



CSO-LA Follow-up consultation on the
EU Regional Multi-annual Indicative Programme for Asia and The Pacific (2021-2027)
4 December 2025

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Welcome remarks	4
Presentation by EU on the Asia Pacific Regional MIP	5
Feedback on previous recommendations from the PFD	5
Question and Answer Session	7
Thematic breakout discussions	9
Wrap up and conclusions	11

Executive Summary

Within the framework of the Policy Forum on Development (PFD), DG INTPA has hosted since 2021 regular consultations on the EU Regional Multi-annual Indicative Programme (RMIP) for Asia and the Pacific (2021-2027). These consultations aim to capture the views of PFD stakeholders and other civil society organisations (CSOs) and local authorities (LAs). A follow-up event was held on 4 December 2025, gathering representatives from CSO and LA global networks, as well as regional networks and platforms present in Europe, Asia and the Pacific. The meeting aimed to update participants on the progress of the RMIP implementation, report on the integration of the recommendations from the last PFD consultation, and gather feedback and comments on moving forward.

The meeting began with a welcome note by **Peteris Ustubs, Director INTPA C, Asia and the Pacific**, who emphasised the valuable input provided by CSOs and LAs during previous consultations, contributing significantly to the shaping of the RMIP especially after the 2024 midterm review. He stressed that the current consultation would play an important role to integrate and complete priorities and perspectives for the Commission's work in the years to come. Director Ustubs highlighted the contribution that CSOs can give to advance sustainable and inclusive development approaches within the Global Gateway framework, raising awareness about critical issues, and influencing policy decisions to enhance social and environmental impact of EU investments.

Charlotte Adriaen, Head of Unit INTPA C1, Central Asia and Afghanistan emphasised that the session provides a platform for dialogue, information sharing and collaborative efforts towards improved outcomes. The Global Gateway Strategy forms the cooperation framework with the region, and collaboration with CSOs is vital in ensuring that investments are carried out in a sustainable, inclusive, and responsible manner. She outlined different ways in which CSOs play a relevant role in this context.

Marlene Holzner, Head of Unit G2, Local Authorities, Civil Society and Foundations offered further insights into INTPA's collaboration framework with civil society and local authorities, specifically highlighting recent initiatives related to the Global Gateway. She invited the participants to engage with the [Cities and Regions Forum for International Partnerships - Localising Global Gateway](#) online and presented the updated Civil Society Roadmaps.

Subsequently, **Luca Manunta, Team Leader INTPA C1**, provided an update on the progress of the Asia-Pacific RMIP's implementation. His presentation included an overview of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), and detailed the RMIP's components and funding areas.

Charlotte Adriaen then provided an overview of the previous consultations, demonstrating how actions planned on the aftermath reflected the recommendations from past consultations, confirming that the feedback from CSOs is actively considered in the actions design. An overview of CSOs recommendations in the areas of climate change, energy and environment, digital, and migration and forced displacement, was also presented, detailing the subsequent actions taken.

The meeting continued with a question-and-answer session, followed by dividing participants into three sub-groups to gather feedback on RMIP implementation topics and on how to enhance engagement with CSOs and LAs in key thematic areas. The main messages from the thematic discussions are summarised below.

1. Climate Change, Energy, Environment:

- **Strengthen cross-regional and transboundary cooperation as a cornerstone of effective climate action.** Proven methods such as early warning systems, watershed management, shared data platforms, and regional city-to-city cooperation, show the benefit of collaboration, particularly where formal state-to-state engagement is limited. CSOs are vital connectors across communities and borders.
- **Reinforce the role of CSOs and local actors throughout the policy cycle.** This includes creating an enabling environment for CSO engagement in policy design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and ensuring that accountability and governance mechanisms are not addressed in silos. Aligning policy objectives with local implementation capacities is essential to ensure that regulatory frameworks are realistic, inclusive, and effective.
- **Promote risk-informed, people-centred climate investments.** Participants called for increased support for nature-based solutions, inclusive climate risk assessments, and the scaling up of high-impact local initiatives. Accessible financing mechanisms for SMEs, alongside blended finance and decentralised cooperation, were identified as key enablers of local resilience and innovation. In the context of the global green transition, characterised by the race to critical raw materials, the meaningful involvement of local communities, who often bear environmental and social impacts, was highlighted as essential.
- The European Union was recognised as having a key role in **fostering an enabling environment for CSOs, supporting local organisations, and scaling up proven community-led models.** EU support can add value by strengthening inclusive climate governance systems, particularly in fragile or constrained contexts.
- **Address climate-related mobility and labour dynamics,** integrating human rights considerations into EU-supported climate and development responses.

