept, which has largely endured until 2012. The Global Migration Group, an inter-agency group comprising United Nations entities and IOM, was also set up in 2007 by the then United Nations Secretary-General to provide expert technical support to the Forum (www.globalmigrationgroup.org).⁵

There are no formal rules of engagement for the GFMD. Its structure, operation and administration are guided by a broad set of “Operating Modalities” agreed by Member States in 2007. The chairmanship alternates annually between developing and developed countries; and the Chair-in-Office is supported by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for International Migration and Development, a Troika of past, current and future Chairs, a Steering Group of engaged governments, the Friends of the Forum open to all Member States and non-state Observers (www.gfmd.org), ad hoc thematic working groups,⁶ and a small administrative support unit. There are two segments – the government and civil society – which, over time, have striven to better define their relationship both in the context of the GFMD and at the general interface between migration and development. The government segment engages more than 160 governments from all regions and across the migrant origin, transit and destination spectrum, and more than 30 non-state Observers, including lead

¹ Irena Omelaniuk is Senior Adviser to the Chair-in-Office of GFMD Mauritius 2012.

² See the GFMD Operating Modalities agreed by Member States at the inaugural Forum meeting in Brussels, 2007: <http://www.gfmd.org/en/process/operating-modalities.html>.

³ See Chapter X of the ICPD Programme of Action: <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/populatin/icpd.htm#chapter10>.

⁴ A number of global consultative processes that were the precursors of the GFMD were established around and after the turn of the millennium: the Berne Initiative, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), and IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration (IDM). The Migrant Workers Convention also came into force in 2003, triggering more international interest in migration and development (Newland, 2012).

⁵ The Global Migration Group, established in 2008 by the United Nations Secretary-General in response to a recommendation of the Global Commission on International Migration, currently comprises International Labour Organization (ILO), IOM, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNESCO, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), WHO, World Bank, UN Women, and the United Nations Regional Commissions.

⁶ Two Working Groups were established in 2009 by agreement of the Steering Group to help prioritize and follow up on outcomes of previous GFMD meetings and link these to current and future thematic priorities. The two current Working Groups are: “Protecting and Empowering Migrants for Development”, co-chaired by the Philippines and United Arab Emirates (UAE), and “Policy Coherence, Data and Research”, co-chaired by Morocco and Switzerland (www.gfmd.org/en/adhoc-wg/protecting-and-empowering.html; <http://www.gfmd.org/en/adhoc-wg/policy-coherence-data-research.html>).

international organizations, the European Union and the Holy See.

One of the unique features of the GFMD is the way governments collaborate voluntarily in teams around issues of mutual interest, to discuss, exchange practices and form partnerships on both policy and process-related issues. Another defining feature is the Forum's independence from the United Nations structure. It is linked to the United Nations through the Secretary-General's Special Representative on International Migration and Development, who participates in governing-body meetings and reports to the United Nations Secretary-General on the progress of the Forum. The GFMD grew out of a United Nations General Assembly High-Level Dialogue (HLD) in 2006 and will report on its first seven-year phase at a follow-up HLD in 2013.

Since 2007, the Forum has been hosted by the Philippines, Greece, Mexico and Switzerland. The broad theme of the Brussels meeting – "Migration and socio-economic development" – has stood the test of time and continues to be unpacked each year for its specific challenges on: migrant protection and human rights (Philippines), integration of migration into development strategies (Greece), partnerships for migration and human development (Mexico), and taking action on coherence, capacity and cooperation (Switzerland). This year, Mauritius is hosting the Forum in November 2012 under the keynote theme "Enhancing the contribution of migration to the development of migrants, communities and states". The Mauritian Chair-in-Office will follow the traditional format of government teams preparing and conducting informal round tables in the summit meeting at the end of the year, in cooperation with non-state expert agencies.

Today, the GFMD is the largest, most inclusive multilateral process on migration and development; and it has become a central reference for most other international processes and entities dealing with migration and development.

Is the GFMD making connections with other current and emerging global challenges?

