

**First Meeting of the GFMD 2020 Friends of the Forum**

***22 July 2020***

***15:00 – 17.30 CET***

***Virtual meeting, held via KUDO***

**SUMMARY REPORT**

1. The first 2020 meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Friends of the Forum (FoF)[[1]](#footnote-1) was opened by H.E. Abdulla Ali Alnuaimi, Undersecretary for Communication & International Relations, Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, Representative of the GFMD 2020 Chair United Arab Emirates (UAE). The meeting was moderated by Alex Zalami, Head of the UAE GFMD Task Force.

**I. Opening remarks by the Chair**

1. The Chair welcomed and thanked the participants for their support for the busy calendar of the UAE Chairmanship in the first half of 2020, including the six Regional Consultation meetings series, the two webinars on COVID-19, and the activities of the newly formed GFMD ad hoc Working Groups. He highlighted that COVID-19 continues to present a significant challenge to the GFMD’s activities. Nonetheless, the UAE Chair remains committed to providing two further rounds of preparatory meetings in 2020, and an in-person Summit in January 2021.

**II. Adoption of the Agenda**

1. Mr. Zalami opened the floor for comments on the [updated Draft Agenda](https://gfmd.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=685997f6e5d20d660e8100d8d&id=4e3da61fcb&e=1e2dfbf768), which was circulated by email to the Friends of the Forum on 20 July. The Agenda was adopted in toto.

**III. Schedule of GFMD meetings and activities leading up to the Summit**

1. According to Mr. Zalami, there will be two more rounds of GFMD 2020 preparatory activities leading to the Thirteenth GFMD Summit on 11-15 January 2021, to wit:

*First round:*

* + - 29 September: Third meetings of the Troika and Steering Group
    - 30 September: First session of the Migration Lab
    - 1 October: Second meeting of the Friends of the Forum and First meeting of the background paper drafting groups

A preliminary overview of Summit preparations will be provided at these meetings.

*Second round:*

* + - 2 December: Fourth meetings of the Troika and Steering Group
    - 3 December: Second session of the Migration Lab
    - 4 December: Third meeting of the Friends of the Forum and Second meeting of the background paper drafting groups

The Chair is looking into the possibility of advancing this round of meetings to the latter half of November, subject to availability of venue and taking into account possible conflicting events.

**IV. Briefing by the co-Chairs of the Working Group** **on Sustainable Development and International Migration**

1. The UAE, speaking in its capacity and on behalf of Germany as Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Sustainable Development and International Migration informed the Friends of the Forum about the key activities of the Working Group since February 2020 to date. The Working Group led the preparation and submission of the [GFMD Focused Input to the 2020 HLPF](https://www.gfmd.org/files/documents/gfmds_focused_input_to_the_2020_hlpf.pdf) by 31 March 2020. The report, penned by Kathleen Newland of the Migration Policy Institute, was enriched by inputs from the Working Group members and the GFMD community. It contains a narrative section responding to the theme of the 2020 HLPF (“Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”), and an Annex containing illustrative examples of relevant policies and practices.
2. Additionally, the Working Group Co-Chairs have led the ongoing efforts in updating the GFMD Platform for Partnerships (PfP) online presence. These would include a refresh of the PfP homepage and the Policy and Practice Database (PPD) in the short term, and consideration of the purpose, value, content and format of the PfP in the long term. IOM’s ICT (Information and Communications Technology) has been engaged to undertake the short term update of the PfP homepage and the PPD, which would entail providing additional categories to the search filters and more infographics.

**V. Briefing by the co-Chairs of the** **Ad Hoc Working Group on the Impact of Covid-19 on Migrants, Migration and Development**

1. On behalf of the three Co-Chairs (Indonesia, Switzerland and the GFMD Business Mechanism) of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Impact of Covid-19 on Migrants, Migration and Development, **Mr. Bonanza Taihitu** of Indonesia gave a brief update on the membership[[2]](#footnote-2) and proposed work plan of the group. Established in May 2020, the Working Group is comprised of diverse stakeholders who have agreed to implement a Draft Work Plan anchored on five objectives with specific associated actions, namely:
2. Create a space to share best practices, initiatives and call for actions, building on and adding to the COVID-19 web-page created by the GFMD Chair.
3. Develop a GFMD working paper on short- and long-term issues according to the phases of COVID-19 interventions – such as prevention, response and recovery. This would represent the crux of the work of the Working Group. It is expected that the Working Group will circulate a survey to gather preliminary inputs for this paper within the next few months.
4. Support the preparatory work of the Government Roundtables as well as coordinate closely with the three mechanisms and the ad hoc Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration.
5. Identify initiatives that could be catalyst for partnerships. The Working Group intends to work closely with the Labor Mobility Partnerships (LaMP) on this objective.
6. Reflect on the need for possible adjustments in the way the GFMD operates in times of COVID-19. It is intended that the Working Group will present a report based on these reflections at the January Summit.
7. Co-Chair Indonesia emphasised that the Draft Work Plan is a working document, and that the Co-Chairs would welcome comments from the broad GFMD community on the Working Group’s activities.

