Report from the Ad Hoc Working Group on Communications

Introduction:

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Communications (working group) was established in February 2015 to assess GFMD's communication requirements and the feasibility of adopting new mechanisms for effective communication.

The Terms of Reference of the working group as endorsed by Steering Group were to assess GFMD's communications requirements, and how to improve information sharing to enhance and better position GFMD in the global migration and development agenda.

This was to be done by:

- assessing the current methods of communicating the processes and outcomes achieved by GFMD;
- identifying GFMD's relevant stakeholders, and assessing whether current communication methods are reaching those stakeholders;
- examining whether there are thematic topics that GFMD may wish to elaborate both in its internal and external communication;
- considering the benefits of GFMD communicating its work in a broader range of media, with the possible consequence of reaching a wider constituency; and
- identifying and assessing the feasibility of adopting new mechanisms for communicating the processes and work of GFMD.

The members of the working group are: Australia, Bangladesh, Mexico, Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia and Turkey.

The working group held nine meetings since February 2015.

The working group members decided to hire cR Kommunikation to conduct a GFMD communications survey to identify the communication needs of GFMD members and stakeholders.

The findings of the survey highlight the need to take action in different areas, particularly:

1. **Organizational and output reforms**: respondents asked for fewer main topics, more targeted and ready-to-use outcomes such as

thematic information briefs, concept papers and policy guidance manuals to help policy makers.

2. **Positioning towards other international organisations in the field of migration and development: r**espondents would like GFMD to strengthen its informal character by providing a venue for informal discussion with the possibility to exchange good practices and experiences. Respondents also suggested increased closer collaboration between GFMD and IOM.

3. **Increasing interaction through activities and new communication channels:** A large majority of respondents called for a more active role and more visible communication by GFMD. Many suggested a restructure of the website, expanded use of communication channels such as Twitter, development of surveys and newsletters to foster internal communications and the introduction of digital online forums and blogs. Others suggested appointing a spokesperson for GFMD or an enhanced communication role for the GFMD chair.

GFMD communications survey outcomes are at <u>Attachment A</u>. More comprehensive information on the survey and analysis is available at: http://www.gfmd.org/

After much deliberation the working group would like to put forward a set of preliminary recommendations for consideration by the Steering Group in Dhaka.

Preliminary recommendations:

These preliminary recommendations are informed by the GFMD communications survey, discussions with external consultant cR Kommunikation, deliberations by the working group, discussions with the present and incoming GFMD chairs and comments received at the October 2016 Steering Group and Friends of the Forum meetings.

<u>*Strategic long term*</u>

1(a) Developing a positioning and communications strategy for GFMD

Members have indicated that a priority is for GFMD to play a key role in the development of the Global Compact for safe orderly and regular migration and position itself strongly in the current migration and development discussions.

<u>The incoming co-chairs may wish to review the future strategic positioning of GFMD so that it is well placed to serve members ahead of the international conference on migration in 2018 and the Third High</u>

Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2019. Strategic positioning is the positioning of an organisation in the future, while taking into account the changing dynamic environment, plus the systematic realization of that positioning.

The strategy could include a scan of the current and future political, social and legal environment relevant to migration and development, and a stakeholder analysis. It may also be an opportunity to reexamine GFMD's objectives, reaffirm GFMD's core and unique qualities, reassess GFMD's role and mission through horizon scanning, gap analysis, mapping exercise to identify what more is needed to achieve the agreed objectives.

A key focus may be what GFMD contributes to multilateral discussions on migration that other fora do not, and how GFMD can be most effective and avoid duplication of effort, specifically ahead of milestone events on the migration calendar.

1(b) New ad hoc working group to support positioning and communications strategy
The incoming co-chairs may also wish to consider establishing a new ad hoc working group that would support work on GFMD's positioning and communications strategy, under new chairmanship and terms of reference. This group could oversee the implementation of these recommendations, provide practical guidance on how the positioning and communications strategy can be incorporated into future GFMD processes, for example by having a standing agenda item dedicated to the communications strategy at major GFMD meetings.

Technical – short term

1- Restructuring the website
The GFMD Support Unit should look to redesigning website, in particular, the Platform for Partnership section. The new design should be more engaging, user-centric and facilitate mobile and tablet usage. The redesign will aim to provide a more functional data-driven search. Work on this has already begun.

2- Increasing the usage of social media
The GFMD Support Unit under the direction of the GFMD Troika should consider developing strategies to increase social media engagement, assess the possibility of introducing new social media channels such as online blogs and at the same time enhance the visual and content aspects of the current communication tools.

To enable these strategies to take shape, the GFMD troika may consider additional resources for the GFMD Support Unit, and/or reprioritising the Support Unit's functions. Increased resourcing, whether in the form of additional funding or additional dedicated position, would enhance the Support Unit's ability to manage content in GFMD social media channels, develop regular newsletters and potentially even launch another communications survey, if there would be value in that.

3- Raising the visibility of the Policy and Practice Database (PPD)
<u>More opportunities should be created to enhance the visibility of the PPD and members should be strongly encouraged to contribute regularly to the PPD</u>. This would encourage inclusive discussion generally, but also a greater focus on understanding the real policy settings, challenges and practical needs of different countries and stakeholders. It would also avoid a duplication of efforts as members benefit from the experiences and practices of others.

The online PPD could also be reexamined and be revamped to align it with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Agenda 2030 commitments. This would encourage Member States to report on their concrete initiatives in implementing migration-related SDG commitments.

Concluding reflections

The working group has discussed with the incoming 2017 chair Germany, the prospect of communications work continuing into the future. We understand the German Chair will launch initiatives to:
- generate more visibility for the Platforms for Partnerships database in 2017-18, with emphasis on sharing instances of collaboration with civil society or the private sector;
- develop a newsletter in the first half of the German-Moroccan co-chairmanship;
- update the GFMD website and make it more interactive; and
- facilitate opportunities for more informal discussions and sharing of best practices and experiences.

With the tabling of this report at the GFMD Summit in Dhaka in December 2016, the working group has reached the end of its mandate, and we consider our work finalised.

As outgoing chair, Australia wishes to thank all the members who participated in the communications survey for their valuable insights and feedback.