2. Private Sector Involvement:

- **Strengthen human rights, due diligence, and accountability across partnerships:** Ensure robust human rights and child rights due diligence throughout supply chains, including strengthened safeguarding systems. Condition private sector support on compliance with due diligence standards, transparency on funding flows and investments, and structured partnerships with CSOs, supported by independent accountability and monitoring mechanisms.
- **Create and protect an enabling environment for civil society and social dialogue:** Address shrinking civic space through supportive legal and regulatory frameworks, give CSOs a seat in

policy-making and monitoring processes, and reinforce social dialogue by supporting trade unions and rethinking social expenditure to better align with inclusive development objectives.

- **Promote inclusive economic development and decent work:** Support MSMEs, particularly in agriculture value chains and women- and youth-led enterprises, alongside skills development and employment pathways. Introduce incentives or subsidies to promote the hiring and inclusion of marginalised groups, and recognise the care economy as a foundational enabler of sustainable economic growth.
- **Ensure meaningful participation of vulnerable and marginalised groups:** Systematically consult vulnerable groups and ensure their equal and active participation across all stages of partnerships, from design to implementation and evaluation, including in skills and employment initiatives delivered in collaboration with the private sector.
- **Foster structured multi-stakeholder cooperation and financing for social impact:** Establish permanent multi-stakeholder platforms and shared decision-making bodies involving local authorities, CSOs, the private sector, and philanthropic actors. Strengthen cooperation frameworks at country level to improve coordination, transparency, and collective delivery of social impact programmes.

3. Migration and Forced Displacement:

- **Improve data, analysis, and anticipatory action on climate-related displacement:** Address critical gaps in understanding how climate change drives displacement by strengthening data collection, coordination, and analysis, including through surveys and community consultations. Improve anticipatory approaches to population movements and support community-based adaptation to displacement, with particular attention to women and youth in rural areas who face compounded vulnerabilities.
- **Adopt a comprehensive, rights-based approach to protection and mobility:** Ensure the protection of migrants' and refugees' rights across countries of origin, transit, and destination. Address restrictions on access to formal employment and education for refugees, which often lead to exploitative informal labour, and promote safe, legal, and dignified mobility pathways, including through formalised government-to-government labour agreements.
- **Advance durable solutions through nexus and resilience-based approaches:** Recognise that durable solutions for IDPs, refugees, and returnees remain limited, particularly where returns are unsafe due to ongoing conflict. Scale up humanitarian–development–peace (HDP) nexus responses, align political, humanitarian, and development analysis, and invest in longer-term resilience, infrastructure, and basic services to support large-scale return and reintegration.
- **Support host communities and local systems:** Increase support to host communities to mitigate economic strain, social tensions, and reduced social cohesion. Prioritise engagement with local and community-based structures to ensure trusted, effective responses and to strengthen local resilience in displacement-affected areas.
- **Strengthen coordination, financing, and multi-stakeholder partnerships:** Ensure predictable, flexible, and long-term financing for complex displacement contexts. Strengthen

coordination mechanisms among institutions, including humanitarian, development, peace, and migration actors, and expand multi-stakeholder platforms involving CSOs, the private sector, and international financial institutions. CSOs should play a stronger role in livelihoods, education, and ground-level data collection, while private sector engagement should support skills development, employment pathways, data gathering, and awareness initiatives.

At the end of the meeting, **Charlotte Adriaen** thanked everyone for their participation in the discussions and their valuable input.

