Report: Second 2020 GFMD Migration Lab

The second GFMD Migration Lab took place on December 3rd, 2020. Due to the COVID pandemic restrictions, the event took place entirely online, beginning at 10:00 CET and finishing at 17:00 CET. The Migration Lab process built on the GFMD regional conversations that were held throughout spring and summer 2021 and that helped identify nine groups that have worked on exploring further possibilities for partnerships. In the first Migration Lab that took place on September 30th, 2020, the participants used Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) methodology to deconstruct the problem they are trying to address to allow for different approach towards finding the appropriate and suitable solution. The overview of the methodology for the first Lab can be found here.

The second Lab presented a set of existing and emerging partnerships with the goal of advancing the possible new projects forward. Specifically, the second Lab was divided into two sessions. The objective of the first session was to help the audience better understand what it takes to create and maintain a successful partnership, and to offer specific relevant lessons for the emerging partnerships. It consisted of presentations of existing partnerships which have been successfully operating within as well as across regions, on themes of interest to GFMD stakeholders. The goal was to introduce these successful partnerships, including what benefits they brought to the involved actors and how they could be potentially replicated, but also what challenges the actors faced during the partnership creation process. Following the presentation of each partnership, there was an interactive session, in which the audience got a chance to ask questions to each of the presenters and comment on possible ways to replicate or further develop these partnerships. Besides benefitting the audience, the first part of the second Lab also allowed the presenters to connect with interested GFMD members and further grow, develop and/or replicate their projects.

During the first session, the audience heard from Gonzalo Fanjul of PorCausa, who presented a strategic campaign on migration reform in Spain. Emma Seymour of Worker Welfare at Expo 2020 then presented work on refunding unauthorized recruitment fees within Expo 2020 supply chains, followed by Alex Zalami from the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, who talked about the process through which the ADD was established as a regional coordination mechanism, including how it balanced receiving and sending country interests. Last but not least, members of the IFAD-ADA group presented a partnership on "Linking Insurance with Remittances to Improve Resilience" that provides affordable and accessible insurance to migrant workers in the UAE and their families back home via remittance channels. The existing partnerships were picked for the second Lab because they in a broad sense map to some of what the newly emerging partnerships under the GFMD are trying to achieve. Therefore, the new partnerships were able to learn from experience and challenges faced by the existing partnerships, which will benefit them as they progress their work and hopefully allow for faster and smoother establishment of their projects.

The goal of the second session was to introduce new partnerships currently emerging from the 2020 GFMD process, and to allow them a chance to present where their projects stand at the moment, connect leads of the emerging partnerships with possible new members within the GFMD members, and hear recommendations on how to further develop their proposals. The session consisted of presentations from groups that are working

on their partnership ideas developed throughout the GFMD Regional Processes and the first Migration Lab. Similar to the first portion of the second Lab, each presentation was followed by time for the audience to ask questions and offer comments with a specific focus on solving their remaining challenges in order to progress the design of the partnerships.

There were four partnerships that presented in the second portion of the Lab. First, Raffaella Greco Tonnegutti of ENABEL Belgium delivered her slides about a new partnership that seeks to establish entrepreneurial mobility between Senegal and Belgium. Raffaella has asked the audience for possible examples of prior programs on entrepreneurial mobility lessons learned from the experience of their establishment. William Gois of Migrant Forum Asia then presented the working group on wage protection during COVID-19. The group has made notable progress in getting support from governments of Bangladesh, Nepal, and Indonesia (and potentially some employer representatives), it has not yet been able to secure support from a government of a receiving country, which is one of the major challenges for this partnership to accomplish its goals. At the moment the group is pursuing a broad advocacy campaign, though participants suggested that it may be helpful to start with a few concrete pilots on wage protection in order to build positive results which could feed into an advocacy campaign. The third presentation was delivered by Stella Opoku-Owusu of AFFORD and Giulia Castro of FAO, who presented partnership ideas on labor mobility schemes and on diaspora contribution for up-skilling in countries of origin (particularly Ghana, Gambia, Rwanda, and Senegal). Both organizations have a number of relevant entrance points and are currently working to identify how best to align them, and are focusing on connecting diaspora in agribusiness, to provide youth employment opportunities through agribusiness, enhancing diaspora skills in agribusiness, and enhancing livelihoods for return migrants. The group has noted partnership gaps related to legal pathways with destination countries (particularly in Europe given the prominence of Africa-Europe corridors) and donors to provide a 50% match funding with existing SDC funding. The last presentation was delivered by Alfred Woeger of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICPMD), who talked about the new features of the Migration EU eXpertise+ (MIEUX+) initiative financed by the European Union in the area of capacity development partnerships. The previous MIEUX project has now been expanded from capacity building for states to demand-driven capacity building for regions on specific subjects of interests. For example, he presented a regional capacity building project in Eastern Europe on consulate responses to crises. Alfred specifically highlighted a regional capacity building project in Latin America, which is still under development, on building capacity for inclusion and social cohesion programs in countries such as Costa Rica and Peru. He noted that there is still an opportunity for Latin American states to get involved in this partnership, which is fully funded, and invites them to reach out to him. He also noted that any other regions are welcome to submit proposals on topics of interest to them.

Overall, the second Migration Lab provided the participants with an opportunity to discuss their challenges and raise questions around development of their partnerships. Despite the online format, which made it difficult for the participants to connect on more personal level, the audience did ask some interesting questions and provided comments on both the existing as well as emerging partnerships that allowed the presenters to think about their projects from a different perspective. The presenters also got a chance to provide their contact information with the participants, who can reach out to them with further feedback and/or possible interest in partnering on their projects. Participants and Friends of the Forum are encouraged to reach out to presenters both of existing partnerships for further information and of emerging partnerships, which will continue to be developed moving towards the Summit in January. Partnerships which reach agreement among necessary members will be presented at the Summit during the Open Space.