**VI. Briefing by the co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration**

1. On behalf of the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration, Canada and the GFMD Mayors Mechanism, **Ms. Alexandra Young** of Canada explained that the ad hoc Working Group was created in early 2020, following from the successful Roundtable on Narratives on Migration at the GFMD Quito Summit. The [Terms of Reference](https://gfmd.org/files/documents/tor_-_ad_hoc_wg_on_public_narratives_on_migration.pdf) of the Working Group were endorsed by the Steering Group in May. Thereafter, expressions for interest were received from diverse actors in GFMD community, resulting in a truly multi-stakeholder membership.[[3]](#footnote-3)
2. The Working Group is currently developing its Work Plan, based on the results of a [survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gfmdnarrativessurvey) to the GFMD community which sought to identify needs, gaps, and existing initiatives. The survey results revealed a wealth of work that is underway, and highlighted that a key gap is how to enhance the visibility of, and build linkages between, these existing campaigns and initiatives. The Working Group planned to finalise its Work Plan at a meeting to be held the following day, 23 July, and undertook to share the finalised Work Plan with the FoF at the end of July.
3. Canada indicated the Working Group’s intention to work collaboratively with the broader GFMD community, particularly the work of the ad hoc Working Group on COVID-19, given the both the positive and negative impacts of COVID-19 on the narrative surrounding migration. Active inputs of the GFMD community would be welcomed to ensure the success of the Working Group’s activities.

**VII. Update on the Chair’s 2020 budget**

1. The United Arab Emirates presented the Chair’s revised budget. It is anticipated that the total cost of GFMD 2020, exclusive of the Summit organization, is going to amount to USD 2.4 Million. Up until June 30, costs incurred amounted to USD 506,807, while USD 1.9 Million is anticipated to be incurred from July 1 until 31 January 2021.
2. In terms of revenues, USD 199,298 was carried over from UAE funds in 2019, and the UAE has added fresh contributions to date amounting to USD 544,514. Germany has provided a fresh contribution of USD 40,717, representing the first tranche of its EUR 75,000 contribution, with the balance 50% to follow soon. Philippines contributed by USD 25,000. Therefore, a total of USD 809,529 has been raised to date, while USD 39,655 is anticipated shortly. In order to meet the expenses as projected in the budget, USD 1,564,532 remains to be raised. This amount would include the seed funding of USD 400,000 that the UAE Chair wishes to leave behind for the next chair. The UAE Chair encouraged other Member States to come forward and actively support the budget for 2020.
3. Canada announced that it would support the GFMD budget by USD 25,000, while Switzerland pledged to contribute an average of what it has contributed in the past few years in the coming months. The UAE Chair also noted that Belgium made a pledge at the Steering Group meeting.

