

GFMD General Assembly 2024

GFMD Secretariat Activity Report 2023

24 April 2024

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1. Overview of key activities carried out in 2023

This activity report covers key initiatives carried out by the GFMD Secretariat in partnership with its network of members and partners in 2023, that have addressed and enhanced GFMD's core mission and strategic goals, enabling the organisation to best serve its membership and the wider journalism support and media development community.

The activities were carried out in line with GFMD's four main lines of work:

- a) Leading media assistance networking convenings, peer-to-peer learning, coordination, and information and knowledge sharing in order to support and strengthen a well-informed and networked global media development community.
 - b) Supporting evidence-based and harmonised media development policy and effective media support through the International Media Policy and Advisory Centre (GFMD IMPACT).
 - c) Supporting digital policy development.
 - d) Supporting media support and public-interest journalism organisations by improving and expanding GFMD member and partner services and resources.
- All activities were aligned with GFMD's [2021-2025 strategic objectives](#) and delivered within [budget approved by members at the 2023 General Assembly](#).

GFMD end-of-year Town Hall 2023

The end-of-year meeting conducted by GFMD on 13 December 2023 served as a platform for reviewing last year by engaging with our members in discussions on collaborative initiatives, with various members sharing their experiences of engaging with GFMD throughout 2023.

You can watch the recording of the GFMD Town Hall at [this link](#).

1.1. Work stream 1: Leading media assistance networking convenings, peer-to-peer learning, coordination and information and knowledge sharing

1.1.1. Information sharing and coordination activities in support of media assistance in crisis and emergency situations

In 2023, GFMD responded to crises and emergency situations in **Sudan, Palestine and Ukraine** by convening – and disseminating crucial information to – media development actors on the ground, as well as donors, funders, and the broader media development community.

GFMD organised **15 coordination and information meetings**, bringing together **380 participants** (in person and online)¹.

- **Palestine:** For more information see: <https://coordination.gfmd.info/current/palestine> and refer to [Work Stream 1.2](#) for more information about the GFMD regional meeting in Amman.
- **Sudan:** For more information see <https://coordination.gfmd.info/current/sudan> and this [article](#).
- **Ukraine and the wider region:** For more information see: <https://coordination.gfmd.info/current/ukraine>

1.1.2. Production of reports, analysis, and focused briefings from peer-to-peer learning, coordination, and information and knowledge sharing activities tailored to specific audiences and needs

- ***Briefing “Media viability: The global vs the local” and country reports on media viability in Namibia, Tunisia and Lebanon***

In June, GFMD released a briefing on [Media viability: The global vs the local](#) based on **three country reports** from a series of national consultations on media viability in Namibia, Tunisia, and Lebanon, which GFMD co-organised earlier in the year (*refer to section 1.2.1. for more information*). The reports provide policy recommendations for supporting journalism and independent media in these countries, with key themes including market reforms, rebuilding trust, and digital regulation and innovation.

Read the full report on the Lebanon consultations [here](#) , the Namibia consultations [here](#), the Tunisia consultations in English [here](#) and in French [here](#).

- ***White Paper on “Long-term financial support to Ukrainian media and journalists”***

As part of GFMD’s coordination activities in Ukraine, GFMD initiated efforts to help Ukrainian media gain financial independence, resulting in a detailed White Paper on Long-term financial support. To ensure that Ukrainian media move from mere survival to long-term vitality, the paper proposes a comprehensive strategy encompassing five pillars: innovative funding mechanisms, prioritisation of local-level media, constructive enabling environment, professional development and media literacy. The paper argues that long-term financial support for Ukrainian media would meet several critical needs, including ensuring media pluralism and guarding against media capture.

So far the white paper has been signed by **34 organisations** - 24 of which are Ukrainian media organisations and regional media - and added their voices for robust support to ensure that the Ukrainian media community continues to contribute to the resilience of the Ukrainian public and the recovery of the nation. The German Marshall Fund of the United States (which inspired us

¹ 4 Sudan information sharing meetings (80 pax), 9 information sharing on Ukraine (203 pax), 1 Iran (17), 1 Israel/Palestine (80)

to create the White Paper in the first place²) and the Nordic Journalists Center **integrated the White Paper into their strategies to support Ukrainian media for the next five to ten years.** The German Marshall Fund will participate in the panel discussion “[The recovery of Ukraine is impossible without the recovery of the Ukrainian media](#)” at the International Journalism Festival in Perugia on April 18, 2024, where the recommendations from the white paper will be brought up. In addition, our partners at the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (NUJU) [shared the White Paper with their members](#) and used it in advocacy campaigns to support local media. They will also use it to capture the attention of the government and parliament.

You can read the full White Paper in [English](#) and [Ukrainian](#).

1.1.3. Organisation of internal assemblies, town halls and committees, learning and policy and working group meetings

- GFMD’s internal processes and committees

GFMD (specifically its Policy and Learning Committee) launched a process to update its Code of Practice - a set of guidelines and principles to which all GFMD members commit to abide. The Code of Practice governs how GFMD members operate and provides a mechanism for accountability and transparency. GFMD’s [current](#) Code of Practice was drafted in 2016, and many members have highlighted that it needs to be brought in line with the current trends, needs and professionalisation of the sector. The new Code of Practice will focus on steps GFMD members can take to ensure better collaboration, aid effectiveness and compliance with human rights standards.

Drafting of the new code is led by a representative group reflecting GFMD’s geographic diversity, supported by a GFMD advisor. The Secretariat will announce a new stage of the consultative process involving the wider membership at the General Assembly in April 2024.

- UN Summit of the Future and Pact for the Future

GFMD started engaging with the Summit of the Future in 2023. The Summit is a high-level event organised by the UN that will take place from 22-23 September 2024 in New York, and touches upon issues that are directly related to media development such as disinformation and digital rights, we see it as an opportunity to highlight the importance of our sector in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and tackling future challenges. It aims to accelerate the efforts of UN Member States to meet existing international commitments and take concrete steps to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

² They participated in our information-sharing meetings, and while discussing the potential types of such a document, they suggested that it would be useful to have a white paper addressed to donors, policymakers, and other stakeholders that we can use to engage them in the discussion and longer-term planning.

The Summit will culminate in "an action-oriented outcome document called the Pact for the Future³ that will be negotiated, and endorsed by countries in the lead-up to and during the Summit in September 2024". The Pact for the Future will provide the basis for future international development commitments in the post-SDG process. By now, civil society has had two opportunities to provide input on this document: in December 2023 before the Zero Draft and in February 2024 after its publication. GFMD has provided two rounds of feedback.

You can find GFMD submissions from December 2023 (prior to the Zero Draft) [here](#) and from February 2024 (following the Zero Draft) [here](#).

In addition, Fondation Hirondelle, a GFMD member organisation, represented GFMD at two meetings in Geneva (in February and March 2024), and the Secretariat has been assisting GFMD Steering Committee members in attending the UN Civil Society Conference in Nairobi on May 9-10.

Throughout 2024, GFMD will continue to monitor regular news items on a daily basis, increasing the number of statements and events; seeking opportunities to engage with key stakeholders - UN system, diplomatic representatives, like-minded organisations; and encouraging members to do the same (draft letter, talking points).

- ***GFMD webinar: Mapping of funding opportunities for digital media in Latin America and the Caribbean***

In partnership with [SembraMedia](#), GFMD organised a [Fundraising Town Hall](#) in Spanish in July for **240** of its members, partners and other interested organisations. The main aims of this collaboration were to highlight the importance of participating in international forums and creating connections outside of the region, as well as to provide SembraMedia partners and beneficiaries in the region with the opportunity to join GFMD. The meeting provided valuable insights into income diversification strategies, effective grant acquisition techniques, and critical management practices for efficient resource utilisation. Furthermore, the event highlighted potential regional avenues for securing financial support in the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

See the full briefing from the event [here](#).

- ***GFMD's end-of-year Town Hall***

The meeting conducted by GFMD in December 2023 served as a platform for reviewing the year by engaging with our members in discussions on collaborative initiatives, with various members sharing their experiences of engaging with GFMD throughout 2023. The Secretariat actively listened to members, gaining insights into their activities and exploring potential avenues for collaboration in the upcoming year, 2024.

³ The document is organised around five chapters - sustainable development and financing for development, international peace and security, science, technology, innovation and digital cooperation, youth and future generations and transforming global governance.

You can watch the recording of the GFMD Town Hall at [this link](#).

Feedback received from the members:

- Members expressed interest in diverse topics for future Town Hall meetings, including in-country collaboration among GFMD members, capacity strengthening in advocacy, and the presentation of new knowledge in media development. They specifically requested continued exploration of case studies illustrating GFMD's assistance to organisations and media.
- In addition, participants expressed a keen interest in addressing journalist safety, exploring media sustainability, and small media protection strategies, with a focus on Global South perspectives.
- Members expressed interest in collaborating with GFMD for future webinars, proposing varied topics such as media and climate change, diversified business models for media organisations, safety challenges for journalists in Latin America, gender mainstreaming in media, combating disinformation, and ending impunity for crimes against journalists.

- *Policy and Learning meetings and other working groups*

GFMD organised more than **28** policy and learning meetings as part of its [digital policy and advocacy strategy](#) in 2023 to enhance the sector's ability to influence policy changes. These meetings were organised through GFMD-led initiatives such as the EU Media Advocacy Group and the DC-Sustainability, enabling the participation of external organisations and experts with wide expertise in digital policy matters (aligning with the goals of Workstream 1.3).