Welcome remarks

Peteris Ustubs, Director INTPA C, Asia and the Pacific welcomed everyone to the meeting and highlighted the insightful input from CSOs and LAs, raised during past consultations since 2021, which have helped shape the RMIP. Feedback on the 2024 midterm review was also valuable regarding how to move forward. Adding the current annual consultation is key in order to exchange views and consider the perspectives for the years to come. This consultation complements the consultations done by EU delegations at country level and allows for the exchange of views and add value to the work being carried out. He underlined that the region is especially diverse, and therefore, the challenges faced underline the importance to have a focused approach, for example on resilience and prosperity for Central Asia; sustainability and connectivity in South Asia; green and inclusive development and connectivity in Southeast Asia' and climate, economic and human development policies in the Pacific. Sustainable and inclusive investments and working with the private sector and collaboration with CSO is of great interest in this context. CSOs can play a key role for advancing sustainable and inclusive development approaches within the Global Gateway framework, raising awareness about critical issues, and influencing policy decisions to enhance the social and environmental impact of EU investments.

Charlotte Adriaen, Head of Unit INTPA C1, Central Asia and Afghanistan underlined that the session allows for dialogue, sharing information and working together for better results. The region is diverse indeed and such consultations allow everyone to discuss emerging issues and engage in an informed dialogue. The Global Gateway Strategy is the EU's external investment strategy to boost the development of quality infrastructure in partner countries to create sustainable prosperity, jobs, and services, while strengthening connections between the EU and its partners. collaboration with CSOs is necessary to ensure that investments are carried out in a sustainable, inclusive, and responsible manner. The initial aim of mobilising EUR 300 billion by 2027 has already been surpassed, noting that an increase to reach EUR 400 billion by the end of 2027 is now targeted, which is where CSOs' cooperation is required to ensure an enabling environment for quality investment that includes local voices, accountability, and respect for social and governance standards. Furthermore, there is a dedicated budget at the level of delegations that helps the investment agenda, whilst also ensuring transparency and sustainability.

Marlene Holzner, Head of Unit G2, Local Authorities, Civil Society and Foundations appreciated the ongoing and open dialogue through the PFD and provided more insight into the overall framework of INTPA's work with civil society and local authorities, specifically highlighting recent efforts in relation to the Global Gateway. She invited the participants to follow online the [Cities and Regions Forum for International Partnerships - Localising Global Gateway](#), on 08 - 10 December, which discusses the role

of local and regional authorities in advancing the Team Europe approach and accelerating the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, she presented the 4th generation of Civil Society Roadmaps, which include new guidance for EU Delegations (EUDs) on how to engage civil society in Global Gateway sectors and projects and encouraged participants to reach out to their local EUD to take part in consultations and meetings.

Presentation by EU on the Asia Pacific Regional MIP

Luca Manunta, Team Leader INTPA C1, updated the floor on the progress of the RMIP implementation. He started by providing an overview on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), the EU's main instrument for international cooperation whose budget is EUR 79 billion for 2021-2027, the biggest part of which is for Sub-Saharan Africa and the Neighbourhood, the third being for the Asia and the Pacific region, with a budget of EUR 8.5 billion. In addition to the geographic components, the NDICI includes a *Rapid Response Mechanism* which responds to unforeseeable needs, such as natural disasters and humanitarian issues, an *Emerging Challenges and Priorities Cushion Instrument* covers emerging challenges during the implementation phase, as well as *Thematic Programmes* to address specific priority areas. The funds allocated for Asia and the Pacific address, for example, poverty alleviation, education, gender equality, climate action, and sustainable under country MIPs and regional MIP. The RMIP aims to support priorities in the region supporting the Global Gateway initiative, the EU-Indo-Pacific Strategy and the EU Central Asia Strategy. The RMIP is composed of different components: 44% is dedicated to investments, 21% to regional cooperation, 14% to migration, 11% to countries in complex settings (Iran, Yemen – now under DG MENA's responsibility - Afghanistan, and Myanmar), and 9% is allocated to collaboration with key partners, mainly implemented by the Foreign Policy Instruments service.