**VIII. Briefings by GFMD Mechanisms**

1. The Civil Society Mechanism Coordinator, **Mr. Stephane Jaquemet**, Director of Programs of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), delivered a statement prepared collectively by the civil society. The GFMD Civil Society intended to provide substantive comments regarding the Regional Consultations, including a few areas for improvement. Civil Society prepared for the Regional Consultations by holding systematic and inclusive preparatory sessions. These efforts will be continued in the lead-up to the Summit where around 250 participants from a broad range of civil society organizations are expected to participate.
2. Civil Society remains committed to support the Thematic Leads and the Government Co-chairs to ensure they are informed of the situation on the ground and the inclusion of the voices of migrants in the Roundtables. Civil Society highlighted the need for partnerships that are based on joint responsibility and transparency where difficult issues are addressed.
3. Mr. Jaquemet also urged the Friends of the Forum to continue supporting the participation of civil society actors through the People’s Global Action on Migration and Human Rights (PGA). The PGA has started an online process to prepare for the January 2021 Summit and updates will be available before the next meeting of the Friends of the Forum.
4. The budget[[4]](#footnote-4) for the Civil Society Mechanism is around USD 685,000, which takes into account the financial support for the participation of more than 90 delegates from developing countries, women and migrant leaders, as well as the administrative costs of the Civil Society during the year. With the contributions made by Germany, UAE, Switzerland and Canada around 78% of their annual budget is now covered. However, there is still a USD 140,000 deficit which may reduce the number of Summit participants and place a considerable financial constraint on the ICMC for a third consecutive year.
5. Representing, the Business Mechanism, **Ms. Stéphanie Winet**, Head of Stakeholder Engagement at the International Organization for Employers (IOE), explained that due to the current crisis, the Business Mechanism reviewed its work plan, both in terms of the business priorities and the logistics of working online.
6. The International Organization of Employers (IOE) together with the worldwide ERC co-hosted a digital conference earlier this year and, in this regard, the IOE and Deloitte have partnered on a future skills assessment report to be launched September 1.
7. The work of the Business Mechanism is geared towards a regional focus on Asia and the Middle East this year. The five tracks it focuses on are:
   1. Training programs for employers on global initiatives in migration advocacy to help employers to maneuver in global processes, understand the GFMD and the GCM objectives and support employers in their advocacy on a national level.
   2. Development of national focal points, which is a network of champions and experts at a national level that serve as a starting point to initiate trainings.
   3. Employers’ Declarations in different regions. The Asian Employers’ Declaration was recently finalized, and the Declarations for the Middle East and Africa will be shared with the GFMD community at the Summit.
   4. Research papers on the impact of migration policies on businesses in the Middle East and Asia. A global presentation of four regional papers will be presented at the Summit.
   5. The launch of the online startup competition is aimed at startups working on migration issues with a COVID-19 aspect that are looking to provide technical solutions to any GFMD stakeholders.
8. The Business Mechanism requested more information on the Summit to ensure business participation, at the latest by the next Friends of the Forum meeting. It also noted that their budget is independent of the GFMD.
9. Speaking on behalf of the Mayors Mechanism, **Ms. Sophie van Haasen**, Coordinator of the Mayors Mechanism, highlighted that with COVID-19, cities and local administrations are on the frontline of response and recovery efforts. As a result, cities have established peer learning opportunities and ways to share information. In addition, the GFMD is recognized as a platform that brings different actors together to see what works and what does not.
10. As 60 city representatives joined the Regional Consultations, Ms. van Haasen welcomed the focus on partnerships and the fact that regional consultations included ideas of joint work going forward, including with local authorities. She highlighted the particular value of regional discussions in view of the regional reviews on the GCM starting in the fall. The Mayors Mechanism is drafting regional outcome documents to be shared with the GFMD once ready.
11. As Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration, Ms. van Haasen encouraged the Friends of the Forum to follow and contribute to the Working Group activities. She urged national delegations to include mayors and to raise funds to bring city representatives to the Summit. She also called for a clear cut-off date for taking a decision on whether or not the Summit will take place in person.

**IX. A presentation by UNMGCY**

1. As the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (UNMGCY) became a new official member of the GFMD family, **Ms. Marta Verani** gave an overview of their work and envisaged contribution to the GFMD. UNMGCY has already been involved in the GFMD discussions, through the organization of the Youth Forum at the Marrakesh Summit in 2018 and the Quito Summit in January 2020, wherein youth representatives participated in the government roundtables and different meetings of GFMD mechanisms.
2. For 2020, the UNMGCY vision is to engage in all GFMD activities and also to organize their own youth-specific activities and facilitate youth participation at the Final Summit. UNMGCY already contributed actively to the regional consultations, with 15 policy briefs presented by 30 youth representatives and 45 concrete proposals for solutions and partnerships.
3. Regarding youth specific activities, UNMGCY will open the application for the third Youth Forum to allow the participation of 70 youth participants. UNMGCY is also envisaging the organization of the Global Innovation Contest, with the objective of fostering youth-led projects and supporting them with mentorship and partnership creation opportunities. Thirdly, they are considering to set up a multimedia virtual reality and interview space at the Summit.
4. Ms. Verani called on the Friends of the Forum to support their work and the youth participation by incorporating young members in their respective delegations, engaging with the youth proposal for partnerships, offering judge and mentors for the innovation contest, and providing financial support. According to her, the main components of the budget amounting to USD 138,500 would be the cost of youth participation, the seed funding for the Global Innovation Contest and the rental equipment and scholarships for young leaders.

**X. Preparing for the second Friends of the Forum and first Migration Lab**

1. The second Friends of the Forum meeting and the Migration Lab taking place on 1 October and 30 September, respectively, will pave the way towards the Summit in January 2021.
2. On preparing the Government-led 2020 Roundtables. Mr. Zalami invited **Ms. Kathleen Newland**, Thematic Lead on Theme 5: Discussing Approaches to Prevent Irregular Migration, to explain the process ahead:

* The thematic leads will compile the outcomes of the Regional Consultations, particularly identifying gaps that remain to be addressed.
* For each theme, a “practitioners group” will be formed, gathering the Thematic Lead, the Government Co-Chairs, Governments that volunteer to join the respective Roundtable Team and a representative of each of the three GFMD Mechanisms.
* The thematic lead will also make available materials for the practitioners group, which will then conduct a series of discussions in August and September, in order to produce a first draft of the respective Roundtable background paper.
* This first draft will be presented at the Second meeting of the Friends of the Forum on 1 October and further discussed during the first preparatory meetings of Government-led Roundtable Teams, to be held on the same day.
* Based on the comments and input received, a final draft will then be produced and presented at the last preparatory meetings in December.
* GFMD observers are invited to join the meetings of the Roundtable Teams on 1 October and, on 4 December and provide input to the successive drafts of the Roundtable background papers.

1. Regarding the Migration Lab, **Ms. Rebekah Smith**, Labor Mobility Partnerships (LaMP) highlighted the appetite and opportunities for partnerships that have been heard and shared in the course of regional consultations – i.e., during the different breakout sessions and the partnership matching session of each closing plenary, or shared in writing through the completion of the online survey. 16 areas of common and emerging interests have been identified. While upholding the state-led character of the GFMD, LaMP will organize over the next few months some informal working groups, with the goal of bringing these themes of interest into fundable proposals by the January Summit.
2. The Migration Labs will be run by LaMP using the Problem-Driven Iterative Interaction approach. LamP will prepare the methodology of the Lab, to be shared later with the Friends of the Forum, together with the list of 16 themes. LaMP would welcome any interested person to reach out directly and express their interest to join via email to [partnerships@lampforum.org](mailto:partnerships@lampforum.org).

**XI. Invitation to Member States to volunteer to chair 2020 Summit Roundtable sessions**

1. The UAE 2020 Chair reiterated the need to identify the Governments that volunteer to Chair or join the respective Practitioners groups as early as possible, starting in August. A number[[5]](#footnote-5) of Member States expressed their interest to join these Government-led teams, either as Co-Chair or member; a number of GFMD Observers expressed interest in supporting the drafting process. Below is an overview of voluntary offers:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Thematic Area*** | ***Co-Chair(s)*** | ***Member States*** | ***GFMD Observers that volunteered to support the drafting process*** |
| **Theme 1:** The Governance of Labour Migration in the Context of Changing Employment Landscapes |  | Spain, Zimbabwe | ILO, OECD, OSCE/ODIHR |
| **Theme 2:** Skilling Migrants for Employment |  | Venezuela | IOM, OECD |
| **Theme 3:** Leveraging New Technologies to Empower Migrants |  |  | IFAD, OECD, World Bank/KNOMAD |
| **Theme 4:** Addressing Gaps in Migrant Protection | Mexico (1st choice) | Morocco, Spain, Venezuela | PDD, OECD, OSCE/ODIHR |
| **Theme 5:** Discussing Approaches to Prevent Irregular Migration | Venezuela | Ecuador, Netherlands, Spain | OECD, OSCE/ODIHR, SELA |
| **Theme 6:** Fostering Partnerships to Realise Migration-Related Goals | Gambia, Mexico (2nd choice) | Canada, Jamaica, Venezuela | IFAD, OECD |

1. In order to encourage member states to join the group of their choice, reminders will be shared over the next few weeks.

**XII. Any other business**

1. No additional item was discussed in the meeting. In closing the first Friends of the Forum meeting, Mr. Zalami thanked all the participants for their active participation and called on them to remain engaged in the forthcoming activities.

Prepared by the GFMD Support Unit

1. The first meeting of the FoF of 2020 was attended by some 70 participants from 50 Member States, 30 participants representing 20 GFMD Observers, and 13 representatives from the three GFMD Mechanisms. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Current membership of the Ad Hoc Working Group on COVID-19: Co-Chairs: Indonesia, Switzerland, and GFMD Business Mechanism; member: Ecuador, Gambia, Jamaica, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, UAE, GFMD Civil Society Mechanism, and GFMD Mayors Mechanism; Ex-Officio members: ICMPD, IOM, SELA; Observer: Sweden. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Current membership of the ad hoc Working Group on Migration Narratives: Co-Chairs: Canada and the GFMD Mayors Mechanism; Member States: Algeria, Bangladesh, Canada, Ecuador, Ireland, Mexico, Morocco, Gambia; Local Governments: City of Mechelen (Belgium); City of Montreal (Canada); Welcoming International; Civil Society: GFMD Civil Society Mechanism, Oxfam, United Nations Major Group on Children and Youth; Business: GFMD Business Mechanism, ERC Worldwide; Ex-Officio Members: European Commission, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The ICMC requested the GFMD Support Unit to share the full budget of the Civil Society Mechanism with the Friends of the Forum after the meeting. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Some expressions of interest have been submitted via the chatbox or later shared in writing to the Support Unit. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)