



FAQs on the United Nations Network on Migration at the country and regional levels

October 2020

In recent months, a significant number of UN country and regional offices have either established new UN Networks on Migration or strengthened existing migration platforms with a view to strengthening coordination amongst relevant actors and providing coherent support by the UN system to Member States in the implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) at the country or regional level. In some regions and countries, new mechanisms are under consideration or being developed (see list attached, as of October 2020).

Support to Member States is expected to intensify in the coming months with the operationalization of the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MMPTF), the development of national implementation plans, and preparations for the regional reviews of the GCM.

This note provides responses to frequently asked questions (FAQs) on national and regional UN Networks on Migration and other relevant fora for the implementation, follow up and review of the GCM.

i. What is the purpose of the United Nations Network on Migration?

The United Nations Network on Migration (Network) was established by the Secretary-General in May 2018, as a “new way of working” to ensure effective, timely and coordinated UN system-wide support, at country, regional and global levels, to Member States in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM. In doing so, the Network seeks to prioritize the rights and wellbeing of migrants and their communities in countries of origin, transit and destination, including through promoting the application of relevant international and regional norms and standards relating to migrants, to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, address migration-related challenges and harness the impact of migration on sustainable development. The Network focuses on those issues where a common UN approach would add value.

ii. How is the United Nations Network on Migration structured?

The Network is coordinated by IOM, which also provides the secretariat¹. It has a core membership (“Executive Committee”) and an extended membership, with the former comprising UN entities with clear mandate-driven relevance and capacity, and the latter comprising UN entities that wish to be a part of the Network and contribute relevant technical expertise and experience. The Executive Committee is comprised of ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDESA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, WHO is currently invited to participate in Executive Committee meetings. There are currently

¹ UNHCR and UNICEF have provided secondees to the secretariat.

39 UN system entities in the core and extended membership of the Network (see list attached).

iii. What are the Network's priorities at the global level?

Currently, the Network is implementing its inaugural workplan (see attached) focusing on a number of core and thematic priorities. Core priorities include, among others, the provision of support to the GCM regional reviews, scheduled to begin in 2020²; empowerment of UNCTs to support national governments in implementing the GCM; preparation of the Secretary-General's first biennial report on the status of GCM implementation; and the development of a Global Knowledge Platform and Connection Hub.

Current thematic priorities are based on GCM objectives on which the UN system can contribute and are:

- i enhancing national capacities in data collection, analysis and dissemination;
- ii promoting alternatives to immigration detention;
- iii strengthening Member States' capacities to expand regular pathways for admission and stay on compassionate, humanitarian and human rights grounds;
- iv enhancing pathways for regular migration to facilitate decent work and labour mobility;
- v ensuring returns are safe and dignified and reintegration is sustainable;
- vi improving migrants' safe and effective access to services.

Specific workstreams have been identified to support the operational rollout of the GCM from a thematic perspective.

These may change and additional workstreams added over time, as targets are reached and priorities evolve.

The Network promotes the integration of the 10 guiding principles of the GCM in its work. Recalling the whole-of-society approach of the GCM, meaningful engagement of all relevant stakeholders cited in the GCM³ is a priority across the workplan.

The Network website contains information on the work of the Network, including in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴

For some of the workstreams, working groups have been established that are open to all Network members, as well as relevant stakeholders as listed in the GCM.⁵ The working groups

² General Assembly resolution 73/326

³ <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/default/files/docs/gcm-n1845199.pdf>, paragraph 15(j)

⁴ <https://www.migrationnetwork.un.org>

⁵ Core Working Groups include: Knowledge Platform and Connection Hub, Stronger UN System for GCM Implementation, GCM National Implementation Plans; Thematic Working Groups include: Data, Alternatives to Detention, Regular Pathways for Migrants in Vulnerable Situations, Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMA), Returns and Reintegration, Access to Services

develop tools, data and information, analysis and guidance to support governments and partners in the operational roll-out of the GCM. Through the provision of best practices, working groups support GCM implementation, drawing on expertise and experience of co-leads and members and in coordination with relevant authorities, stakeholders and UN actors at country, regional and global level.

Champion countries ('Champions') are Member States that expressed interest in providing active support in promoting the implementation of the GCM in a number of ways, including, where relevant, in participating in piloting of activities envisioned in the Network's workplan. The current list comprises: **Asia/Pacific** (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Nepal); **East Africa** (Ethiopia); **Latin America and the Caribbean** (El Salvador, Mexico); **Middle East and North Africa** (Morocco); **West Africa** (Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Senegal); **Western Europe and Others Group** (Canada, Portugal).