1.1.4. Coordination and facilitation of joint policy and advocacy initiatives related to coordination and information and knowledge sharing in crisis and emergency situations

- *Updated GFMD Perugia Declaration for Ukraine*

In 2023 GFMD [updated](#) its [Perugia Declaration for Ukraine](#), which was launched in 2022 in collaboration with the International Journalism Festival (IJF) in Perugia, and remains a platform for collective advocacy efforts across the sector. Along with the update, we examined how to strengthen its implementation. To date, the Declaration has been translated into **10** languages and signed by over **200** organisations. It served as a centrepiece for the community's advocacy efforts, helping GFMD to **mobilise further and better support Ukrainian journalists and media**.

In 2023, we focused on establishing clear protocols and support for fair content moderation, leading to the creation of the Tech and Journalism Crisis & Emergency Mechanism. We also initiated efforts to help Ukrainian media gain financial independence, resulting in the detailed [White Paper on long-term financial support](#) (described above). Additionally, we worked on building stronger ties between Ukrainian and European media markets by inviting new Ukrainian

GFMD members to speak at various MediaDev events.

1.2. Work stream 2: Supporting evidence-based and harmonised media development policy and effective media support through the International Media Policy and Advisory Centre (GFMD IMPACT)

1.2.1. Convening donor, practitioner and academia topical meetings, facilitating the convening of national and regional information sharing and consultation sessions and collection and curation of relevant resources

GFMD IMPACT's focus in 2023 was to organise cross-disciplinary and thematic stakeholder convenings as part of our larger advocacy effort to reform the media development landscape, while encouraging coordination among all stakeholders and ensuring that donors, in particular, act in ways that are genuinely responsive to local needs and sensitive to aid recipients.

These local and regional coordination and knowledge sharing meetings were designed to respond to specific issues and imminent needs of the community. The aim was to feed their experiences and their knowledge into discussions with national governments, policy-makers, donors and the international community and to inform their aid and development policies in the future. As one participant at the MENA regional meeting pointed out about the relationship between local partners/needs on the ground and international donors:

"The central question revolves around who decides these (refers to the discussion on needs assessment of the journalists on the ground, eg. safety equipment, humanitarian assistance and organisational support). Are they determined by the media institutions operating in the country, possessing a deeper understanding of its subjective and objective circumstances, or are they influenced by the agenda of donors? For instance, who determined that the top priority in Palestine should be, with all due respect to its importance, environmental issues? This is like telling someone on the brink of starvation, 'We want to hear you music.' While issues mandated by donors may be crucial to humanity, the unique circumstances in Palestine necessitate a prioritisation, specifically focusing on the sustainability of media institutions and the fortification of independent media."

The valuable insights and best practices derived from these meetings were captured in a number of policy briefs and white papers, including:

- [Transforming Media Development – Recommendations for Effective Funding and Collaboration](#)
- [Long-term financial support for Ukrainian media and journalists White Paper](#)

- [Philanthropy for Ukraine](#) (write-up of the session co-hosted with Philea, April 2023)
- [National Journalism Funds](#) (GFMD IMPACT [policy brief](#) and [policy paper](#), October 2023)
- [MEDIA VIABILITY: The global versus the local](#), June 2023
- [Public Consultation on Draft Principles for Relevant and Effective Support to Media and the Information Environment](#), September 2023
- [Media Freedom Cohort: key outcomes and findings](#), March 2023

At the same time, these insights gathered on the regional level fed back into global meetings and subsequently consolidated and disseminated across various high-level multi-stakeholder initiatives, including:

- The OECD DAC GovNet process to ["Renew the principles for effective media assistance"](#)
- [The Media Freedom Cohort of the Summit for Democracy \(S4D\)](#)
- The UNESCO's [International Programme for the Development of Communication \(IPDC\)](#)
- The US-UK chaired the Media Development Working Group within the [Media Freedom Coalition](#) in order to inform the MFC's efforts to support coordination among the diplomatic networks of its member states.

- **Media Viability in Crisis**

In January and February, GFMD facilitated three national consultations on media viability with local partners and members in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Namibia, in partnership with UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), Deutsche Welle Akademie (DWA) and local implementing partners (Maharat Foundation and Samir Kassir Foundation in Lebanon, Editors' Forum of Namibia and Namibia Media Trust and Al Khatt, Pamt2 and Pencils Consulting in Tunisia). The consultations gathered over **100 participants**.

You can read the full report on the Lebanon consultations [here](#), the Namibia consultations [here](#), the Tunisia consultations in English [here](#) and in French [here](#).

Lessons learned from organising these events:

- The national-level consultations facilitated by this project have provided valuable bottom-up insights into '**lived experiences**'. The process of working with local partners to determine the prioritisation of recommendations from recent research and policy papers for comprehensive national consultations underscores the effectiveness of this approach in guiding discussions on local media viability.
- These collaborative meetings play a crucial role in empowering local policy knowledge networks and expertise, thereby supporting media viability policies that are grounded in the local context and incorporate the perspectives of all stakeholders.
- The process of working with local partners to decide which recommendations from recent research and policy papers should be prioritised for in-depth national consultations

demonstrates that this format provides a clear framework from which consultations on local media viability can be led.

- Considering the implications of political context is also essential when developing locally driven approaches to media viability. In many instances, meaningful and supportive legislative reforms are unlikely to materialise in the near to medium term. Moreover, opportunities for diversified commercial revenue, online payment systems, or paid subscriptions are severely limited in certain cases. Therefore, media stakeholders need to be realistic about incorporating normative actions into their strategies for supporting local media viability, prior to designing and implementing them.
- That is not to say that long-term goals are not needed. Policymakers, both local and international, have a role to play in providing sustained support for media viability. Nonetheless, if locally driven consultations aim to define practical actions, they must also clarify how and when these actions can lead to tangible change.

- Side events at the Second Summit for Democracy

Drawing on discussions from the above mentioned national consultations, GFMD and its partners hosted two [sessions on the sidelines of the Second Summit for Democracy](#) in March in The Hague, bringing together recommendations on how to sustain viable, independent media and journalism. Both sessions informed the contribution of the Media Freedom Cohort at the Summit. At the first session, local partners from Tunisia, Lebanon, and Namibia presented recommendations from their national consultations to 81 international policymakers, donors, and other actors across the media development landscape who were then invited to give further examples of how media viability can best be supported in their country/region.

The second session drew on the contributions and perspectives of journalists and media development professionals working in Afghanistan, Ecuador, the Balkans, Egypt, Georgia, Kenya, Nepal and Ukraine on how best to support the viability of independent media.

You will find more information on the two sessions [here](#).

- Can journalism still be saved?

At World Press Freedom Day 2023 in New York, GFMD was invited to co-organise a [media viability](#) event, in partnership with DW Akademie and other leading media development organisations.

- “Philanthropy for Ukraine”

In April, GFMD was asked by [Philea](#) to co-organise the 13th edition of the “[Philanthropy for Ukraine](#)” session with a focus on journalism and help with inviting Ukrainian media experts⁴. The session focused on journalism in the context of the war. Four Ukrainian media experts shared their insights on the challenges and opportunities for international donors to support the media.

⁴ GFMD engaged 4 speakers for the event selected from GFMD's Ukraine coordination group. The speakers included; Ievgeniia Oliinyk, Program Director, Media Development Foundation (MDF); Andrey Boborykin, Executive Director, Ukrainska Pravda; Olga Myrovysh, CEO, Lviv Media Forum; Jakub Parusinski, Co-founder and Editor, The Fix Media and CFO, The Kyiv Independent.

Based on their experience of being a recipient of media support, speakers shared their ideas and advice on how philanthropic or foundation support for media and journalism could be improved. GFMD chaired the discussion and prepped the participants to make sure that session covered all areas of interest to the audience of over **40** representatives of European philanthropies and foundations.

The full briefing is available [here](#).

- GFMD's regional meeting in the Middle East and North Africa

In November, GFMD IMPACT co-organised a [regional event](#) for **80** of its members and partners in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), which took place in conjunction with the Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism conference (ARIJ) in Amman. The meeting focused on the effect of the Israel-Gaza war on journalists, media and media support organisations, coordination efforts and mechanisms the community can use to better support journalists and support organisations in the affected areas. Attendees exchanged information on the situation in Gaza and affected areas, as well as the most pressing needs and issues that journalists and media faced, including:

- Unprecedented challenges and violations, including killings, arrests, and physical abuse of journalists⁵ with instances of targeted attacks.
- Destruction of more than 30 media institution headquarters in Gaza.
- Lack of essential resources for journalists including salaries, equipment and working space, making it impossible to cover the ongoing crisis.
- Grave impact of the situation on the mental health of journalists facing trauma.
- Challenges in distributing and delivering humanitarian aid due to lengthy and tiring steps, including approval processes.

Participants also expressed frustration with the “lack of attention paid to the suffering in Gaza, the lack of clear identification and support for the victims, and the use of double standards in dealing with the situation in Gaza in comparison to other situations and conflicts, such as the one in Ukraine”.

“Faith in the principles of journalism was profoundly shaken by the events in Gaza. Despite the support extended by various organisations, for which we are grateful, to journalists in general and Palestinians in particular, it is disheartening to observe that certain press entities, particularly those from northern countries and foreign organisations that arrived in the Arab world purportedly to teach us knowledge about freedom of the press and ethical practices, have betrayed and abandoned these values.”