Feedback on previous recommendations from the PFD

Charlotte Adriaen provided an overview of the previous consultations since 2021, noting that the 2024 consultation addressed climate change; energy and environment; digital; and migration and forced displacement. The actions planned since then took into account and reflected the recommendations raised by CSOs in the previous consultation, confirms that the feedback from CSOs and LAs is key and taken onboard:

1. **Better involvement of CSOs in policy reforms**, is variously pursued by the Commission, for example through a EUR 4.5 million CSO facility set up to support regional processes in Central Asia, including the annual CSO forum. To build youth capacities to engage in policy making it has created different working groups, for example on climate change, or digital connectivity. In South-East Asia, the Commission organises regular CSO fora to strengthen relations with ASEAN, including on issues on human rights. In Thailand, the EU funded the "Strengthening Urban Climate Governance" project and helped CSOs conduct climate risk assessments. In the Pacific region, a call was launched to help strengthen CSOs' ability to monitor government programmes and be involved in decision making at all levels.
2. **Simplify the process of CSOs to access funding and improve the dissemination of information regarding grants and calls for proposals**, is one of the Commission's key considerations when organising sessions aimed to provide targeted support to apply for proposals. In South East Asia and Yemen, smaller CSOs were encouraged to collaborate with larger ones to access funding.

Some calls for proposals launched in South-East Asia included provisions to provide financial support to third parties (subgranting), to facilitate access to funding for smaller CSOs.

3. **Promote the participation of CSOs in stakeholder dialogue with the government.** In Afghanistan, the EU organised an annual event to advocate for climate actions involving CSOs. In Laos, the EU-funded programme “Citizens Engagement for Good Governance, Accountability, and Rule of Law” helped creating platforms for dialogue between CSOs and the government. In Mongolia, the “Switch Off Air Pollution” project facilitated the engagement between non-state actors, CSOs, and government stakeholders on key energy issues.
4. **Maintain funding for green initiatives.** The EU launched several programmes, including the Pacific Regional Electrification Fund, which brings energy to remote areas and the EU-Pacific Marine Partnership Programme to protect marine resources. Other regions and countries were targeted as well, for example to protect biodiversity in South-East Asia and strengthen climate resilience in Afghanistan.
5. **Support to SMEs and promotion of trade unions involvement** are addressed for instance by the flagship programme Switch Asia. This programme promotes sustainable consumption and production across Asia Pacific, providing finance to collaborative projects of SMEs and promoting the adoption of green and circular economy models. As of 2025, further support for this programme will focus on scaling up successful projects and connecting them to financing. In Indonesia, the “Just Energy in Coal Regions” initiative has worked with trade unions to integrate the just transition principles into the collective bargaining agreements.
6. **On digital issues, address data privacy protection and cyber security.** In Cambodia, a national conference on personal data protection under the Global Access and Trade Expertise (GATE) project was organised, and brought together experts on the topic. In Fiji, a national scams awareness week was supported. In Thailand, a seminar was held in August 2025 on preventing scams and combating cybercrime. In Central Asia, a capacity building programme for national digital authorities was organised to improve cybersecurity.
7. **Emphasise the need to use digital, AI, and technical advances to develop sustainable and inclusive jobs in the digital transition.** In Mongolia, several projects work with CSOs to contribute to inclusive digital transformation, such as by improving the digital competences of young people. In Southeast Asia, a partnership with UNESCO is helping countries use the “readiness assessment methodology” to align their priorities with global standards for ethical AI. In Yemen, programmes under DG MENA fully integrate the central role of digital skills in supporting Yemeni livelihoods, in particular women and youth. The activities focus on digital literacy and skills which will contribute to increasing the financial inclusion of women, and contribute to their access to more productive sectors of the economy.
8. **Increase familiarity with the digital for development hub “D4D”,** which fosters collaboration in digital transformation. This hub had the first multi-stakeholder dialogue in June 2025 and brought together private companies, investors, and the government to discuss cyber security, connectivity and AI.
9. **On migration and forced displacement, address the need for long-term funding, especially regarding livelihoods and education, as well as mental health and psychological support.** In Thailand, the EU has provided essential services to refugees in 9 camps along the Thai-Myanmar border since 1995 and is extending it to Myanmar populations near the border areas, in the areas of education, health, water, and sanitation, mental health support as well as livelihoods. The

“PROTECT project” addresses the needs of women and children migrants. For example, in Cambodia, work is carried out on mental health support and help to returning migrants to gain recognition for their skills.

