



ENHANCE CONSULAR PROTECTION, ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION THROUGHOUT THE MIGRATION CYCLE



Associated actions

- a. **Cooperate to build consular capacities**, train consular officers, promote arrangements for providing consular services collectively where individual States lack capacity, including through technical assistance, and to develop bilateral or regional agreements on various aspects of consular cooperation
- b. **Involve relevant consular and immigration personnel in existing global and regional fora on migration** in order to exchange information and best practices about issues of mutual concern that pertain to citizens abroad and contribute to comprehensive and evidence-based migration policy development
- c. **Conclude bilateral or regional agreements on consular assistance and representation** in places where States have an interest in strengthening effective consular services related to migration, but do not have a diplomatic or consular presence
- d. **Strengthen consular capacities in order to identify, protect and assist our nationals abroad** who are in a situation of vulnerability, including victims of human and

labour rights violations or abuse, victims of crime, victims of trafficking in persons, migrants subject to smuggling under aggravating circumstances, and migrant workers exploited in the process of recruitment, by providing training to consular officers on human rights-based, gender-responsive and child-sensitive actions in this regard

- e. **Provide our nationals abroad the opportunity to register with the country of origin**, in close cooperation with consular, national and local authorities, as well as relevant migrant organizations, as a means to facilitate information, services and assistance to migrants in emergency situations and ensure migrants' accessibility to relevant and timely information, such as by establishing helplines and consolidating national digital databases, while upholding the right to privacy and protecting personal data
- f. **Provide consular support to our nationals through advice**, including on local laws and customs, interaction with authorities, financial inclusion, and business establishment, as well as through the issuance of relevant documentation, such as travel documents, and consular identity documents that may facilitate access to services, assistance in emergency situations, the opening of a bank account, and access to remittance facilities



Example practices

For more practices, visit the Migration Network Hub's **Repository of Practices**

Consular Assistance Protocol for Mexican Victims of Human Trafficking Abroad

In 2018, Mexico's Foreign Ministry introduced the Consular Assistance Protocol for Mexican Victims of Human Trafficking Abroad. This protocol was developed by Mexico with the assistance of IOM and the United States Embassy in Mexico. It is designed to facilitate the capacity of Mexico's consular network to identify victims and possible victims of trafficking abroad. It also lays out criteria, guidelines and specific actions for providing assistance and protection. Mexico developed two other consular protection protocols with the help of United Nations agencies: one on unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents (in partnership with UNICEF) and another on victims of gender-based violence (in partnership with UN Women) (Government of Mexico, 2018).

Model of consular protection of migrant girls, boys and adolescents

In addition, in both Guatemala and Mexico, UNICEF programmes are working to strengthen consular protection for migrant and refugee children – including those who are apprehended or detained in transit. These programmes have helped develop child-sensitive interview techniques for consular officials to detect children's protection needs, give them information about their rights and options, and provide psychosocial support (UNICEF Mexico, 2015). The government of Guatemala, with UNICEF support, has developed a protocol for consular support to migrant children.

Philippines' coordination of assistance to nationals (OUMWA)

The Department of Foreign Affairs' Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs (OUMWA) in the Philippines coordinates all assistance to nationals (ATN), along with legal services, for overseas Filipino workers in distress and their family members. OUMWA was created by the *Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act* of 1995, and it is provided through Philippines embassies and consulates. OUMWA collaborates with other government agencies to maximize and facilitate services for overseas workers in distress. These agencies include the Department of Labour and Employment, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration, and civil society organizations (OUMWA, 2013). In September 2019, the Department of Foreign Affairs also launched an official "OFW Help" page on Facebook, which gives distressed overseas workers and their families a new means of reaching the government and requesting emergency assistance (Rocamora, 2019).



Relevant sustainable development goals



SDG 1: No poverty

▪**1.3:** Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable



SDG 10: Reduced inequalities

▪**10.7:** Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies



SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

▪**16.3:** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all

▪**16.6:** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

▪**16.9:** By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

▪**16.10:** Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements



SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals

▪**17.16:** Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries

▪**17.18:** By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts