

Full Schedule of Side Events at the 13th GFMD Summit

Day 1: 18 January 2021

10.00 – 12.00 CET

Impacts and Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Migrant Workers in the Middle East

Organiser: Embassy of Sweden

The COVID-19 pandemic has so far had a devastating impact on a global scale, affecting millions of persons around the world. The unprecedented situation has led governments to implement restrictions on movement, significant health measures, changes to labour laws and the provision of wide-scale economic support packages.

As is often the case, it is the most vulnerable in society that have felt the impact of the crisis the most. Migrant workers have been particularly susceptible to job losses, salary cuts and various health and safety concerns. Migrant populations are often far from family support networks and face language and cultural barriers. Some have suffered from discrimination, while others have found themselves stranded between origin and host countries without any means to provide for themselves or their families. This event will look at these challenges in the context of the Middle East.

10.00 – 12.00 CET

Non-Payment of Wages and Benefits: Impacts on the Life of Migrants and their Families Post-COVID-19

Organisers: Migrant Forum in Asia, Civil Society Action Committee, Council of Global Unions

Migrants have faced enormous challenges this year due to the closure of businesses amid lockdowns. Many migrant workers have faced termination, with employers unable or unwilling to provide earned wages and end-of-service benefits. Some of these workers have also been repatriated without the means to seek redress for grievances related to non-payment of wages.

While the non-payment of wages is not a new issue, it is one that has been aggravated by the economic situation faced by many countries, with existing justice systems unable to handle the increase in cases. While recognising the magnitude of the issue, this event will provide an avenue for an interactive exchange between stakeholders present and touch upon what has been done, and what remains to be done. It will identify and assess policies, measures and initiatives taken by governments to address the issue, as well as the gaps and challenges that continue to await remedy.

16.00 – 18.00 CET

The Impact of COVID-19 on Migrants, Migration and Development

Organiser: GFMD Working Group on COVID-19

This side event will serve as an opportunity to present to the GFMD community the Working Paper developed by the ad hoc Working Group on the Impact of COVID-19 on Migrants, Migration and

Development, led by the governments of Switzerland, Indonesia and the Business Mechanism. The Working Paper is a product of multistakeholder consultation and inputs, as well as the outcomes of a survey of GFMD constituents.

16.00 – 18.00 CET

Beyond Recovery: a Post-COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response for Migrants and their Communities

Organisers: ILO, UNDP, UNU-MERIT, Colombia, Sweden

With the right policies in place, migrants can be central to and play a major role in recovery plans for countries emerging from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Socio-economic (re)integration and social cohesion are key to fostering positive development outcomes in countries of origin, transit and destination. While COVID-19 is still at peak levels in many countries, it is timely to consider how this can be addressed in the near and longer-term.

Participants will share practices of recovery measures that address the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants and their communities, but also build on their skills, knowledge and expertise. They will also discuss the challenges and lessons learned to build more inclusive and cohesive post-COVID-19 economies and societies.

Day 2: 19 January 2021

08.00 – 10.00 CET

Migration Governance in the Arab Region: Trends, Challenges and Priorities for the Future

Organisers: League of Arab States, IOM, UN-ESCWA

Incentivised by the GCM, countries across the Arab region - which hosts around 15% of the global migrant population - have accelerated the pace of reforms to their migration governance frameworks, with significant impacts on development outcomes. Migration issues including regularizing migration pathways, ensuring migrant protection and empowerment, and linkages between migration and development have received increased attention from policy makers. However, the region continues to face considerable challenges in achieving GCM objectives.

This session aims to discuss some of the trends in migration governance in the region and offer a platform for reflection and critical thinking on key priorities and challenges. It will build on some of the initial findings of the first GCM regional review in the Arab region organized by LAS, IOM and ESCWA in collaboration with the members of the UN Regional Network on Migration, and with the support from the Global UN Network on Migration.

10.00 – 12.00 CET

Inter-Regional Partnerships on the Governance of Labour Migration: two Abu Dhabi Dialogue Initiatives

Organisers: UAE, IOM, GK Partners

This side event will consist of two halves. The first half will feature the presentation of an overview of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue's "Comprehensive Information and Orientation Program", a harmonised pre-employment, pre-departure and post-arrival orientation program, designed by IOM and implemented by three pairs of ADD Member States. This program can be replicated by additional country of origin and country of destination pairs.

The second half will focus on the ADD's recently adopted four-track research program, which will produce a total of 11 thematic paper. The four tracks focus on anticipated changes in the employment landscape of the GCC; the use of technology to improve mobility governance; pre-deployment testing of workers in Asia-GCC corridors; and cooperation between RCPs on the global governance of migration. Programme coordinators will present an overview of the four tracks, with contributing authors available to answer questions relevant to their papers.

10.00 – 12.00 CET

Enabling African Youth to Upskill and Move

Organisers: Centre for Global Development, Labor Mobility Partnerships, Enabel - Belgian Development Agency, The European Commission's Joint Research Centre, The OECD Development Centre

The youth population in Africa is booming, creating a large working-age group with the potential to contribute to labour markets around the world. They nonetheless face constraints in finding safe and regular pathways to migrate, as countries shift towards a bigger emphasis on high skills and points systems. Moreover, COVID-19 may further constrain regular pathways to traditional destination countries.