10. **Combat the lack of information faced by displaced groups on where they can find support.** In Afghanistan, in partnership with IOM and UNHCR, efforts are exerted to raise awareness among returnees and internally displaced people as well as in host communities about assistance at community resource centres, legal aid, and feedback mechanisms. In Thailand, work is carried out to ensure that refugees in camps have access to information about services and updates on durable solutions.
11. **Manage the risk of over dependence on EU support.** The PROTECT Project addresses the risk of over-dependence on EU support by empowering women migrant workers to advocate for their rights and build resilience by strengthening their leadership and organizational capacity. CSO-led initiatives are embedded into the national systems to ensure that they continue beyond EU funding. Efforts are made to strengthen the partnerships between CSOs, governments, and international organisations to secure collaboration and funding for future capacity-building programmes that help CSOs improve financial management and diversify funding sources.
12. **Address unequal treatment of Rohingya refugees.** The EU is committed to protecting the rights of the Rohingya refugees and is partnering with the UN to advocate for the principle of non-refoulement, and for a greater economic inclusion of refugees in Bangladesh. Such efforts have contributed to the government's decision to allow biometric registration, and to provide access to essential services.
13. **Improve the monitoring of the situation in Myanmar and the Rohingya crisis,** including the collection of accurate data for effective responses. In Myanmar, programmes are implemented under the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus through the EU-funded Nexus Response Mechanism, with regular analysis to ensure that the programming is conflict sensitive. In Bangladesh, a survey to gather current data on living conditions in Cox’s Bazar is being supported, and a needs assessment for Rohingya refugees is co-financed.

Question and Answer Session

Following the presentations, participants raised several questions and comments across multiple thematic areas:

Regarding green economic development and adaptation to climate change, participants highlighted that while local authorities value regional operations, gaps remain in complementary support, adaptation, and resilient planning, especially after recent flash floods in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka. They called for adaptable support to enable mitigation and private sector investment, as well as an enabling environment for local green economic development, particularly for MSMEs, women-led enterprises, and other actors translating initiatives into local benefits.

In response, INTPA noted that a new EUR 25 million call under the SWITCH Asia programme will support climate change adaptation through a circular economy, targeting MSMEs, local entities, and organisations. Details are available on the e-Calls PROSPECT and EU Funding & Tenders portals.

On migration, forced displacement, and CSO partnerships, participants asked how the EU can strengthen long-term partnerships with local CSOs in Afghanistan to ensure that programming remains community-driven and adaptable. Questions were also raised on how the distinct protection and assistance needs of women and children are systematically addressed across humanitarian, development, and climate resilience interventions, and how the “nexus approach” can provide integrated support for displaced populations, including those in protracted crises such as the Rohingya and those affected by climate-induced displacement. Participants stressed the need to address climate- and economically-driven migration at the local level, noting that local governments often manage frontline services but lack adequate tools. Participants further highlighted challenges in raising awareness and accessing funding for projects supporting migrants and returnees.

INTPA responded that engagement with UN agencies and local CSOs will continue, for example in Afghanistan supported by an additional migration package of EUR 38.5 million from 2025 to address returnees’, IDPs and host communities needs. Multi-stakeholder engagement, including with the private sector, shall ensure sustainable CSO operations. The “nexus approach” aims to provide integrated support that meets immediate needs, while enabling pathways to self-reliance and durable solutions. Participants were also invited to contact EU delegations for specific support.

