

## Report from the Ad Hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

1 December, 2016

### Introduction:

The Terms of Reference of the *Ad Hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (WG)<sup>1</sup>, as endorsed by GFMD participating states, mandated the Working Group to consider the best ways for the GFMD to *support the implementation* of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup>, to *contribute to the follow-up and review* process of the 2030 Agenda, and to *promote coherence of processes related to the 2030 Agenda*, through the following three functions:

1. *Provide a platform for voluntary sharing of experiences, progress and evidence on migration aspects of the 2030 agenda;*
2. *Facilitate voluntary action by building partnerships on migration-related aspects of the 2030 Agenda; and*
3. *Inform Member States, observers and relevant organizations of migration-related aspects of the 2030 Agenda and provide inputs to the formal follow-up and review mechanisms of the United Nations*

The WG has held five meetings over the course of the year,<sup>3</sup> which took place in the context of an unprecedented attention to migration. In these meetings the role, timeliness and strategic outlook of the WG have been welcomed, and the objectives set out have received wide support both from the WG membership and from external experts consulted. At the same time, WG members recognized the need to be mindful of the rapidly changing international context, which could have implications for the GFMD.

During the period since the WG was formed in early 2016, a multitude of important events on migration has taken place – the High-level Political Forum has held its first meeting on the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda; and Member States of the United Nations have negotiated the New York Declaration, which was adopted at the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016, which committed to inter-governmental negotiations on a global compact on migration over the coming two years and to hold an intergovernmental conference in 2018. In addition, on the institutional front, IOM has entered the UN as a related organization recognized by its Member States as the lead agency on migration. We furthermore had continuous active engagement by civil society in the GFMD as well as at the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants. Finally the new GFMD business mechanism that the International Organization of Employers and the World Economic Forum

<sup>1</sup> The Terms of Reference of the WG is found in Annex 1.

<sup>2</sup> Based on paragraph 40 of the 2030 Agenda Declaration, we consider the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to be an integral part of the 2030 Agenda.

<sup>3</sup> The meetings of the WG took place on 5 April, 20 May, 29 July, 18 October and 18 November 2016.

have launched this year, with the support of the GFMD chair and a number of states active in the GFMD, has stimulated private sector participation.

Moreover, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, Mr. Peter Sutherland will provide a report that will propose ways of strengthening international cooperation and the engagement of the United Nations on migration. He has also been asked to coordinate the contributions of the GFMD and the GMG to the negotiations of the global compact on migration.

Against this backdrop of an evolving international migration context, the WG considered that it is neither possible nor desirable to provide final recommendations at this stage. The group further agreed that this year's high-level attention to migration reaffirms the relevance of the WG. Thus, it is recommended that the WG continue its mandate under the GFMD Co-Chairmanship of Germany and Morocco to reflect further on the shifts taking place and provide more conclusive recommendations.

In the meantime, the WG outlines below a set of *preliminary recommendations* for the GFMD, for the consideration by its participating states in Dhaka.

#### **Preliminary recommendations:**

##### **1. *Provide a platform for voluntary sharing of experiences, progress and evidence on migration aspects of the 2030 agenda;***

The Ad Hoc Working Group confirms that the GFMD is in a unique position to share experiences and practices and has the appropriate mechanisms for doing so related to progress and evidence on migration aspects of the 2030 Agenda. This includes the *government teams* and *roundtables*, the *platform for partnerships (PfP)*, *side-events* etc. Nonetheless, the WG considers them to be underutilized, sometimes repetitive and that the potential of these are not fully realized. The 2030 Agenda presents an opportunity to adapt these mechanisms to energize and maximize their usefulness and the GFMD at large. This could be done by linking thematically both the roundtables and the GFMD Common Space partially closer to commitments in the 2030 Agenda (see point 2 below). It is further suggested to use the existing GFMD Migration and Development Policy and Practice Database in attributing policies and practices related to specific SDG targets. This would allow interested parties to search the database according to SDG targets. It is also suggested that participating states be invited during PfP sessions to share their experiences in realizing migration-related commitments.

With regards to evidence, the WG established that it is neither the GFMD's mandate nor its comparative advantage to carry out research. Nonetheless, it remains an important platform for sharing evidence and best practices and should seek input from expert actors for doing so, including by sharing relevant research results carried out in the field of migration and development. This could be more effectively targeted towards reporting on progress on the migration-related aspects of the 2030 Agenda (see point 3 below).

It was further agreed that governments should maintain the lead in the GFMD mechanisms, but that other actors, including international organizations, civil society and the private sector can make valuable contributions in order to achieve the SDGs.

## **2. Facilitate voluntary action by building partnerships on migration-related aspects of the 2030 agenda;**

In line with the GFMD Operating Modalities<sup>4</sup>, which state that GFMD is intended *inter alia* to enhance partnership and foster practical outcomes, the WG recommends that the GFMD should be made more action-oriented without going beyond its operating modalities – i.e. without itself establishing an implementation mechanism. By doing so, it can provide opportunities for governments to demonstrate their political will and their concrete efforts to resolve problems in the field. An option would be to strengthen its role as a catalyst.

The Operating Modalities set out that the GFMD could be geared towards, and thus provide a platform for, facilitating partnerships to deliver on the migration-related commitments in the 2030 Agenda. This could partially be done by aligning the GFMD with the 2030 Agenda-process, e.g. by having one or more GFMD government teams geared towards specific deliverables<sup>5</sup> in the agenda (e.g. policy tolls, handbooks) and be problem-solving in nature (e.g. identifying practical solutions to recruitment costs, remittance costs, facilitating access to and portability of earned benefits, cooperation to provide education/vocational training to migrants etc.). These government teams would complement the existing model of government teams preparing round table discussions. Such teams could, if so decided by the team members, benefit from multi-stakeholder contribution.

Consistent with the Operating Modalities, such teams would be voluntary in nature, but primarily gather participants with a genuine interest in addressing the problem at hand, either through policy changes, funding mechanisms or other actions. While it might be unlikely to actually solve the issues at hand within the timeframe of any given Chairmanship, such teams could aim towards e.g. delivering action plans and commitments towards those plans. Other states and partners could be invited to sign-up or otherwise express commitment/ support for the proposed action, such as by doing pilots of the proposed initiative. The PfP offers a space to launch calls for action and partnerships in this regard. Members of the relevant government teams would be invited to report back to the GFMD on progress made and lessons learned.

## **3. Inform Member States, observers and relevant organizations of migration-related aspects of the 2030 Agenda and provide inputs to the formal follow-up and review mechanisms of the United Nations**

In order for the GFMD to provide an effective platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 agenda, and thus provide inputs to the formal follow-up and review mechanisms of the United Nations, the WG recommends the GFMD to have a standing agenda item dedicated to this issue and reflected in the multi-annual work program of the GFMD.

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex 2 for the Operating Modalities.

<sup>5</sup> In the past, the GFMD had ad hoc WGs comprised of governments and non-government partners that worked towards developing M&D policy tools, including Migration Profiles, Mainstreaming migration into development planning and diaspora engagement handbook.

Without prejudice to the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Sustainable Development Goals, the UNGA took a decision to have specific themes for the coming three HLPFs as well as a clustering of SDGs.<sup>6</sup> This presents an opportunity for the GFMD Chair to choose to tailor its substantive agenda, to the extent wished, to the thematic focus of the High-level Political Forum.<sup>7</sup> Assuming this could be achieved, the GFMD could contribute to the ECOSOC for the migration-thematic follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda (through the GFMD Chair-in-Office, GFMD Troika or other dedicated mechanism).

Such contributions should include: a) Experiences and evidence related to the development outcomes for migrants (i.e. not leaving them behind); b) The progress towards the migration-specific and related targets, including in relation to facilitating the exchange of data for migration related indicators; c) Harnessing the contribution of migration and migrants towards inclusive growth and sustainable development and d) Identifying emerging issues likely to affect the realization of poverty eradication and achieving prosperity for migrants.

In fulfilling this third function, the GFMD could, *inter alia*:

1. Assist in the exchange of data for migration related indicators (e.g. through encouraging participating states to submit data to agencies assigned with collecting relevant data);
2. Invite expert agencies to provide preliminary aggregated global findings to the GFMD Friends of the Forum and showcasing these through the PfP; highlighting policy and regional trends, progress towards targets, gaps etc;
3. Invite voluntary sharing and informal exchange of experiences by participating states and other stakeholders on migration related indicators, on migrant inclusion in other SDGs and on migrants' and migration's contribution to progress towards SDGs.
4. Invite expert agencies, academia and research institutes to share in depth case-studies, including through thematic indicators, to give more detailed understanding (e.g. why certain policies might produce certain outcomes; why migration might be contributing to the achievement of SDGs in some places more than in others; how migrants have been included more effectively etc.).

The GFMD could partner with one or more relevant expert agencies, to summarize the findings from the exercises above, then have these findings vetted through the appropriate procedures of the GFMD before they are finally submitted to the High-Level Political Forum.

The WG furthermore recommends that the GFMD be used to share more systematically information about the various relevant international processes,

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<sup>6</sup> A/RES/70/299: Op3 *Also decides*, therefore, that for the remainder of the current cycle of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, the themes shall be: (a) For 2017: Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world; (b) For 2018: Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies; (c) For 2019: Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality. Op5 *Decides* that, for the remainder of the current cycle of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, the sets of Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed in depth shall be: (a) In 2017: Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14; (b) In 2018: Goals 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15; (c) In 2019: Goals 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16.

<sup>7</sup> The GFMD Chair received an invitation from the ECOSOC President to submit inputs from the GFMD to the HLPF in 2016, but due to time constraints, the Chair was unable to do so. Such inputs should be proactively pursued in future.

notably with regard to the Agenda 2030 and now also on the global compact on migration and related initiatives. This could take the form of a standing item in the meetings of the Friends of the Forum, where the chair-in-office would brief participating governments and observers on recent relevant events. This would enable the GFMD to be a platform contributing to thematic synergy and coherence between and among processes related to the Agenda 2030, by sharing relevant information. If the mandate would be extended, the WG could be tasked to provide regular information to the GFMD Steering Group and Friends of the Forum. Alternatively, it can also be decided that the current GFMD Chair or SRSG Peter Sutherland be charged with the task of sharing the most relevant information.

### **Concluding reflections**

Should the WG get the mandate to continue its work in 2017 – 2018 it would be in a good position to provide recommendations to the Co-Chairs, Troika and the Steering Group for the GFMD's continued engagement with the ongoing processes – the 2030 Agenda, the process to elaborate a global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration, the Inter-governmental conference on migration scheduled for 2018 and the High-level Dialogue on International Migration to be held before 2019. The WG would in this case submit revised Terms of Reference for the period 2017-18 to the Steering Group and the Friends of the Forum at its first session in 2017 for approval. The WG would continue to foster exchanges with other stakeholders on specific topics with the aim of strengthening the dialogue during the year, but also to bring added value to the discussions.