The Forum is unlikely to produce anything new or innovative on larger global issues already adequately covered by dedicated institutions and processes. But it can guide on issues that slip through the cracks in larger forums and make connections with migration and development. For example:

Climate change may not be the central focus of a migration and development forum, but since it is likely to cause increased internal and international migration and affect poorer countries more severely, the GFMD can look to comparable governance systems for lessons

and models to prepare for and manage responses by migration management systems. Displacement resulting from climate change is not covered by existing international treaties on migration. A special convention on this would need to take account of the fact that climate change-induced flows would be mixed and would include labour migrants. Martin (2012) observes, in the context of the discussion on this issue in Puerto Vallarta in 2010, that, given the history of reluctant ratification of the conventions on labour migrants, the future of such a convention would be questionable. However, Martin points to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as a possible model for developing international standards related to climate change-induced migration across borders.⁷

The Forum has shared knowledge and ideas on the subject, including the possible integration of migration into National Adaptation Plans for Action (NAPAs) on climate change. Evidence-based exchange on this issue is seen as a useful first step for GFMD governments to begin discussing this complex matter in an informal setting.

Global economic crisis: Similar to climate change, the GFMD is not the primary forum for this issue, but in a practical way, the GFMD has brought into focus the trade-offs that migrants and their families often face during a crisis, such as the costs and benefits of going home when a job disappears, or the value of lower or no earnings versus sitting it out because of lack of opportunity at home, pressing family needs, and the need to amortize the costs of migrating. The recession has caused governments to shift their focus from migration and remittances to ensuring that there is no backlash against migrants during a recession, which could set back development efforts in the countries of origin. In 2010, in the context of discussing public perception of migrants in their host countries, the GFMD sent a strong message to countries employing migrants not to shut their doors in times of crisis. Traditional strategies of sending migrant workers home when they lose their jobs have had mixed results and affect development efforts that are often supported by destination countries.

⁷ The Guiding Principles are built on existing human rights, humanitarian and refugee laws to develop norms and standards that apply to internally displaced persons. They are not binding, but bring together relevant laws in a way that allows governments and international organizations to set standards consistent with international norms. Martin (2012) argues that, following the lead of the AU Convention on Internally Displaced Persons, which is based largely on the Guiding Principles, a similar process to address international movements may be equally effective in developing a legal framework for addressing climate change and migration.

What has the GFMD achieved?

The GFMD has helped build bridges between countries, regions, public and private sectors, migrants and their home and host societies on two global issues that are naturally connected, but where the policies still remain largely disconnected. Over the past five years, GFMD governments have developed a new discourse and some new approaches, and made useful intercountry contacts in the migration and development fields. They have come to understand that there is no quick-fix, no one-size-fits-all model; but there are some good practices and ideas they can pick up from each other, and from some experts.

An informal survey undertaken by the GFMD shows that some attitudes and policies are changing. Some European governments have new or pending migration programmes to facilitate circular migration of development benefit to partner countries. New pilot circular migration programmes, such as those between Mauritius and France, Ukraine and Portugal, and Costa Rica and Nicaragua, are testing the concept and reporting back to the GFMD. Regional and interregional cooperation has been reinforced at two meetings of Regional Consultation Processes (RCPs) in Thailand (2009) and Botswana (2011), also in the context of closer relations with the GFMD.

A number of recommendations have been followed up to better mainstream migration into development planning, for example, through concrete tools such as the Extended Migration Profiles and Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning. Both of these were endorsed by governments in the 2011 Forum for further implementation as longer-term processes and planning tools to factor migration into development planning and vice versa. In 2011, the Swiss and Moroccan governments called together governments and other experts on how to assess the impacts of migration on development, and planned an inter-agency workshop in 2010 to look at indicators for impact evaluations. A global call was also made by the GFMD in 2009 for the 2010 censuses to include a migration component.

GFMD 2011 also saw the expansion of work on Migration Profiles/Extended Migration Profiles. At a number of global workshops, governments confirmed the utility of these Profiles as a tool to collect migration and development data and to inform more linked up and coherent policymaking. IOM has launched a Web-based Migration Profiles Repository on the GFMD Platform for Partnership (PfP), which will be regularly updated to reflect future developments and discussions at regional and global levels. The PfP will compile all existing Migration Profiles and provide guidance on these tools as they evolve.

Some living experiments among governments and in the context of regional and interregional cooperation are demonstrating advances in the area of protecting and empowering mobile workers and their families. These are not GFMD projects per se, but are being undertaken within the auspices of the GFMD by willing governments already working on these issues and prepared to share the experimentation and outcomes with GFMD members. For example, the GFMD preoccupation with lowering costs of migration for low-income mobile contract workers has increasingly been informed by the efforts of the United Arab Emirates and partner states to strengthen cooperation among migrant labour sending and receiving countries in the context of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue.⁸ First discussed in a 2007 round table under the chairmanship of Bangladesh, this debate has moved from a specific focus on the labour recruitment industry to a more comprehensive approach to protect and empower mobile workers in temporary and circular situations.⁹

Today, countries participating in the Abu Dhabi Dialogue are discussing a framework for regional cooperation, a direct outcome of the Dubai workshop, the first “thematic meeting” in the Swiss Chair’s programme for 2011.¹⁰ Countries of origin and destination along major labour corridors in Asia are implementing measures to: better inform and prepare contract workers; reduce the costs of deploying contract workers; better train, certify and recognize workers’ skills (both in the origin and destination countries); ensure that job offers are valid and compliant with labour laws; enforce recruitment regulations more strictly and cooperatively; ensure transparent contract procedures and wage payments; and, by all these means, minimize job mismatches and better empower workers.

