



Stakeholder Consultations for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)

Supporting the Integration of Migrants and their Contribution to Development (Addressing GCM objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22)

Wednesday, 16 December 2020, 11:00-14:30 hrs (*Bangkok-time*)
Online (Zoom)

Concept Note

1. Introduction

In the context of the Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) scheduled to be held in Bangkok from 10 to 12 March 2021, the United Nations Regional Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific¹ is committed to enabling the meaningful engagement of stakeholders with the regional review process, in line with the principles underpinning a whole-of-society approach.

Therefore, the Regional Network is organizing four stakeholder consultations to inform the regional review process of the implementation of the GCM. The consultations are being held in line with the clusters of the GCM objectives envisaged for the roundtables of the International Migration Review Forum, according to General Assembly resolution 73/326.

The third stakeholder consultation is on:

Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development

This consultation addresses the following objectives of the GCM:

- (14) Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle
- (15) Provide access to basic services for migrants
- (16) Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion
- (19) Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries
- (20) Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants
- (22) Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

For further details on the six objectives, please go to the end of the concept note.

¹ The Regional Network is comprised of all United Nations agencies at the regional level in the Asia-Pacific wishing to join. IOM's Regional Office for Asia-Pacific serves as the Coordinator and Secretariat of the Regional Network. The Executive Committee of the Regional Network comprises of ESCAP, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UN DRR, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, and UN Women.

2. Objectives of the consultations

The purpose of the stakeholder consultations is to facilitate and expand collaboration and participation in the regional review process, and in particular to elicit stakeholder experiences and views around the review objectives, namely:

- To take stock of the overall progress of implementation of objectives to date
- Identify key challenges, opportunities, gaps and emerging issues
- Identify established and emerging good practices and lessons learnt
- Identify resource requirements and capacity building needs
- Formulate recommendations

3. Content and format

The consultation will consist of an opening plenary, followed by two rounds of two simultaneous working groups and a closing plenary (please see agenda for more details). The working groups will address all six GCM objectives relevant to this consultation, with objective 19 featuring in both groups given its broad and encompassing nature, as follows:

- **Working Group 1:** objectives **14, 19, 20, 22**
- **Working Group 2:** objectives **15, 16, 19**

The consultation is a closed meeting and will not be recorded. In order to have open and frank discussions, it will follow the Chatham House Rule, which means that participants are free to use the information received but may not reveal the identity or the affiliation of the speaker(s), or of any other participant.

A summary note of the consultation will be drafted and made publicly available after the consultation. Registration for the consultation will close on **Wednesday 9 December at 24:00 hrs (Bangkok-time)**.

4. Organizing team

This stakeholder consultation is co-designed and implemented by a team of stakeholders and UN agencies.²

5. Participants

Participation in the stakeholder consultations should be balanced with regard to geography/region, gender and area of work/sector (please see stakeholder categories, as identified in General Assembly resolution 73/195 and 73/326 and listed in the background note on stakeholder engagement for the regional review in the Asia-Pacific, listed below).

In the interest of ensuring diverse representation at the consultation, we ask that only two persons per organization participates.

Please feel free to forward the invitation to colleagues and partners, keeping in mind that all participants need to register for the meeting by **Wednesday 9 December at 24:00 hrs (Bangkok-time)**.

² The organizing team includes Awaj Foundation, Host International, India Migration Now, People's Empowerment Foundation, UNDP and UN Women

6. Expected outcomes and next steps

Meaningful, inclusive, transparent and diverse participation by stakeholders with respect to reviewing progress towards GCM objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22 in the Asia-Pacific.

A summary report drafted by the Regional United Nations Network on Migration (with inputs from stakeholders participating in the consultation), to be posted on the ESCAP and the United Nations Network on Migration websites.

7. Background

In resolution 73/195 (“Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration”), the United Nations General Assembly:

- Committed to a whole-of-society approach promoting broad multi-stakeholder partnerships to address migration in all its dimensions by including migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, parliamentarians, trade unions, national human rights institutions, the media and other relevant stakeholders in migration governance (para 15 (j)).
- Committed to implementing the Global Compact at the national, regional and global levels in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders including migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians, National Human Rights Institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders (para 41 and 44).

8. Background documents

[Concept Note: Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#)

9. Further details on GCM objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22³

Objective 14: Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle

In Asia and the Pacific, some origin countries have strengthened consular and other services to assist migrants in destination countries. They also support migrant workers, often through Memoranda of Understanding and bilateral agreements between countries. However, since most migrant workers from South and South-West Asia and many from Indonesia and the Philippines move to Western Asia for employment, the policies of Gulf Cooperation Council countries are critical to their protection and well-being.

Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants

Migrant access to basic services is often constrained by laws, fees, language barriers, and restrictions related to residency and migration status. Despite widespread recognition of health as a basic human right, it has proven challenging to ensure health care for all migrants, particularly in the case of women, children, persons with disabilities and irregular migrants in areas where health services are not fully developed. In several countries in the Asia-Pacific, there

³ The information is based on the Asia-Pacific Migration Report 2020 (forthcoming) produced by members of the UN Regional Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific.

are comprehensive health-care schemes that cover migrant workers, but this is limited mostly to those with long-term contracts, and seasonal migrant workers are rarely covered.

Objective 16: Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion

Achieving social cohesion requires some degree of mutual adaptation by all involved. Given the temporary and employment related nature of much migration in the Asia-Pacific region, migrant integration is often not the primary goal of countries of destination and origin, and migrants themselves. Yet, even with a narrow labour market focus, matching occupational skills of migrant workers with host country demand is important, and it remains challenging, due to barriers of language, certification and skills transfer. Other challenges to effective integration in the labour market include ensuring fundamental principles and rights at work, decent working conditions, protection from labour market discrimination and addressing negative public perceptions of migrant workers. As with other aspects of migration, the integration of migrant workers into the labour force is highly gendered.

Objective 19: Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries

International migrants generally contribute to economic and social development in both origin and host countries, when there is a conducive policy environment. The key to creating conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries is to mainstream migration into development planning, human resource development strategies, labour migration policies and cooperation agreements with international organizations. Some countries in the region promote diaspora development overseas or support existing diasporas so as to contribute to national development initiatives.

Objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants

Most migrants from the region send remittances to families and others in their origin countries, which supports household consumption and contributes to poverty reduction. Between 2009 and 2019, remittances to the region rose from \$183 billion to \$330 billion, nearly half of the 2019 global total of \$714 billion. India and China are the world's largest remittance recipients, with the Philippines, Pakistan and Bangladesh also among the top ten countries at the global level. Remittances are not just important in absolute value; in some countries of the region they are a significant part of GDP. The median cost of sending US\$200 in remittances to Asia-Pacific countries in the first quarter of 2020 was at a low of 2.7 per cent; however, such costs vary considerably across subregions, with countries in the Pacific experiencing much higher costs.

Objective 22: Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

Migrants are often excluded from social protection systems in both origin and destination countries. Even when they can access social protection systems, the benefits may not be portable between countries. In Asia and the Pacific, portability of social security between countries of origin and destination is limited. Some innovative approaches in the region exist at subregional levels. In addition, bilateral agreements on social security have been signed between countries in and outside of the region, and several countries of origin have adopted unilateral approaches that extend a certain amount of social security coverage to citizens abroad. In general, however, social protection coverage for migrants is patchy and uncoordinated rather than rights-based and consistent.

Additional information is available on the dedicated UN ESCAP [website](#)