This workshop will bring together experts focused on up-skilling and moving African youth. It will attempt to answer several questions. These include: Why, how and where do young people in Africa want to move? What skills, experience and income gains will they acquire by moving abroad? What contributions will they make to their countries of origin and destination? And how can major destination regions, such as Europe and the GCC open legal pathways to allow them to migrate safely, regularly and orderly?

16.00 – 18.00 CET

Advancing Fair and Ethical Recruitment for all in a COVID-19 Context (and Beyond?)

Organisers: ILO-IHRB Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment, IOM

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed new challenges and brought to light pre-existing, often structural, challenges in the recruitment of migrant workers for all actors involved and the overall functioning of labour markets. This side event will explore how the COVID-19 crisis has changed the recruitment landscape, how different stakeholders are responding, and what kind of policy and practical action is needed to contribute to an improved post-COVID-19 landscape.

Key questions include: what are the key challenges that the current crisis has created or exacerbated for migrant workers, their employers and public and private recruiters? How can business, governments, workers' and employers' organisations ensure responsible recruitment practices are in place in the current crisis? And how can the use of technology support progress in this area?

16.00 – 18.00 CET

Harnessing Diaspora Contributions to COVID-19 Recovery Efforts in Countries of Origin

Organisers: IOM, UNDP, Moldova, Mexico

While the contribution of diasporas to local development in their countries of origin is well recognised, their engagement in recovery efforts from COVID-19 remains largely overlooked. Yet experiences in countries including Mexico and Moldova show that harnessing diaspora contributions can serve to amplify the impact of national and local COVID-19 responses and recovery efforts.

With examples put forward by national and local public authorities and diaspora organisations, this session will discuss good practices and practical approaches adaptable to other country / regional contexts. The timing for diaspora engagement is critical to ensure broad, sustainable stakeholder support to national responses, particularly in developing countries of origin most affected by the socio-economic consequences of COVID-19.

Day 6 – 25 January 2021

10.00 – 12.00 CET

Entrepreneurship for Migrants and Refugees: Innovative Partnerships for Sustainable Development

Organisers: UNITAR, UNCTAD, UNHCR, IOM

Entrepreneurship offers both a long-term solution to the challenges emanating from large and permanent movements of people and operates as a means of providing livelihoods in the short-term, following humanitarian crises. Especially in the context of recovery from COVID-19, forging innovative partnerships can play a critical role in improving the inclusive nature of entrepreneurship ecosystems.

This event aims to promote better understanding of the importance of facilitating entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees in developing and developed countries, by enhancing their access to requisite services in the areas of training, finance, markets and technology. It will also highlight the positive contributions that migrant and refugee entrepreneurship brings to their host communities.

10.00 – 12.00 CET

Cross-sector Approaches for Local Actors on Migrants' Inclusion

Organisers: UN Habitat and Center for Mediterranean Integration, OECD, UCLG, UNICEF, UNCTAD, UNESCO, WHO

Local stakeholders - local governments and local actors - play an ever more influential role in shaping protection responses, advancing the social inclusion and integration of migrants. They are first responders and often responsible for meeting the immediate needs of migrants, including through providing access to healthcare, education, housing and administrative services.

This session will focus on introducing successful practices, lessons learned and planning strategies from local level actors that have implemented "whole of society" and cross-sectoral approaches for improved

responses. It will introduce recently launched guidance on fostering coordination across sectors, creating enabling environments for all and advancing inclusive governance structures.

16.00 – 18.00 CET

It Takes a Community: Building a Global Movement to Balance the Narrative on Migration

Organisers: Canada, Ecuador, GFMD Mayors Mechanism, IOM

In a global context where public attitudes towards migrants and migration remain deeply polarized, this side event will highlight how concrete action and collaboration between a variety of actors can turn the tide on misinformation and promote a more balanced discourse, in keeping with the objectives of the GCM.

This event will showcase "It Takes a Community", a collaborative campaign developed by the GFMD Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration that aims to shift the narrative on migration by sharing stories about the positive impact migration can have on communities worldwide. Building on the campaign's soft launch that took place on 18 December 2020, speakers will share a call to action for members of the GFMD community to participate in the campaign's implementation throughout 2021.

16.00 – 18.00 CET

The Impact of COVID-19 on Migration and Remittances

Organisers: KNOMAD / World Bank

The stock of international migrants is likely to have declined in 2020, as new migration slowed and return migration increased. Rising unemployment in migrant-host countries may result in a further increase in return migration. Forecasting the impact on remittances is linked to uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of efforts to contain the spread of the disease and the vaccine.

This session will discuss how COVID-19 has impacted migration and remittances and what measures different countries, donor agencies and different stakeholders have implemented including on: (i) safe and regular labor mobility; (ii) remittances; and (iii) partnerships.