The Forum offers a context for cohering the global debate on migration and development around some practical solutions at the interface between these two policy fields. Whatever the outcomes in terms of concrete policy change or impacts on the migrants and their families, the Forum has helped change how governments and their non-state partners deal with each

⁸ The Abu Dhabi Dialogue, established in Abu Dhabi on 21–22 January 2008, is an interregional Ministerial Consultation process, which brings together the Colombo Process countries and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, plus Yemen, Malaysia and Singapore, on issues of regional cooperation on contractual labour mobility.

⁹ See the GFMD website for the studies on “Preparing contract workers for return and reintegration - relevant for development?”; “Reducing the cost burden for migrant workers: A market-based approach”; and “Migrant Resource Centres: Examining global good practices in providing services to empower migrants for development and protection” (www.gfmd.org).

¹⁰ On 25 January 2012, high-level officials of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue discussed ways to enhance cooperation and develop a comprehensive framework to maximize the mutual benefits from labour mobility in the region. Ministers from the respective Member States will come together in Manila in April 2012, to discuss a possible Plan of Action on this.

other on these issues through the interactive method of preparing and conducting the annual debates. The Forum has also developed a certain continuity and given impetus to some incremental advancement in specific areas among certain countries.

The year 2011 saw the completion of the first phase of an internal assessment of the GFMD government process that looked into its structures, format, content and impacts. The report of the assessment reflected, inter alia, a broad positive response by governments to the achievements of the GFMD to date. In 2012, Mauritius will take the next stage of the assessment forward, to deal with the more strategic questions about the future of the Forum, and in preparation for the next High-Level Dialogue in 2013.

Also of note is that, in 2012, Mauritius is hoping to engage the business sector more on issues relating to labour mobility, diaspora and investments in human capital development. Such collaboration between the public and private sector has remained elusive, since each has different interests, time perspectives and obligations: governments need to ensure sustainable human and socio-economic development, while businesses operate on shorter-term economic imperatives (GFMD, 2011). The private sector covers a wide spectrum of players – employers, businesses, multinational companies, manpower agencies, subcontractors, Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) – and each country has its specific business challenges. The private sector has tended to be cautious about engaging with the GFMD, which may be somewhat too informal for its purposes. It was agreed in 2011 that there was a need for more trust and confidence between the government and the private sector, and the GFMD should continue efforts to strengthen relations through a better understanding of the objectives and the process of the GFMD.

After only five years, much of the business of the GFMD remains unfinished, and much remains to be done to understand and promote the positive linkages and practice between migration and development (Newland, 2012). One of the most notable achievements of the Forum has been to give as much attention to the political and organizational aspects of migration and development as to the technical and financial ones. This recognizes that policies and practices are only as good as the institutions and partnerships that implement them. Mauritius promises to move the debates to the more practical level of how to make a measurable difference to the conditions of migrants and their families, who, in the final analysis, are the primary beneficiaries of such an ambitious process.

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GFMD 2012 under the chairmanship of Mauritius

Ali Mansoor¹

This paper briefly highlights what Mauritius hopes to accomplish this year in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), which has now become the central point of reference for the global discourse on migration and development. The paper does not elaborate on the GFMD and what it has been able to achieve since its inception in 2007, as this is dealt with elsewhere in this volume.

The first section of this paper highlights the objectives and plans of GFMD 2012 under the chairmanship of Mauritius. The second section proposes some ideas that could guide the future work of the GFMD, as well as suggestions of programmes that could help make a difference for migrants, the diaspora, their families, communities and states in the years ahead.

GFMD 2012 under the chairmanship of Mauritius

Since its launch in Belgium in 2007, the Forum has been hosted by the governments of the Philippines (2008), Greece (2009), Mexico (2010), and Switzerland (2011). This year, Mauritius is hosting the Forum in Port Louis in November 2012.

In assuming chairmanship of the GFMD 2012, Mauritius faces the handicap of being a small island developing state with limited resources and funding relative to previous GFMD Chairs-in-Office. Mauritius hopes to offset this handicap with its heritage. As a nation built through migration, Mauritius brings to the Forum:

- its experience in the interconnections between migration and development;
- the transition from a labour-surplus economy to a labour-short economy;
- the importance of putting people first to achieve equitable development;
- the need for stakeholder partnerships to bring positive change with the government, the private sector, civil society and the international community working together to generate synergies;
- the importance of reform with a strong focus on results and outcomes to be achieved; and
- some African perspectives for the first time in the history of the GFMD process.

This experience is reflected in the proposed theme of the 2012 Forum: “Enhancing the contribution of migration to the development of migrants, communities and states”. As in earlier years, the Forum will comprise a number of informal round tables prepared and co-chaired by governments, with the support and cooperation of experts from civil society, international organizations and the private sector. As in the past, governments will join forces with other non-state expert agencies to implement GFMD recommendations of mutual interest.

As GFMD Chair-in-Office, Mauritius faces two major tasks in 2012. The first is to move the internal GFMD assessment forward to its second and final phase. The second task will be to organize and chair the 2012 Forum debates towards some concrete objectives of improving the conditions and prospects of individual human beings on the move and their families, for increased development outcomes. As in previous years, the Chair will be guided in these two tasks by two current GFMD ad-hoc Working Groups, set up in 2009 to help prioritize themes for the coming year, also based on the outcomes of the previous year. The Working Groups help ensure thematic continuity and implementation of outcomes. However, in the spirit of consensus-building from its own development experience, Mauritius is also counting this year on the advice and guidance of an Enlarged Troika that consists of past (Belgium, Greece, Philippines, Mexico and Switzerland) and future (Sweden and Turkey) GFMD Chairs.

The first task of the Mauritius Chair is to focus on internal GFMD assessment. From the report of the first phase of the assessment of the GFMD process in 2011 – its structures, format, content, impacts and the like – by a team of governments aided by a Swiss expert, it appears that governments have responded positively to the achievements of the GFMD to date. In a special session on assessment at the Geneva Concluding Debate in 2011, it was agreed that the first phase assessment report provided the basis for the next phase: the strategic and political discussion in 2012 about the future of the Forum. The results of this second phase assessment will be reported to the second United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in 2013.

The second task will focus on the round-table themes at the Summit meeting scheduled for November 2012. The Chair has embarked on an extensive, multiphase consultation process with the Friends of the Forum,

¹ Ali Mansoor is GFMD 2012 Mauritius Chair-in-Office.

commencing with a survey conducted in December 2011 to garner ideas and preferences for round-table themes in 2012. This was followed by two brainstorming meetings in Mauritius in January 2012, attended by many governments and representatives of civil society/non-state partners; there was also an opportunity for those unable to come to Mauritius to comment online via a dedicated GFMD e-mail address. The draft concept paper resulting from these consultations in December and January was tabled at the first Geneva Friends of the Forum and Steering Group meetings, for discussion and final endorsement, as the basis for commencing work on the round-table preparations.

GFMD 2012 will generally follow the traditional format used between 2007 and 2010, namely a summit meeting at the end of the year, comprising round tables prepared by teams of governments around themes agreed by the Friends of the Forum. Each round table would include two thematic sessions.

The following themes have been proposed for discussion and adoption by the Friends of the Forum, based on brainstorming and feedback on earlier proposals in an earlier draft concept paper:

Round table 1: Circulating labour for inclusive development

Session 1.1 Beyond-the-border skills and jobs for human development?

Session 1.2 Supporting migrants and diaspora as agents of socio-economic change

Round table 2: Factoring migration into development planning

Session 2.1 Supporting national development through migration mainstreaming, migration profiles and poverty reduction strategies

Session 2.2 Addressing South–South migration and development policies

Round table 3: Managing migration and perceptions of migration for development outcomes

Session 3.1 Shaping public perceptions of migrants and migration

Session 3.2 Migrant protection as integral to migration management

Round table 4: Gender, human rights and migration

Session 4.1 Enhancing legal, social and financial protection of women migrants and their families

Session 4.2 Protecting migrant domestic workers: Enhancing their development potential

In 2012, the Chair-in-Office proposes to give stronger emphasis to outcomes that will make a difference for individual human beings who migrate, their families, the diaspora, communities and states, and that may be achieved in the coming years, and possibly guide the future work of the Forum. As the first African Chair, Mauritius would like to draw attention to the specific needs and challenges of African countries and their migrants and diaspora, on hopes that these concerns can be addressed concretely. These issues have relevance for a wider range of countries, particularly as migration patterns shift and countries in the South begin to experience the same challenges as destination countries in the North.

