

12 civil society recommendations for the future of the GFMD*

Civil society International Steering Committee for the GFMD

16 July 2018

GFMD programme

1. **Global Compact for Migration:** Add one extra day to the GFMD programme, dedicated entirely to monitoring and reviewing progress, implementation and follow-up of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The organisation of this Compact Day should follow the organising model of Common Space and should be open to all stakeholders to participate and contribute to. While overseen by different Chairs each year, a sense of continuity should be engrained in this annual day, with a longer-term concept, structure and vision that builds and bridges from year to year on the developing mechanisms for implementation, follow-up, review and monitoring of the Global Compact.
2. **GFMD Common Space:** Re-centre and explicitly charge the GFMD Common Space with identifying shared interest and strong convergence among state, civil society and other stakeholders on important issues within and beyond the Global Compact. This can accelerate good practice, partnership and achievement, in particular in fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals in contexts of migration and development and discussing the more controversial or less understood aspects of migration constructively, such as return, firewalls, access to services regardless of status etc.
3. **Civil society access to the GFMD Government Days:** Beyond Common Space, civil society participation in the rest of the government programme of the GFMD Summit has continued to be extremely limited, with only one or two invited in any given year to participate, and only at the discretion of the roundtable chair(s). Give civil society full access to the government day discussions, even if just in a listening capacity - one comment was that civil society has learned more about state positions, concerns and understanding of issues from listening to the GCM negotiations than we ever have in the GFMD spaces, and that this type of access would be valuable to continue as a baseline.
4. **GFMD Local mechanism:** In developing a local mechanism for GFMD, ensure that local level civil society and grassroots organisations are co-organisers of this mechanism, and that migrants and civil society are given full access to this space. Many respondents to the survey, as well as participants in the Hearing itself called for greater representation of local and grassroots organisations, as well as migrants themselves, throughout the entire GFMD programme. Greater access for youth to the Government Days was also emphasised, both in terms of building the capacity of the future, and in funding the access of those who would otherwise not be able to attend.

5. **Innovations of interaction:** Multiple innovations to how civil society and states interact, including 1) more and smaller spaces for meaningful dialogue (for example, the tea table model adopted by civil society for table discussions with states, ice breaker sessions, dedicated networking spaces and informal moments for unstructured dialogue), 2) more opportunities to meet regionally and thematically throughout the year and not just in the Forum itself, 3) greater access for civil society and migrants themselves to the government days as participants but also as speakers and panellists etc.
6. **Institute two ‘Sutherland Awards’:** At each GFMD, possibly but not necessarily connected to the Global Compact, launch two ‘Sutherland Awards’. One for *Excellence in Partnership*, the other for *Excellence in Exchange that Widens Implementation*. In each category, give a first prize of USD \$25,000, and a second prize of USD \$10,000. Put the “we” in that, too: civil society could contribute some of the funds we raise toward that award, and hopefully the business mechanism too.

GFMD throughout the year

7. **National level follow-up:** Stronger emphasis on national level briefings among the government and national stakeholders before the GFMD, as well as debriefings, implementation and action following the GFMD is strongly recommended, in particular linked to the implementation, follow up and review of the Global Compact but also connected to wider national implementation of Agenda 2030. These briefings can be linked to existing national working groups or national monitoring frameworks dedicated to either the GCM or Agenda 2030.
8. **Regional level follow-up:** Consider **regional workshops** that are independent from but linked to regional mechanisms developed for Global Compact follow up. These can deal with regionally specific issues, or be cross regional in scope and should be co-organised by governments and civil society. They should take place throughout the year, and feed into the roundtable discussions of the GFMD. **Regional capacity building workshops** should also be considered in connection to or separate from the thematic workshops, that focus on challenges specific to states, civil society and other stakeholders within each region. These workshops should build regional capacities to implement, monitor and report on migration and development related policies and practice, and strengthen partnerships in the regions. These workshops should be linked to the programme of the GFMD itself, in terms of rapporteurs or reports delivered to the GFMD.

GFMD Governance and Structures

9. **Sutherland Report:** Follow Recommendation 15 of the Sutherland Report to “repurpose” the GFMD, and to “consider governance reforms to encourage joint ownership by States, civil society and the private sector”. Joint ownership does not always mean equal ownership, nor does it contradict or weaken "states-led." We strongly believe that a prosperous future GFMD needs to believe in the “we” of this Forum in order to make things happen.
10. **GFMD Working Groups:** In order to deepen GFMD Working Group focus, partnership and concrete follow-up, strongly recommend inviting a workable number of leading civil society actors, including practitioners to participate as members of these groups. For example, such

participation could be especially constructive in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the SDGs and the Global Compact for Migration. (In 2010 and 2011, there were several civil society participants in two Ad hoc Working Groups of the GFMD, mostly from academia or think tanks, but since then, none).

11. **GFMD Steering Group:** In its first ten years of the GFMD, a fixed number of states have been members of the Steering Group, including the troika and major donors. With a track-record of fundraising for and organising their own Civil Society Days during the GFMD, it is reasonable to now consider regular participation by a civil society representative in the GFMD Steering Group.
12. **Friends of the Forum:** Even as the Friends of the Forum has evolved over the years with a greater focus on issues and with a wider roster of UN and international agencies, until 2017, only one civil society organization-- the global Coordinator—was allowed to participate regularly. In 2017 the Friends of the Forum approved participation by a second organization that organizes civil society in activities parallel and linked to the GFMD each year. To expand connection and partnership, modalities should be explored to invite other leading civil society organizations to contribute to the Friends of the Forum as full participants.

*Note: These 12 recommendations have been gathered through the Civil Society Hearing with the GFMD Review Team which took place on 25 June 2018, and through responses to the civil society survey “Review of past GFMD organising and future interface between GFMD and Global Compact for Migration”, as of 16 July 2018.