On the Global Gateway, investments, and responsible business conduct, participants asked about eligibility criteria for calls and how objectives align with policy goals. Interest was expressed in responsible business conduct, human rights, the green transition, engagement with the private sector and support for smallholders in Asia Pacific. Questions also focused on investment vs. grant allocations, ensuring CSO participation, and promoting gender equality and ESG standards.

INTPA responded that eligibility rules reflect policy objectives under Global Gateway. A 360-degree approach ensures environmental and social responsibility, with investments and private sector involvement complemented by grants for enabling environments. CSOs play a key role in implementation and monitoring, linking with delegations and governments CSO-private sector collaboration is fostered to ensure sustainable operations. Different initiatives are ongoing, for example with smallholders in Southeast Asia, to support them in complying with the EU Deforestation Regulation for exports to the EU, or on responsible business conduct for green digital and resilient supply chains in Asia working with Japan, Korea, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand (managed by FPI). Gender action plans and ESG standards are observed in all investments.

On biodiversity and environmental issues, participants asked whether biodiversity initiatives in Southeast Asia include community- or human rights-based approaches and if they have been implemented.

INTPA confirmed that these initiatives follow a 360-degree approach, complementing Global Gateway investments and incorporating human-rights considerations.

Participants also raised questions regarding **CSO challenges and countries in complex settings** mentioning for example that in Afghanistan, CSOs are often perceived as opposing the government, limiting trust and service delivery.

INTPA provided an overview of the funding allocations for countries in complex settings, such as Afghanistan, Myanmar and Yemen which are programmed based on country needs. For example,

in Afghanistan a support package for 2025 of EUR 83 million will continue its basic needs and livelihoods support and in Yemen a multi-annual package for 2025–2027 of EUR 75 million focuses on local governance, sustainable basic services, and market-driven livelihoods.

Thematic breakout discussions

The participants engaged in thematic decisions with the aim to gather feedback and remarks from CSOs and LAs on relevant topics for the Regional MIP implementation, as well as how to better engage with CSOs and LAs in key thematic areas. Following the breakout sessions, the rapporteur of each subgroup presented their group's main issues raised as well as the recommendations and conclusions they reached.

1. Climate change, energy, environment

The group discussed opportunities for cross-border collaboration on shared ecosystems and transboundary climate risks, noting that natural disasters such as typhoons, droughts, and floods affect multiple countries in similar regions, for example, river basins in India and Nepal. Transboundary risks were identified as entry points for advocacy, early warning systems, watershed management, and shared data systems. CSOs emphasized the need for meaningful involvement in policy design, implementation, and monitoring to ensure accountability in governance, while recognizing that different local realities, such as dispersed islands in the Pacific or flood-prone basins in South Asia, require tailored approaches.

Socio-economic and political contexts, human rights, and climate mobility were highlighted as critical considerations in climate governance, particularly given the migration of young people due to climate stress. The discussion also emphasized digital connectivity and infrastructure gaps, especially in remote Pacific regions, which shape the design of energy transition and climate-resilient systems. Sustainable investment should be risk-informed, people-centred, and locally contextualized, focusing on areas such as water management, land investment, climate-resilient livelihoods, and farm infrastructure. The EU's added value lies in enabling inclusive governance, strengthening responsible investment frameworks, and supporting tailored financing mechanisms to scale local climate-resilient economies.

Support for nature-based solutions, inclusive climate risk assessments, and scaling high-impact local initiatives was widely endorsed. Strengthening local capacities, including modelling for policy reforms, blended finance, and accessible funding for MSMEs, was encouraged. Pacific local authorities, often unable to access large investment windows, requested small grant mechanisms, simplified co-financing, and support to prepare city-level project concepts. Sustainable investment priorities should also align with responsible production and consumption, particularly in disaster-prone countries.

CSOs play a critical role in engaging communities, especially where state-level cooperation is weak, ensuring inclusive, locally-driven decision-making and long-term sustainability of adaptation actions. The EU can support these efforts by scaling up proven local models and strengthening community-led climate governance systems. The group also stressed the importance of sharing best practices, identifying capacity gaps, and adopting solutions-based approaches. Bilateral cooperation in South Asia and technical-level interventions were highlighted as opportunities, alongside the need for security cooperation and improved data exchange between countries.

2. Private sector support

The group discussed current and potential areas of collaboration between CSOs, local authorities, and the private sector, highlighting skills development as a key focus. They emphasized that job creation must be matched by the availability of relevant skills and an enabling environment for investment absorption, whether in urban or remote areas. Responsible business conduct and due diligence, including ESG criteria, were seen as essential, with CSOs potentially playing a role in screening private sector actors to ensure sustainable investment.

Investments should reach SMEs and actively address structural barriers, particularly promoting women-led businesses. Sectoral opportunities for collaboration were identified in agriculture, energy, green technologies, climate health, and education. The group stressed the need for an enabling environment for civic participation, where CSOs can freely engage, supported by clear regulatory frameworks. Strengthening dialogue among stakeholders—including local authorities, donors, governments, and private sector actors—was considered critical, along with greater transparency on funding flows and types of investments to enable meaningful CSO and local authority involvement.

The importance of conditionality and standards on private sector engagement was also highlighted. Investments should respect human rights, the rule of law, and EU regulatory principles. Capacity-building for CSOs is necessary to ensure they can support the private sector effectively. The group noted challenges of trust, as historical poor engagement and preferential treatment in some countries have undermined partnerships, emphasizing the need to rebuild confidence between CSOs and private actors.

Finally, the group highlighted barriers that, if addressed, could unlock significant potential for private sector collaboration. The care economy, characterized by high informality, requires formalization. Participants encouraged platforms to strengthen trust, accountability, and safeguarding in public-private partnerships, alongside inclusive and structured dialogue mechanisms. Policy dialogue was identified as the core entry point, requiring comprehensive actor mapping to ensure equitable participation and avoid marginalizing any stakeholder.

3. Migration and forced displacement

The group discussed displacement in Myanmar, Afghanistan, and neighbouring countries, highlighting the growing impacts of climate-induced migration across the region. Gaps were noted in funding and the humanitarian-development nexus, limiting CSOs' ability to provide both immediate aid and longer-term programming. Durable solutions, including the challenges of returnees and pressures of repatriation, were discussed, with agreement on the need to strengthen advocacy spaces and support CSOs in enhancing livelihoods, education, and integration opportunities for displaced populations. Language barriers, host community support, social cohesion, and peacebuilding were also emphasized as critical areas for intervention.

Participants highlighted the importance of regional coordination and responsibility sharing, with the EU playing a key political role as well as for advocacy. Limitations in terms of data availability, coordination and sharing were raised. CSOs were seen as essential partners in providing data from the ground, supporting advocacy, and informing policy decisions. Integrating climate adaptation into migration responses was a recurring theme, focusing on sustainable livelihoods, resilience building, and mitigation of displacement drivers such as droughts and floods. Operational constraints, including limited funding, weak infrastructure, challenges in government engagement, and data gaps, were

identified as major obstacles to effective response and reintegration. A noteworthy mention was made in reference to the townships for refugees planned in Afghanistan by the *de facto* authorities, raising a number of questions on legal processes, access by female-headed households and policies transparency.

The group stressed opportunities for engagement with the private sector, sharing lessons learned from other contexts, and strengthening community-based interventions, risk reduction, and preparedness. **The need for continued labour migration support in the South-East Asia region was raised. While the Global Gateway concept may be legitimate, the CSOs see no entry points for themselves or for fragile contexts.** Longer-term financing, including the involvement of international financial institutions, was encouraged to support resilience-building. Strengthening multi-stakeholder platforms, improving coordination between humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts, and aligning political, humanitarian, and development analysis were highlighted as key to ensuring a coherent and sustainable approach to migration and forced displacement in the region.

Wrap up and conclusions

Charlotte Adriaen thanked everyone for their participation in the discussion, and underlined the value attached to the recommendations and insights of CSOs and LAs, which will be reflected in the programming.