Mauritius individually intends to take up the challenge of identifying and making itself accountable for some specific outcomes over the coming years that would positively impact the lives of migrants. However, given the voluntary, state-led nature of the GFMD as a forum for the exchange of ideas, it will be entirely up to each of the GFMD members to decide if they also wish to go in this direction. Mauritius does hope, however, that some pilot activities would result from the deliberations in 2012, involving at least one or two other GFMD members that would find it worthwhile to support programmes that would make a positive difference to the lives of individuals and communities. These programmes could include: skills development for migrants to facilitate their integration upon return home; improvement of the housing conditions of migrants; and development of institutions and instruments to mobilize the African diaspora. Whilst work can begin on these themes under the Mauritius Chair, most of these initiatives will require several years to be designed and implemented, and some may prove to lack sufficient support to move forward.

Ideas for the future work of the GFMD and suggestions of programmes to help make a difference in the coming years

By and large, the Mauritius Chair aims to:

- Ensure that human beings end up better off from the collective efforts of the GFMD;
- Develop a stronger partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and international organizations to bring about concrete improvements in the lives of individual human beings;
- Mobilize financial support and human resources to enable sustained action over the next few years (on a voluntary basis by interested governments) towards making the lives of migrants better in agreed areas;
- Promote more effective interactions with the Diaspora for Development, particularly in Africa via institutional building (e.g. a possible African Diaspora Private Investment Fund/African Diaspora Remittance Institute);

- Improve Skills for Migrants (United Arab Emirates proposal);
- Fund programmes for migrants to be jointly implemented by governments, civil society, the private sector and international organizations (e.g. Decent Housing initiative in Mauritius and measures coming from private sector and civil society consultations in Mauritius).

As the voluntary, intergovernmental, non-binding and informal nature of the Forum inclines it towards illustration and example rather than dictates and prescriptions, any agreed good practices to emerge from GFMD discussion on these issues would have generic value for the GFMD. In doing this, Mauritius will closely consult with civil society and international organizations, particularly the Global Migration Group (GMG) and its constituent agencies, and actively engage some missing players, such as the private sector and the diaspora, to support governments in achieving their agreed outcomes.

In the particular context of Mauritius, labour mobility and circulation of skills, jobs and assets, Mauritius would aim to achieve the following outcomes, both for its own purposes and as good practice to be shared with other GFMD members:

- A matching grant scheme to encourage migrants to invest in a business on return;
- Schemes to support learning to improve human capital both at home and abroad, for example, through skills training for jobs, skills upgrading while abroad, and skills recognition upon return;
- Tools to support and incentivize diaspora to mobilize its assets for investment in the home country, including investment in skills. These could include a diaspora database. There may be increased scope to mobilize additional, dedicated and predictable financing for a Mauritius circular migration programme as a pilot that could be generalized in other countries in case of interest.

To achieve the above indicated plans, the Mauritius Chair hopes to encourage civil society and the private sector to discuss and propose concrete strategies to improve the welfare of working migrants, and to strengthen trust between the government and civil society for effective joint actions to this end. As Mauritius already has a strong tradition of advancing public policy goals through public-private partnerships (PPP), if PPP mechanisms could be developed using the Mauritius context and experience, scope might exist for scaling up to regional and global levels through consultations using various fora in the GFMD context or the World Economic Forum (WEF) consultative framework.

Finally, the Mauritius Chair also hopes to work more closely with African regional economic communities (e.g. ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC and IOC) where migration issues could be taken up. The Mauritius Chair will also welcome the contribution and participation of regional entities representing largely countries at the destination end (e.g. the European Commission), since their participation is crucial to reassuring lower-income countries of origin (e.g. countries in Africa) that have to deal with the ever-increasing complexities of migration with fewer resources.

After six years of operation, the GFMD is at a crossroads. Building on the lessons learned, as well as the outcomes and achievements of previous meetings, it is hoped that the Mauritius GFMD 2012 Chairmanship, with its focus on securing achievable development outcomes linked to improving the well-being of migrants, would contribute to the mainstreaming of migration into development strategies and the improvement in the fate and prospects of millions of migrants in various parts of the world, as all countries will continue to be exposed to the challenges of continuously shifting and evolving labour markets and competitive economies in an increasingly globalized world.