– MENA regional meeting participant

Participants also addressed the actions of social media blocking the voices from Palestine by mechanisms such as 'shadow banning' and the closure of accounts and labelling certain organisations as dangerous.

As a response to these identified needs, attendees suggested:

⁵ <https://cpj.org/mideast/israel-and-the-occupied-palestinian-territory/>

- Prioritising delivery of safety equipment, including vests, helmets, gas masks, trauma, and first aid kits.
- Offering support for psychosocial well-being of journalists and addressing the shortage of Arab-speaking mental health professionals.
- Combating disinformation on the conflict by supporting local fact-checkers working to verify information.
- Providing legal support and enhancing the legal framework and transparent actions to protect journalists.
- Coordination of community efforts including exchange of information, sharing who is providing assistance and in what way by using mechanisms such as the [shared sheet](#) prepared by GFMD at the request of members and partners mapping emergency needs, funding, and crisis response capabilities for media and journalists reporting on the Israel/Palestine conflict.
- Information sharing needs to be conducted with special care to avoid exposing journalists to danger.

"We have a network of relationships that enables us to safeguard the confidentiality of information about journalists in the field without subjecting them to accountability. We are ready to collaborate with you and extend this network" - GFMD member

Read the full report from the regional event [here](#).

- **GFMD IMPACT's stakeholder consultation on "National Journalism Funds"**

In July, GFMD hosted a wider stakeholder consultation on 'national funds for journalism' (NFJs) as a particular instrument for providing strategic, long-term financial support to independent public interest media and media sectors and ecosystems. The event gathered **71** participants, among them representatives of academic, research and Think Tank organisations, media outlets or journalism organisations, media development and journalism support non-profits and donor/funding organisations.

You can find more information about the event at this [link](#) and the full briefing [here](#).

Following the convening, GFMD IMPACT published two briefings designed to inform efforts to advocate for, design and build NFJs around the world:

- a [policy brief on national funds](#) initiated and funded specifically by governments, authored by Anya Schiffrin and Brigitte Alfter. This paper served as the foundation for an open consultation titled "State of the Field - National Journalism Funds" in July 2023.
- a broader [policy paper looking at all types of funds](#) and presenting the state of the field, drawing on the July 2023 consultation, and authored by Sameer Padania and Francesca Silvani of Macroscopic London.

In addition, GFMD IMPACT compiled

- a comprehensive and diverse collection of case studies and literature that illustrate the impact and effectiveness of National Journalism Funds in various settings. You can access the spreadsheet with examples of a variety of government-supported and

national journalism funds and literature on more than **50** national journalism funds in this ever-evolving field [here](#).

GFMD IMPACT and partners have presented the findings and recommendations of its consultation process at a number of fora in order to further inform processes and consultations underway globally (including at IAMCR's conference "New Frontiers for Media Viability: Building an Inclusive Agenda" in August). These interventions were used to inform the creation of planned national journalism funds globally, support further development of or advocacy for existing funds and encourage those considering national journalism funds – as part of a broader national policy portfolio towards providing strategic, long-term financial support to independent public interest media and media sectors and ecosystems – to consider the pros and cons of the various models and mechanisms that are outlined in the paper and which would be best suited to their context.

The policy papers have **increased the willingness of governments to engage with and ask for advice from GFMD**. The best example of this is that the Secretariat of Digital Policies and Social Communication within the Brazilian Presidency has reached out to GFMD in regard to the development of a new policy being drafted to support journalism in Brazil. GFMD has already provided some papers and information and will continue these avenues for dialogue during the *NetMundial +10 Conference and the G20 side events* in Sao Paulo, Brazil in April and UNESCO *World Press Freedom Day* in Santiago, Chile in May of this year.

- ***IAMCR Fishbowl Discussion "Finding a Common Language: Towards A Multi-Stakeholder Conceptual Framework for Media Viability"***

GFMD IMPACT joined DWA and other leading media development organisations to develop a common understanding and shared vision of media viability. At an [IAMCR \(International Association for Media and Communication Research\) pre-conference](#) in Lyon in July, GFMD Deputy Director, Tom Law, facilitated an exchange between **40** media development researchers and practitioners⁶ to discuss new frontiers for media viability, during which he pointed out that many of GFMD's members feel that current media viability efforts are often fragmented and set unrealistic expectations for individual outlets without adequately addressing the prevailing media ecosystem.

In line with this goal, DWA and IMS have started an initiative with other media development practitioners to work towards a **Media Viability Manifesto**⁷. The initiative seeks to foster conceptual clarity, strategic collaboration and a shared vision for the media development community. Currently, 10 international organisations are actively engaged in this joint endeavour, and the initiative is open for anyone to get involved.

Read the full briefing from the event [here](#).

⁶ Geographical representation of the participants: North America (4), Latin America (5), Africa (3), MENA (3), Asia (5), Europe (22)

⁷ <https://www.mediasupport.org/news/towards-a-media-viability-manifesto/>

The discussions in Lyon brought to light the need for a more practical and strategic approach to the Media Viability Manifesto. Following the event, organisations engaged in the initiative reconvened in autumn 2023 to work towards a joint strategy for transformation. The [Media Viability Manifesto](#) initiative is gaining momentum at a time when different stakeholders invested in media viability are looking to unite their efforts to confront a multifaceted crisis in journalism. The purpose is not merely to protect independent media outlets as businesses but, more importantly, to safeguard democracy on a global scale. Currently, ten international organisations are actively engaged in this joint endeavour, and the initiative is open for anyone to get involved.

1.2.2. Collaborating with funders/donors via the Help Desk mechanism to support them during their policy, strategy and programme design process

In 2023, the GFMD IMPACT team, together with the network and thematic expertise of our [regional coordinators](#), has responded to over **10 requests** including answering questions from donor organisations concerning certain countries or themes and helping to map out media development actors and projects in various contexts.

- *Media Viability Accelerator*

GFMD partnered with Internews to support the development of the [Media Viability Accelerator](#) (MVA), a project which key international media development organisations are working together to establish a data-based approach media viability⁸. GFMD provided advice on the MVA's platform design, including data gathering and processing, the product's potential utility for end users, as well as its governance structure. The MVA was [publicly announced](#) during the 2023 Summit for Democracy. Building on this phase, the [second phase](#) of our collaboration started in March 2023. This work included contributing to the development of a set of criteria for the prioritisation of countries, languages and types of organisations to target for MVA engagement during the pre-launch phase. GFMD has also contributed to the development of criteria for a diverse and engaged Shaper Cohort, encouraging the GFMD network to sign up for and participate through its various communication channels. GFMD plans to actively engage in the MVA Solutions Marketplace, scheduled for launch in the late fall, by offering comprehensive access to all sections of the Mediadev Fundraising Guide (normally exclusive to GFMD members) as well as curated fundraising workshops and one-on-one help clinics with industry experts.

In 2024 we will be making GFMD's [MediaDev fundraising guides](#) available to users of the USAID/Internews-led [Media Viability Accelerator](#) (MVA), which is being designed for media outlets (entities publishing fact-based news and information), and solution providers

⁸ Announced at the 2021 Summit for Democracy, the Media Viability Accelerator has been conceived and funded by USAID. In partnership with a range of media development actors, the MVA shall gather data about the contexts in which media organisations operate, their routes to financial viability, their internal and external actions and limitations. This data will be analysed, and results, developed into benchmarks, recommendations and conclusions, which will then be shared with media partners. The MVA, which is still in its early stages of development, is intended to inform the business strategies of media outlets seeking to build resilience and improve the viability or financial sustainability of their business models by "offering users easy-to-access, relevant, and highly contextualised information about the markets in which they operate, and their own performance."

(organisations — including funders, media development organisations, software providers, consultants, and researchers — that can increase media outlets' viability).

We plan to provide a series of workshops and clinics through the planned MVA Solutions Marketplace. It's a web-based platform from Internews that pools data from media organisations all over the world in order to enable independent newsrooms to discover what works for others and apply that learning to their own business. One of the innovations that we plan to provide through the MVA Solutions Marketplace is the establishment of **self-managed funding profiles for MVA organisations**. These profiles will be accessible to donors and funders, showcasing each organisation's unique identity, achievements, and needs. The profiles will include an overview of the organisation, detailed funding history, future funding goals, key projects, and achievements, with personalised branding, multimedia content, and storytelling elements. We will be sharing more information about this process in the coming year.

- PRIMED (Protecting Independent Media for Effective Development) Consortium workshop

In December, the GFMD IMPACT team participated in the PRIMED⁹ consortium¹⁰ workshop held in London. PRIMED, a three-year project spanning from 2020 to 2023, aimed to bolster public interest media in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone. Its primary goal was to contribute valuable insights to guide future media development policies and practices, with a strong focus of learning. The three-day workshop was designed to agree on the Programme's key implementation results and to formulate noteworthy policy and learning recommendations.

These key programme learnings are being shared with the broader community throughout 2024. To that end, GFMD co-organised three workshops, with a focus on [the five learning questions and themes](#) that have been integral to the programme since its inception. The main takeaways from those workshops will be presented in the next annual report.

- Meeting with the French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs

The French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs organised a series of consultations in 2023 to chart out its "Media and Development" roadmap. The aim was to identify France's priorities and objectives in this strategic area and to inform its aid and development policies moving forward. A number of GFMD members participated in the consultation process that was organised for that purpose.

Subsequently, GFMD has been actively exploring collaborative opportunities with the French government within the OECD-DAC process, building upon these consultations. The French representatives have been briefed about the process and they have committed to support it. In August, GFMD's Executive Director held a meeting with the Ministry's representative to follow up on the consultations, delving into discussions about their media development and

⁹ [Protecting Independent Media for Effective Development](#)

¹⁰ Consortium partners include BBC Media Action, Free Press Unlimited (FPU), International Media Support (IMS), Media Development Investment Fund (MDIF), and Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD).

international development plans and strategy. The primary focus was on identifying potential areas of collaboration and how GFMD can lend support. Following the meeting, it was agreed that the Ministry would provide feedback regarding the identification of further needs specific to certain countries or members, which will be instrumental in enhancing our understanding of the specific requirements and potential areas of cooperation.

Complementing the Help Desk, GFMD's **advisory services** included:

- leading the development of renewed principles and recommendations for effective media development and support for journalism in partnership with CIMA (see details in section 1.2.5.below);
- and giving advice, consultative support, inputs, making recommendations, connecting donors and stakeholders with pertinent experts and researchers and assisting in programme and project planning and delivering coordination services (examples include coordination of donors and recipients of support on the ground in the Ukraine, connecting researchers and experts in specific areas with organisations working on media assistance programme design, and providing advice to the European Commission officials).
 - For example, in November 2022, GFMD staff met with EU Commission (EC) officials at the European Journalism Symposium in Brussels to explore opportunities for aligning GFMD IMPACT's policy and learning activities with the Team Europe Democracy (TED) network. As a result, GFMD has made significant strides in **influencing the media and digital working group on behalf of the wider sector within the newly launched TED Network**, which was launched in June 2023. Furthermore, GFMD **advocated for reforming the Commission's rules regarding the formation of consortia for grants. Our efforts prompted the Commission to reconsider and update their rules, creating a more favourable environment for consortia formation.** During the meeting, GFMD also provided the EC with an update on the services available through the GFMD IMPACT help desk. Subsequently, the Commission utilised our help desk to identify potential partners in Congo and Central Africa, expanding their reach and engagement in these regions¹¹. Overall, GFMD's interventions and engagements have yielded significant outcomes, including our active participation in the TED network, the reform of consortia rules, increased partnership opportunities in Congo and Central Africa, and the Commission's recent call for proposals on critical thematic areas. These achievements reflect the positive impact and influence of GFMD in shaping policy and driving meaningful changes within the European Commission.

¹¹ In response to the feedback provided by GFMD, the Commission recently issued a request for proposals in two key thematic areas. These include (1) civil society and new technologies, and (2) capacity building. This call for proposals signifies the Commission's acknowledgment of the importance of these areas and their commitment to supporting initiatives in these domains.

1.2.4. Acting as a Hub for the media development and journalism support community (eg. conducting joint needs and impact assessments in recipient countries; developing dedicated pathways for local organisations to access decision-makers)

- ***Providing access for our members to global policy and advocacy forums***

GFMD has various avenues where members can present their work, initiatives, advocacy campaigns, or concerns to regional or global stakeholders¹². Faced with such a challenge, Vusumuzi Sifile, Executive Director of the Panos Institute Southern Africa reached out to GFMD Secretariat for assistance in July:

“Over the years, my organisation has been attempting, without success, to make presentations at the UN Human Rights Council and at the UN engagements.” - Vusumuzi Sifile, the Executive Director of Panos Institute Southern Africa, GFMD Steering Committee member and GFMD IMPACT regional coordinator for Sub-Saharan Africa

In practice, GFMD’s special consultative status¹³ at the United Nations Economic and Social Council ([ECOSOC](#)) means that, through GFMD, a member organisation can access ECOSOC, subsidiary bodies, and human rights mechanisms of the United Nations as well as special events organised by the President of the General Assembly. Special consultative status organisations such as GFMD can be accredited to attend conferences convened by the United Nations.

“There are different forms of participation and engagement with UN bodies and complexity of the application process depends on the type of engagement. We assist members through the process of submitting applications for side events and preparing and submitting written or oral statements. However we cannot guarantee the statement or session application will be accepted.” - Laura Becana Ball, GFMD Policy and Advocacy Manager

Laura Becana Ball, GFMD’s Policy and Advocacy manager, assisted PANOS in navigating these complex processes and utilising this advocacy avenue to highlight important issues of access to information in Zambia. With our support, in July 2023, PANOS succeeded to get permission to use the GFMD ECOSOC accreditation, which enabled them to organise a very effective side event to the 54th session of [the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva](#) on the status of the rights to access to information in Zambia.

On another occasion last summer, GFMD granted representatives from the International Media Support and MiCT accreditation to attend and observe the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a briefing by the High Commissioner on the Middle East.

¹² GFMD is part of the [Media Freedom Coalition Consultative Network](#), Bolstering Independent and Diverse Media Working group of the Media Freedom Cohort[#] and other partnerships. Since July 2018, GFMD holds a special consultative status[#] at the United Nations Economic and Social Council ([ECOSOC](#)). In June 2022, GFMD was granted observer status at [UNESCO](#). [GFMD is an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO \(consultative status\)](#).

¹³ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/320/16/PDF/N2332016.pdf?OpenElement>

1.2.5. Renewing and promoting the Principles for Effective Media Assistance through international and multilateral organisations and coalitions

Following efforts by GFMD and the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA), in November 2022, the [Network on Governance](#) (GovNet) within the [Development Assistance Committee](#) (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) formally adopted its work plan for 2023/24 that included advancing a new set of principles for effective media development. In June 2023, a group of OECD donors, including from Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, and the US, assumed responsibility for drafting the principles and put forward a [first draft](#) at the OECD DAC GovNet plenary meeting.

Nick Benequista, Senior Director of CIMA, discussed the principles process and the collaboration with GFMD during the GFMD Town Hall at [this link](#) (from 38 '50'). The **collaboration between the GFMD community and OECD serves as a testament to the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships in shaping global policies that promote press freedom, media independence, and sustainability.**

Between 1 December 2023 and 15 February 2024, the OECD GovNet Secretariat worked with partners (including GFMD) to hold [consultations on the text of the principles](#). GFMD and CIMA organised one such consultation in January 2024 for a group of **70** key stakeholders and submitted a [formal list of suggestions from GFMD members](#).

The GovNet working group reviewed all inputs received from the consultations and submitted the revised draft for successful approval at the OECD GovNet meeting in Paris on 6 March 2024. Following GovNet approval, on 8 March the OECD Secretariat, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, GFMD, and CIMA hosted a half-day meeting at the OECD offices in Paris to deepen the conversation about fostering DAC adoption of the principles – and to advance the discussion towards an agenda for their implementation. The principles were adopted by the DAC on 22 March 2024.

You can find more background about the OECD process to renew the principles on effective support to media and the information environment at [this link](#).

1.2.6 Mid-term evaluation and recommendations of GFMD IMPACT

In 2023, the GFMD IMPACT team engaged two external evaluators to conduct a mid-term assessment of the IMPACT programme. You can read the conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation report submitted in October 2023 [here](#) and our strategy going forward and responding to its recommendations [here](#). The report includes testimonials and insights provided by interviewed stakeholders on how they use GFMD IMPACT knowledge and resources in their work, as well as how they see GFMD IMPACT growing and progressing.

Key findings from GFMD IMPACT mid-term evaluation:

- By actively collaborating with [key international organisations](#), organising [strategic convenings](#), and producing innovative [thought leadership](#), GFMD IMPACT has improved the media development sector's knowledge about effective, contextual, and forward-looking models for media development.
- GFMD IMPACT's role as a convener and its carefully curated resources have become pivotal in facilitating the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches within the MediaDev community. These gatherings have not only fostered new relationships but have also strengthened support networks within our sector.

"This is an extremely important and helpful project. We are developing recommendations for the UK government to introduce new funding for local public interest journalism, and it's very useful to have such an overview of the approach in other countries." - Jonathan Heawood, Executive Director, Public Interest News Foundation (on GFMD IMPACT)

... the working group meeting was a fantastic way to enter the community. I met quite a few fantastic peers and funders. Grateful to GFMD for convening such gatherings! (GFMD Testimonial).

- By advising intergovernmental organisations and major donors involved in media assistance, GFMD IMPACT emerged as a trusted advisor in [guiding international media assistance policy](#) in a more coherent and strategic direction and ensuring that media development policy is being discussed at the highest levels of development assistance.
- GFMD IMPACT's inputs have been sought after in various high-profile papers, policies, and events, such as around the OECD consultations on renewing the MediaDev Principles (mentioned above). Another notable example of this is GFMD's collaboration with Internews to contribute to the *United for News* handbook, aiming to raise women's voices in the media. In another, the GFMD Secretariat engaged the Media Diversity Institute (MDI) to provide insights on how donors can contribute to gender equality in local independent media and the importance of an intersectional approach that encompasses various aspects like race, class, disability, sexuality, age, and nationality, in addition to gender.
- GFMD IMPACT's wide-reaching network has also been instrumental in garnering consultative status and membership invitations from other influential networks, highlighting its growing reputation as a trusted advisor and facilitator in policy processes and joint initiatives.

1.3. Work stream 3: Supporting digital policy development

GFMD's [digital policy](#) has been focused on [peer-led, evidence-based policy development through research and networking activities](#) as well as a combination of bespoke events and participation in external forums that seek to drive the conversation on political and structural constraints to media sustainability and freedom. These include two international digital media policy forums designed to help shape future regulation as well as press freedom rights, engaging with the European Union and the United Nations' Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

1.3.1. Launching the Tech and Journalism Emergency and Crisis Joint Industry Mechanism (T&JM)

Prompted by GFMD's coordination efforts in emergency and crisis situations (especially in Ukraine) and engagement with technology platforms, we have made significant progress with the structuring and strategic planning of the [Tech & Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism](#) (T&JM)¹⁴, which led to the official launch of the T&JM pilot in Krakow in November 2023, in collaboration with the Lviv Media Forum. The [platform to submit cases](#) opened the same day of the launch, and we received 17 submissions by the end of 2023.

You can find details on how to use the mechanism and how it works [here](#).

You can find more details about the launch of the [Tech and Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism \(T&JM\)](#) in Ukraine [here](#).

According to our members, one of the most pressing issues they and media around the world face, particularly in non-Anglophone or smaller markets, is account-related issues on major technology platforms, such as:

- Account-related issues, including removals, restrictions, denial of service suspension, and blocking, constitute a significant portion at 41.2.% of the total cases received.
- Mislabeling accounts for 5.9% of the received cases, indicating a comparatively lower frequency.
- This is substantially less than the 47% of cases related to issues such as monetisation and reduced distribution.

¹⁴ For background: Targeting small and medium-sized media, community, and investigative journalism organisations and their professional communities, this mechanism serves as an escalation channel to engage with tech platforms in order to address and resolve account-related incidents and moderation issues. It also allows for advocacy for systematic change in the platforms' internal policies and crisis protocols.

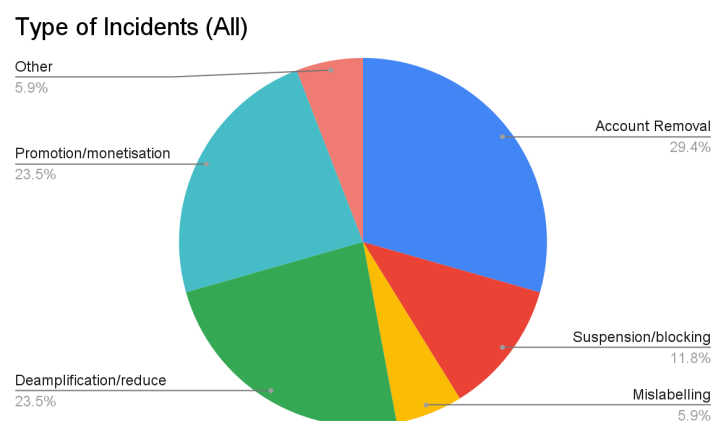


Chart representing issues faced by members and media organisations globally

To address these issues more strategically through the T&JM, we developed the [Terms of Reference](#), which serve as a foundational guide for the initiative, outlining our objectives, expected outcomes, scope, methodologies, and the involvement of various stakeholders, ensuring the initiative's clear and effective path forward.

- T&JM international partnerships

The [T&JM Ukraine Coalition](#), coordinated by the Lviv Media Forum, plays a pivotal role in the operational framework of the T&JM. This coalition is instrumental in identifying and assessing media entities that could benefit from the escalation channel, ensuring that the process aligns with the needs and challenges specific to the Ukrainian media landscape.

As partners and part of the [T&JM Advisory Group](#), Ukrainian and international experts are being consulted and assisted with their knowledge and experience to ensure that T&JM's approaches are grounded in best practices and respond effectively to the dynamic challenges in the digital media landscape.

Voluntary partnerships and communication channels to address systemic content moderation issues and the effective function of the mechanism have been established with Meta, and are in the process of being developed further with TikTok.

1.3.2. Participating in international digital media policy forums and contributing to shaping international, regional and national policy.

- Continued engagement with the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

As secretariat of the Dynamic Coalition on the Sustainability of Journalism and News Media (DC-Sustainability), GFMD has participated in the coordination meetings for all Dynamic

Coalitions under the Internet Governance Forum. In January 2023, GFMD submitted the [2022 DC-Sustainability Activity Report](#), outlining the achievements of 2022 and outlining the plan for the year 2023.

During the 12th edition of RightsCon, DC-Sustainability organised the session “Assessing regulatory interventions into the platform-press relationship”. The session discussed learnings from Australia, Indonesia, India, Brazil, Canada, the US and elsewhere in how to craft these new media-tech laws in ways that ensure independent quality journalism while avoiding opening the door to undue government or platform influence or further entrenching dominant players and other unintended negative consequences. It also discussed alternatives to direct taxation and subsidies, such as through industry actions, changes to the advertising economy, and more. Additionally, the DC-Sustainability hosted a Happy Hour event for existing and potential new members, which successfully contributed to enlarging the membership and enabled a space for current members to network and meet two of the co-coordinators in person.

During the 2023 Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in October, DC-Sustainability organised a session on [Data, Access & Transparency: A Trifecta for Sustainable News](#) (based on the agreement and interest showcased by its members during the first convening in January 2023). The goal of the session was to generate insights and recommendations that support the sustainability and growth of journalism and news media organisations amidst evolving regulations, as well as to launch the [2023 DC-Sustainability Report](#).

You can view the session [here](#) and read the briefing [here](#).

Additionally, the DC-Sustainability engaged with media regulators (Ofcom and UK Competition and Markets Authority) to organise a learning call in July. The session brought together **28** participants from different organisations, such as Associação de Jornalismo Digital (AJOR), Tech for Peace (T4P), Media Council of Malawi, Global Media Registry, DW Academy, CIMA and InternetLab). The aim was to deliver an introductory learning exchange between international civil society stakeholders and media regulators on the topic of media plurality and sustainability. It took place at a time when the research community is a key agent in bringing evidence-led contributions to policy debates on media plurality and sustainability issues, and when several regulators, Ofcom among them, are actively developing potential policy recommendations to address relevant areas of concern and harm.

- GFMD’s leadership of the EU Media Advocacy WG

GFMD has continued playing a key role in the organisation and facilitation of meetings for the EU Media Advocacy group (henceforth referred to as the Group) to address the different advocacy opportunities related to media in the EU, with a primary focus on the development of the proposed regulation on the [European Media Freedom Act - EMFA](#)¹⁵. Throughout 2023, **23** meetings brought together **110** participants, including representatives of key media and digital

¹⁵ EMFA was launched in September 2022 and the advocacy group coordinated the drafting and [publication of a joint statement](#) welcoming the proposal as soon as this was announced by the EU Commission.

rights organisations (e.g Article 19, International Press Institute, European Broadcasting Union, EDRI, European Partnership for Democracy).

You can listen to Renate Schroeder, Director of the European Federation of Journalists, talk about the GFMD led EU Media Advocacy group during our December Town Hall at [this link](#) (from 26 '30).

Key engagements of the EU Media Advocacy WG in 2023:

- GFMD coordinated the chapter on “Media and Journalism” for the [Joint Civil Society and Democracy Organisations’ Priorities for the Defence of Democracy Package](#) which incorporated contributions from 46 European organisations for the European Commission. This report provides civil society-based recommendations for tackling disinformation, protecting the online public sphere and the role of foreign interference.
- The Group has provided a forum for different organisations with different areas of expertise to follow thoroughly the developments of the [European Media Freedom Act](#), a regulation aimed at harmonising the media sector in Europe.
- GFMD has stressed the importance of protecting both media and journalists online, not only in relation to content or accounts, but also in protection against surveillance. The multilayered debate around the potential privileges of media service providers on online platforms that emerged during the making of the Digital Services Act, was revived once more in response to Article 17 of the EMFA.
- GFMD coordinated the production of the [EMFA brochure with policy recommendations](#) together with **11** other organisations from the Group.
- GFMD coordinated the organisation of six meetings with key representatives from the European Council, European Commission and European Parliament:
 - In September, the “Briefing Breakfast on the European Media Freedom Act, a discussion in the European Parliament, moderated by Professor Tarlach McGonagle
 - During trilogue negotiations, the GFMD and the European Federation of Journalists organised **five** meetings on behalf of the Group with the European Commission (**one** led by GFMD), European Parliament (**three** led by EFJ) and the Spanish Permanent Representation (**one** led by GFMD), who were leading the negotiations on behalf of the Council.
- A total of **five** letters were coordinated through the Group on:
 - Article 4 (3), [open letter supported by 80 organisations](#), and two other communications to the three institutions, the final one with [recommendations and amendments](#) for the negotiations.
 - Article 5 (1), [joint letter on strengthening public service media](#)
 - Article 24 (1), [public letter concerning state advertising](#)

Key takeaways:

- **Unified effort despite diverse views:** Despite differing positions within the EU Media Advocacy Group, there was successful collaboration to strengthen the EMFA proposal. Key areas of focus included the protection of journalists, media transparency, independence, and

regulation of state advertising.

- **Focused efforts on EMFA development:** The group's efforts were primarily centred on shaping and enhancing the EMFA to ensure media protection, transparency, and independence within the European Union. This included pivotal discussions and recommendations on specific EMFA articles, especially concerning the protection of journalists and the regulation of state advertising.
- **Successful advocacy and impact:** The group's advocacy led to significant outcomes, including the successful removal of a national security exemption under Article 4 of the EMFA regarding the use of spyware. Overall, **GFMD's coordination in the EU Media Advocacy group played a crucial role in shaping the European Media Freedom Act**, demonstrating effective collaboration among diverse stakeholders in the media and digital rights sectors.

Key Engagements and Takeaways from GFMD's Leadership of the EU Media Advocacy Group

- ***Engagement with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM)***

GFMD was asked to provide expertise during the RFoM event “[Shaping the Future: Media Freedom and Security in a Changing World](#)” in November. Before the event, different consultations were organised with experts to provide insights into the different projects of the RFoM. Together with other 12 experts, GFMD's Advocacy and Policy Manager Laura Becana Ball, participated in a workshop discussing OSCE's Strategy Paper to Put a Spotlight on Artificial Intelligence and Freedom of Expression (#SAIFE), aimed to explore ways for the RFoM to improve their contribution to creating and sustaining a healthy online information ecosystem.

1.3.3. Facilitating GFMD community's learning on the subject of digital and internet governance and empowering participation in international policy discussions

- ***GFMD joined Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and 15 partners to launch the Paris Charter on AI and Journalism***

In November, GFMD Executive Director, Mira Milosevic, attended the 2023 [Paris Peace Forum](#) and participated at the launch event of the [Paris Charter on AI and Journalism](#). The charter, written by a Commission that Milosevic was a member of, the first of its kind, defines ethics and principles that journalists, newsrooms and media outlets around the world will be able to appropriate and apply in their work with artificial intelligence. It was created by a commission initiated by RSF and chaired by journalist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Ressa.



Members of the Commission that wrote the Charter, chaired by Maria Ressa, the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize in 2021

You can watch the recording of the event [here](#) and read a full briefing about the initiative [here](#) and [here](#).

- **GFMD partnered on a new initiative: The Journalism Tech Alliance**

The initiative is dedicated to tackling the pressing challenges encountered by the investigative journalism industry, which stem from the substantial expenses and constraints associated with cloud computing (eg. limited computing capacity, high costs of cloud computing and/or insufficient expertise in working with very large datasets or AI-powered tools for investigative media).

GFMD joined a consortium together with The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), who is the lead partner, and Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN), ICIJ, the Pulitzer Centre, and some others. Our goal is to work together to find ways of making data storage and processing capacity more accessible and affordable for investigative and data newsrooms. We already secured funding from the McGovern Foundation and are at the moment gathering insights (via this [survey](#)) into the requirements of various newsrooms and journalism organisations regarding data science, storage, and data processing. It also explores interest in joining an alliance to enhance access and reduce costs related to computational and cloud services.

Going forward, the project will also conduct training, lead the development of training material and ethical guidelines, develop technology tools and make them available to other investigative media in Europe.

1.3.4. Deepening working relationships with digital platforms to facilitate effective day-to-day cooperation between platforms, media outlets and journalists

GFMD continued its engagement with networks such as the Christchurch Call Advisory Network (CCAN) and Global Network initiative, and their discussions around the UNESCO [Guidelines for Regulating Digital Platforms](#), as well as other policy discussions about content regulation developments in Brazil, the internet restrictions in Pakistan or the workshops organised around the implementation of risk assessments in the Digital Services Act.

In May, GFMD Executive Director was invited to the [State Media Symposium](#) hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's Partnership for Countering Influence Operations in Washington, in partnership with Meta. This interactive event examined the role of state media in the information environment, as well as policy possibilities. Its goal was to promote a nuanced and contextualised understanding of state media from various perspectives, including geography and identity. The discussions presented best practices for state media companies while granting the space for specialists to share their expertise on the current state media debate.

The list of participants and shared resources can be found [here](#).

- Engagement with Meta

In January, Meta invited key GFMD members to provide feedback on how their platforms can best warn and support users who they believe are targets of influence operations on their platforms. As Meta's team wanted to review their current approach and gather the perspective of journalists and media organisations, they asked for feedback members of the GFMD network, including the Executive Director of the Media Foundation for West Africa, the Deputy Director of the Global Investigative Journalism Network and the Director General of the Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism.

Meta has provided GFMD with an extensive [list of resources](#), designed to address various challenges related to content moderation and safety. These resources encompass not only insightful guidelines but also support systems, prominently featuring Meta's Oversight Board, with its role in overseeing content-related decisions. GFMD continued collaborating with Meta to update the list of trusted and independent media in Ukraine and the region and ensure these media undergo the process to obtain XCheck status. Internally, Meta has already embarked on the necessary steps to facilitate this expansion. Meta's XCheck process is a verification system that signals a user's legitimacy to prevent unjust penalties. This proactive measure protects users, especially those prone to false reports or coordinated attacks.

In December, in response to the war in the Gaza Strip, GFMD curated a list of trusted and independent media in Palestine and the broader MENA Region, by crowd-sourcing different media and journalism organisations with the assistance of GFMD members and partners working in the affected region.

- ***Meeting with YouTube***

In July, GFMD Executive Director and Advocacy and Policy Manager met with Youtube's Public Relations and Partnership department to discuss the ongoing issues experienced by Ukrainian media outlets and those in exile. The meeting was a follow-up to the meeting with the European Commission's Vice President, Vera Jourova's cabinet (we reported on this in the previous report) earlier last year. Whereas YouTube expressed their resistance to having whitelists for selected users or exempting media from the prohibition to monetise violent content (even if newsworthy), they offered support in addressing cases of false flagging copyright infringement and providing access to programs related to news, that help news organisations and other users to meet their goals on YouTube (i.e reaching their audience target). As a result of the meeting, GFMD managed to secure two contact points with YouTube, one to escalate cases of issues experienced in the platform and a second one to access information on existing tools and information related to the resolution of issues.

- ***Engagement with TikTok***

GFMD Executive Director and Policy and Advocacy Manager met with TikTok's Public Policy and Government Relations Manager in December to explore potential collaboration in addressing TikTok cases received through the T&JM and to exchange valuable resources for users encountering challenges on the platform. As a notable outcome of our engagement with tech platforms, TikTok further welcomed GFMD to share media lists from Ukraine and the surrounding region, seeking insights on the electoral landscape in Ukraine. Additionally, TikTok expressed its readiness to receive and address cases related to threats and attacks against journalists brought to their attention.

1.3.5. GFMD digital policy resource centre

GFMD works to gather knowledge and share relevant resources and initiatives with its partners and members to create an evidence-based body of knowledge to improve its actions. Its objectives include local and global approaches to enhance the ability of the membership and the GFMD Secretariat to influence policy making.

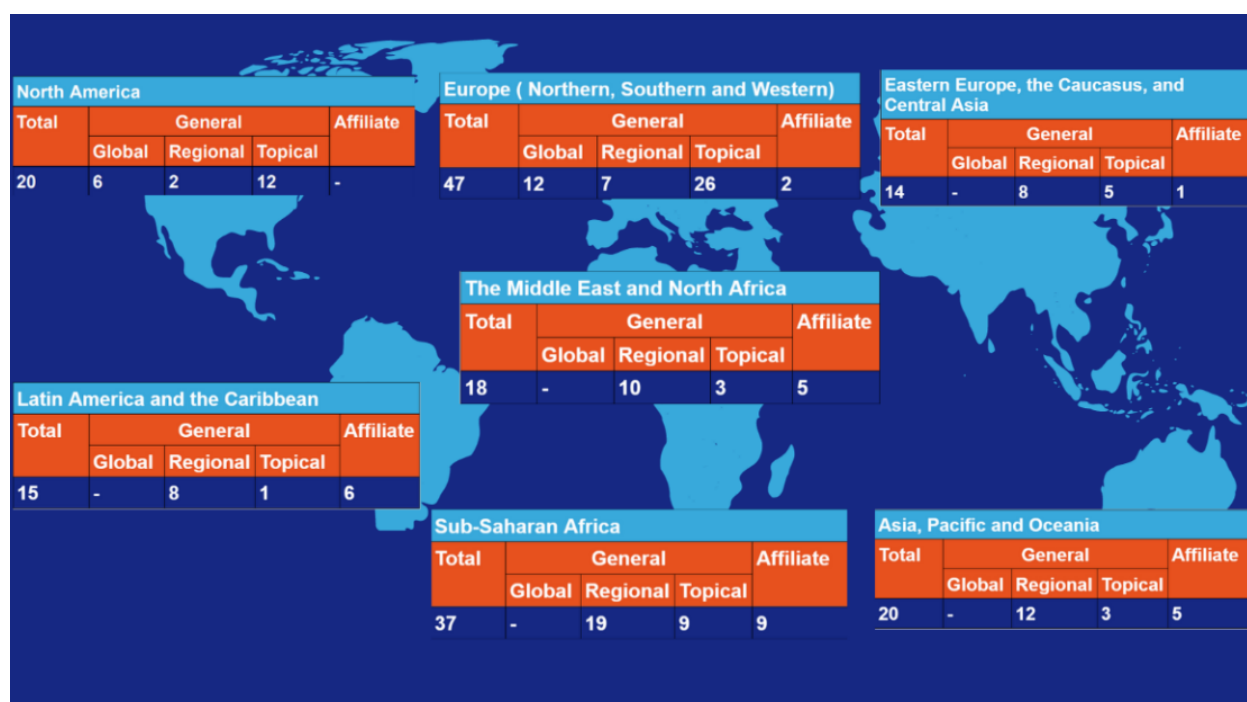
Our [Policy & Advocacy Centre](#) offers information about the different initiatives led by GFMD (eg. our key initiatives including [The Tech and Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism](#), the [DC-Sustainability](#), and the [EU Media Advocacy WG](#) - and their dedicated resources) as well as collecting reports, toolkits, events, and other relevant resources, such as: [Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms](#) (UNESCO 2023), [2023 Annual Report of the DC-Sustainability](#), [Briefing Breakfast on the European Media Freedom Act](#) and [SDG16 Data Initiative Report and Launch](#). Throughout 2023, we kept updating these resources - now totalling around **396** - and restructuring the centre to make it more easily navigable.

1.4. Work stream 4: Supporting media support and public-interest journalism organisations by improving and expanding GFMD member and partner services and resources

1.4.1. Proactively encouraging GFMD membership from South

In 2023¹⁶ 42 **new members** (30 general and 12 affiliate members) joined our community bringing the total to **171 members** from **76 countries worldwide**.

- [10 new members](#) (8 general and 2 affiliate) joined in May 2023
- [32 new members](#) (22 general and 11 affiliate) joined in October 2023



Regional representation of GFMD's member organisations in December 2023

The regional representation of GFMD's network is now better in line with our overall strategy to amplify voices and perspectives from less developed countries at the regional and local level.

¹⁶ In January 2024, a further 17 new members (9 general and 8 affiliate members) joined our community bringing the total number of members to 188 members from 78 countries worldwide up to April 2024.

This strengthens their involvement and participation in the co-creation of the overall media development and journalism support policy so they receive appropriate consideration.

In our efforts to deepen engagements with our members in the South, GFMD co-organised two events specifically aimed at members from Latin America and the Caribbean (see information about the webinar with SembraMedia in [Work Stream 2](#)) and francophone speaking Africa. Regarding the latter, GFMD together with Fondation Hironnelle and Samsa Africa co-hosted a webinar on developing awareness-raising and training modules on the [fight against ordinary sexism, abuse of power and sexual harassment in the media](#) in October, bringing together 24 participants, with 11 coming from Africa (Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western).

1.4.2. Ensuring services more directly align with members' needs and conducting regular member surveys to better understand and respond to members' needs

- ***GFMD's report on funding in the media development sector***

In September, GFMD launched its report "Transforming Media Development: Recommendations for Effective Funding and Collaboration". This study is based on a body of desk research as well as a series of online interviews with GFMD members from Eastern Europe, Asia and South America, and documents the challenges that our members face on a daily basis in their attempts to raise funds and live up to donor expectations on reporting and accountability.

Please find the full report [here](#).

The report, authored by Michael Randall, a fundraising consultant and the creator of the Mediadev Fundraising Guide, offers valuable insights and best-practice recommendations for donors seeking to enhance industry standards and better meet the needs of their grantees. The report's findings complement GFMD's current efforts to update [media development principles](#), which are expected to be adopted by OECD's Development Assistance Committee in 2024.

- ***GFMD Fundraising workshop at the 2023 Global Investigative Journalism Conference (GIJC)***

In September, Michael Randall, GFMD expert and author of the Mediadev Fundraising Guide, was invited to speak at two [sessions on sustainability](#) during the Global Investigative Journalism Conference (GIJC) in Gothenburg. The sessions gathered 60 participants and aimed at sharing strategies and tools available to help investigative journalism outlets find donors with the financial capacity and interest to support their work. As a direct result of the presentations, three media outlets reached out directly to GFMD to enquire about fundraising capacity building and discuss GFMD membership following the GIJC sessions.

The video of the session on Fundraising: Prospecting is available [here](#) and on the session How to craft a funding proposal [here](#).

- ***GFMD's fundraising clinic at the Arab Reporters Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) Forum***

GFMD held a fundraising workshop and piloted a series of **15** one-on-one clinics at the [Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism \(ARIJ\)](#) annual Forum in December 2023. Fundraising Guide author Michael Randall and media development consultant Aida Alkaisy held an in-person workshop at the Forum for **30** investigative journalists and media outlets from the MENA region and Sudan, focusing on how to write a successful fundraising proposal. In addition, **15** participants signed up to the help clinics and were encouraged to share a previously unsuccessful funding proposal with Randall in order to receive insights and feedback on how to improve future proposals.

1.4.4. MediaDev Fundraising Guides and Resource Centre

The [MediaDev Fundraising Guide and Resource Centre](#) has now been translated into [Spanish](#), [French](#), [Ukrainian](#), [Russian](#)¹⁷, [Arabic](#) and [Romanian](#).

In the course of 2024 the fundraising guides will be made available on the USAID/Internews-led [Media Viability Accelerator](#) (MVA) platform. Through a proposed MVA Solutions Marketplace, GFMD intends to create a platform for MVA organisations to add self-managed funding profiles, as well as provide its users with online training modules, workshops, one-on-one clinics, and webinars, and the latest updates on funding opportunities.

- ***Regularly publicising funding opportunities***

GFMD continues to provide timely information on funding opportunities on a weekly basis. Several members and partners have shared that they regularly visit the website when researching the newest available funding. The global audience is expected to grow in the coming year when the Fundraising Guide and Resource Centre are added to the MVA marketplace. **157** funding opportunities were posted in 2023 and the [Find Funding](#) section continues to be one of the most visited sections of the GFMD website.

1.4.5. Fostering a more vibrant online community for purpose of knowledge sharing - GFMD communications channels

- ***GFMD in the news***

- January 2023: GFMD Advocacy and Policy Manager in an interview with Media Diversity Institute on the European Media Freedom Act: [The European Media Freedom Act: An Interview with Laura Becana Ball - Media Diversity Institute \(media-diversity.org\)](#)
- April 2023: A session hosted by Philanthropy Europe Association and Global Forum for Media Development on : "Philanthropy for Ukraine" with a focus on journalism in the context of the war. [Philanthropy for Ukraine – Supporting journalism in conflict – JFF \(journalismfundersforum.com\)](#)

¹⁷ Of the 102 users of the Russian Guide over half were using Russian language settings, with only 12 of these users based in Russia, reflecting what we can assume is a considerable number of in-exile Russian users as well as the location of several Russian speaking communities in Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine, and Russian-speakers in Armenia and Belarus.

- June 2023: GFMD Executive Director in interview with Lina Kushch, First Secretary of the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (NUJU): [The revival of front-line newspapers would be impossible without partners' support." Lina Kushch](#)
- July 2023 - [Mapa de oportunidades para medios digitales – SembraMedia y GFMD](#) - In alliance with the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD), SembraMedia held a virtual meeting on mapping of financing opportunities at a global level.
- October 2023 - [NUJU signed a document calling for long-term support of Ukrainian media and journalists](#) - The National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (NUJU) is among the signatories of the GFMD's white paper on [Long-Term Financial Support For Ukrainian Media And Journalists](#)
- November 2023 - [Tech and Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism](#) - Lviv Media Forum briefing about the mechanism
- November 2023 - [UNESCO and media freedom organizations call for continued support to Afghan media and journalists](#) - GFMD participated in a meeting in Brussels that brought together the civil society organisations working to support the struggling Afghan media sector and promote the safety of journalists
- December 2023 - [GFMD organises platform to support independent media \[Ukraine\] | International Journalists' Network](#) article about the Tech and Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism (T&JM) launched by Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) and Lviv Media Forum.

- **Newsletters and mailing lists**

We published **10 issues of the MediaDev Insider** newsletter, covering topics such as how to engage with the Media Freedom Cohort of the of the second Summit for Democracy, Media Freedom Cohort: key outcomes and findings, Providing psychological support for Ukrainian journalists, Tech & Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism, Media viability: the global vs the local. National Journalism Funds, a policy brief on national funds titled "State of the Field - National Journalism Funds"; a policy paper looking at all types of funds and presenting the state of the field; Data-driven journalism: Survey on data processing and cloud services for newsrooms; and Public Consultation on Draft Principles for Relevant and Effective Support to Media and the Information Environment. The MediaDev newsletter had an average open rate of **31.4%** and an average click rate of 4.8%.

Additionally, **10 issues of the Bottom Line** newsletter were released focusing on the launch of the Arabic Fundraising Guide and our latest fundraising town hall in collaboration with SembraMedia; the launch of the report "Transforming Media Development - recommendations for effecting funding and collaboration"; Tips and advice on mapping donors; Emergency funding opportunities and Mapping funding for the MENA region. The Bottom Line newsletter had an average open rate of 38.75% (10.5% higher than during the last reporting period) and an average click rate of 9.7%.

- **Social media accounts**

We noted significant increases in the interaction with various GFMD social media accounts:

- GFMD's [LinkedIn account](#) saw a remarkable increase in its followers from **6.9K** in 2022 to **13K** in 2023, making it the most popular social media platform for the organisation last year. The posts were shared **1,059** times by the audience. GFMD also launched a [newsletter on LinkedIn](#) last year, which gained a lot of popularity and interest among its audience, and now boasts **8.2K** subscribers.
- [GFMD's X \(previously known as Twitter\) account](#) has been ranked second among all the social media channels used by GFMD to communicate with its audience. However, GFMD has gradually decreased its presence on X since the engagement with the audience noticeably changed after X's changes in policies and general approach. As of the end of December 2023, the page had **9.2K** followers, and tweets gained **74.3K** impressions.
- [GFMD's Facebook account](#) is used mostly for sharing key news and updates with our members and partners in the regions where Facebook is the main social media network (Middle East and North Africa; Asia, Pacific and Oceania; Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia). The page was visited **4.4K** times and gained **469** new followers (**6.1K** followers in general).
- [GFMD YouTube channel](#) features playlists of webinars and sessions from important events related to media development. These videos have received **6.8K** impressions and have been viewed for a total of **27.9** hours. The channel also gained **25** new subscribers.
- [GFMD website](#) had a successful performance in 2023, attracting **54K** visitors with web pages viewed **121K** times and making **316K** impressions. The most popular pages remain Funding (**13K** views), Careers (**9K** views) and News (**7.9K** views). The website also received **1.8K** referrals from reputable sources such as the Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN), UNESCO, DW Akademie and the Media Development Investment Fund (MDIF). A notable achievement was that **53%** of the visitors came to the website through organic search, indicating that the search engine optimisation (SEO) strategy implemented by the GFMD team was effective.

2. Appendix: Quotes and testimonials

GFMD media coordination efforts in times of crises and emergencies

- ★ *"We're grateful to GFMD for its efficient coordination and information-sharing efforts because that is what we need right now – uniting donors for coordinated support and spreading information about these opportunities to a wider media community" - **President of the National Union of Journalists in Ukraine (NUJU) Sergiy Tomilenko.***
- ★ *"This [Ukraine] is the first international crisis where I've seen such careful information-sharing, thanks to GFMD. I realise this is the major crisis right now, but I'd love to see this effort replicated in other countries/regions where many of us are working, sometimes overlapping and other times leaving gaps" - **GFMD Testimonial***
- ★ *"We are seeing the lessons from Ukraine in Sudan. Better coordination and a general learning that comes out clearly about the longer-term approach" - **GFMD member***
- ★ *"Sudan [meetings] started in April/May, and we learned that connections matter a great deal. UN agencies had to evacuate so it was hard to see who was still there and doing what. GFMD's work in Ukraine became a model for how to coordinate an emergency" - **Donor***

Tech and Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism (T&JM): Launch and case escalation

- ★ *"Amidst the complex landscape of today's media environment, the launch of the Tech and Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism (T&JM) stands as a beacon of resilience. In times of war, the synergy between technology and journalism becomes pivotal, and this initiative serves as a vital lifeline for the media in Ukraine. By bolstering our ability to navigate challenges, it not only safeguards the integrity of information but fortifies the very essence of a free press—a cornerstone in the face of adversity. I am honoured to be part of this transformative endeavour, recognizing its profound importance in preserving the truth" - **Alyona Nevmerzhytska, CEO of Hromadske.***
- ★ *"Even before Russia's full-scale invasion, the situation with tech platforms was not easy for Ukraine's publishers and journalists, both of local and national scale. But since February 24, it has become exponentially more difficult. The onslaught of Russian disinformation that Ukrainian users now face is overwhelming. Our independent media outlets continue to have their accounts arbitrarily blocked or suspended. Their content*

dealing with the war is unjustly removed or downgraded. I really hope that the Tech & Journalism Crisis and Emergency Mechanism will provide an essential escalation channel to address these critical issues, especially at the local level. We urge tech companies to engage sincerely with this initiative for the sake of Ukraine's free press and democracy" - **Andrey Boborykin, Executive Director of Ukrainska Pravda and Lead Expert of the Media Development Foundation.**

- ★ "As Ukraine fights for its freedom by resisting Russian armed invasion followed by the information warfare, establishing a vital link with its audience is imperative for Ukrainian media, especially through social networks. We have confidence that T&JM will help in maintaining and fortifying this connection. It also aims to inspire media outlets to delve more profoundly into the community guidelines of social platforms, and take a more responsible approach to compliance" - **Olga Myrovych, Head of Lviv Media Forum**

Internet governance and digital policy

- ★ "The [EU Media Advocacy] Group brings together organisations from different fields and backgrounds and allows them to explore common positions. Where organisations disagree, the Group provides a safe space to discuss. This is very valuable. The Group contributes to establishing trust relationships between different stakeholders. More specifically, the Group simplifies the work on joint advocacy actions, i.e. the drafting of joint letters, organisation of joint events or requesting of joint meetings" - **EU Media Advocacy Working Group Participant**
- ★ "Thanks to the [EU Media Advocacy Working] Group, a broad scope of organisations was able to attend several meetings with high-level representatives of EU institutions during the EMFA negotiations. The Group was also extremely helpful when drafting open letters and collecting signatures for them"- **EU Media Advocacy Working Group Participant**
- ★ "[Collaboration through the EU Media Advocacy Group has proved beneficial in] arranging large sessions such as the EMFA breakfast in the European Parliament. It could not have been done without such a forum as the European Media Advocacy Group" - **EU Media Advocacy Working Group Participant**
- ★ "[Collaboration through the EU Media Advocacy Group has proved beneficial on] the EMFA ban spyware campaign, as a perfect forum to unite civil society and professional representations" - **EU Media Advocacy Working Group Participant**
- ★ "The meeting was well planned, expertly moderated, fast-paced and very rich in information and insights" - feedback form response - **Partner (July 2023) on the NFJ meeting**

GFMD International Media Policy and Advisory Centre (GFMD IMPACT)

- ★ *"This is an extremely important and helpful project. We are developing recommendations for the UK government to introduce new funding for local public interest journalism, and it's very useful to have such an overview of the approach in other countries" - **Partner (July 2023) on the NFJ meeting***
- ★ *"When they [GFMD team] do engagement with policy makers and others, they are excellent. They are making a difference through the Media Freedom Cohort. Mira and Tom are fantastic spokespersons. They are great ambassadors for the media development sector" - **Interviewee for the mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)***
- ★ *"Their value added is that IMPACT can speak with a legitimate voice in the media especially in the global south. It is a collective voice and provides analysis that is extremely important. The reality is that it is difficult for members to make arguments to donors, but GFMD IMPACT is able to speak on their behalf. It is a collective voice for the field that can speak with authority on the matters. It captures what the [GFMD] members want" - **Interviewee for the mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)***
- ★ *"Some local organisations were not really convinced but now recognise [GFMD IMPACT] neutrality. It bridges issues: small/big, local/global, Media Freedom/Media Development. It is bridging this space" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)***
- ★ *"One area that they have made some progress, and a difference is bridging internet freedom, the tech sector, and the media development community. These groups don't usually collaborate. They are strengthening links between all these groups. It has not been done well before" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)***
- ★ *"GFMD was able to find ways for members to meet the reporting requirements for UN organisations and also make organisations in Ukraine more able to fit the donors' rules" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)***
- ★ *"IMPACT has linked us with funders. We have been in contact with key funders like Gates, Meta and those relationships will have impact eventually" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)***
- ★ *"Approaching media sustainability from a structural standpoint is key. IMPACT accumulated local knowledge from other regions that helped us get collective knowledge*

that would be expensive and maybe impossible for our media to know [otherwise]" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)**

- ★ "The biggest impact of policy advocacy is related to issues of regulation in the media sector. Based on the gaps that we have identified; we have been able to mobilise stakeholders to work on self-regulation and our actions have been informed by IMPACT resources" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)**.
- ★ "There is a need for resource management in our sector. The IMPACT site is easy to use, and I find what I need. Other organisations can take the GFMD IMPACT site as a model" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)**.
- ★ "Getting to know like-minded actors and creating interaction channels was not the case before IMPACT. It is easier now to approach certain actors. We convened a meeting [a high-level meeting] which would never have happened before we started working with GFMD. IMPACT gave us the information, networks, and accreditation to lead this event" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)**.
- ★ "We have been trying to mobilise different resources to motivate media development. But it is tough to do. It is hard to get quality materials from certain countries. There is some information out there. Trying to find information takes a lot of time. That's why IMPACT is so helpful to us" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)**.
- ★ "GFMD needs to continue its advocacy. They did a session on longer term support for media and fundraising. They made actionable suggestions for longer scope projects, longer duration to help members and international organisations to feed input into policy recommendations. They urged donors to prepare for the next crisis and think about these media issues from early on" - **Interviewee, Mid-term evaluation report of GFMD IMPACT (August 2023)**

GFMD membership services

- ★ "Since Muwatin joined GFMD last year, we had the opportunity to connect with colleagues around the world, to grow our network and to attend important events and meetings to advance media freedom and discuss relevant topics. We would like to express our appreciation to GFMD's work and impact. We are very pleased to be an active member. We look forward to continuing in the near future to help foster the protection of journalists and media institutions, and help independent media globally and regionally" - **GFMD Member**
- ★ "Congratulations on this valuable report, I have forwarded it to the journalism funders in our network and I will see if we can add it to the resource page on our JFF website" -

Journalism Funders Forum on GFMD's report on funding in the media development sector

- ★ *"I just read the conclusions of this report. This was the best and most radical thing I have read about media development in years!" - **Director of a GFMD member organisation on GFMD's report on funding in the media development sector***
- ★ *"The Latin American call for joining a panel on Fundraising Principles on Effective Support for Journalism and Media was in Spanish and the amount of feedback was amazing in the chat and afterwards. This panel brought together Latin American media and that does not happen. We don't have these kinds of convening events in the region. One of the most important conversations with GMFD is about donors. It was important because what Latin American media were thinking about was not in the minds of the donors. GFMDs events were significant experiences for Latin American media" - **GFMD Member from Latin America***
- ★ *"The outcome is that the media in the Latin America region have more information. They (GFMD) translated the fundraising guide into Spanish. They changed the conversations that the media were having. They have held events with Spanish as the main language. This possibility opened doors to other people who don't speak English" - **GFMD Member from Latin America***