In identifying Champions, the Network applies the following criteria:

- Geographical balance
- Respect for the GCM 360-degree vision
- Commitment of the host government
- Existence of a UN Migration Network or similar UN coordination mechanism
- Support of the UN Resident Coordinator
- Compatibility with other processes (Common Country Assessments, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, Universal Periodic Review)

Member States should be encouraged to join this initiative (see attached note for details).

iv. How does the Network support coordination on migration at regional and national levels?

Effective coordination on migration at regional and national levels is critical to provide effective, timely and coordinated support to Member States in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, with the engagement of relevant stakeholders.

To avoid duplication of efforts and strengthen synergies, **existing migration-related UN fora at the country or regional level** are encouraged to adapt their terms of reference (ToRs) and working arrangements in line with the global TORs of the Network. This process should be conducted with the agreement of all entities involved as well as in consultation with Executive Committee members and the Coordinator of the Network.

Where **new UN Networks on Migration are established**, the Network's global ToRs provide guidance on its mission, objectives, working principles, membership and structure, and decision-making (by consensus), helping to ensure a coherent approach at global, regional and country levels.

In situations where **UN Issue-Based Coalitions (IBCs)** take on support for GCM implementation, follow-up and review at the regional level, alignment with the Network's

TORs and close liaison with the Network is important to ensure a coherent approach and inclusion of all relevant UN system entities as well as engagement of non-UN stakeholders.⁶

v. What is the role of the Network in supporting the regional reviews of the GCM?

In the GCM, the General Assembly invited relevant sub-regional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations, including the UN Regional Economic Commissions and regional consultative processes on migration, to review the implementation of the GCM within the respective regions, beginning in 2020, to effectively inform each edition of the international migration review forum (IMRF), with the participation of all relevant stakeholders (para 50).

Subsequently, in resolution 73/326 (“Format and organizational aspects of the international migration review forums”), the General Assembly:

- Requested the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as Coordinator of the Network, to assist, upon the request of Member States, in the preparation and organization of regional reviews of the implementation of the GCM (para 9).
- Requested the Network, in preparation for the IMRF, to collect *all*⁷ inputs submitted by Member States and other relevant stakeholders from local, national, regional and global levels and to develop, as part of the global knowledge platform, a dedicated website featuring these inputs to the IMRF (para 13).

As indicated in the workplan⁸, the Network provides support and guidance in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, and promotes the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in line with the GCM vision and guiding principles (GCM paras 8-15).⁹

The Network developed a framework to assist Member States in the organization of regional reviews (see attached).

Inputs provided by Member States and stakeholders to the regional reviews process will be posted on regional webpages, developed by the Connection Hub and Knowledge platform.

vi. How can the Network support the implementation of the GCM in countries?

Capacity-building measures on migration governance are key elements of the Network workplan. The Network’s core workstream 2.1¹⁰ focuses on bolstering the UN capacities at global, regional, national and local levels to support Member States in their implementation of the GCM, alongside core workstream 2.2 which focuses on support to Member States in

⁶ Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, A/RES/73/195, 11 January 2019 para.44

⁷ Emphasis added.

⁸ Available at <http://migrationnetwork.un.org/about/united-nations-network-migration-workplan>.

⁹ Including the GCM’s 360-degree vision and guiding principles of: people-centered, international cooperation, national sovereignty, rule of law and due process, sustainable development, human rights, gender-responsive, child-sensitive. whole-of-government approach, whole-of-society approach (GCM para 15).

¹⁰ <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/cwg-21-stronger-un-system-gcm-implementation.U on Migration>.

developing national action plans on migration and other strategies to implement the GCM at the national level. Both workstreams are closely aligned with the UN development system reform process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thematic workstreams – i.e. on Data, Alternatives to Detention, Regular Pathways for Migrants in Vulnerable Situations, Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (BLMAs), Returns and Reintegration, and Access to Services -- support Member States in providing practical guidance and tools and strengthening their capacity in implementing specific GCM actionable objectives.

Member States, UNCTs and country-level Networks will be able to draw upon a range of support measures, including:

- **Support in the development of GCM national implementation plans.** Alternatively, the Network can advise on the mainstreaming of GCM objectives into existing national policies, action plans and synergies with SDG implementation.
- **Support in implementing specific GCM objectives.** Targeted technical and capacity-building support in accordance with national priorities and the GCM's 360-degree vision and through the activities of the Network's thematic areas.
- **Strengthened UN system coordination.** Support for UNCTs, national or regional UN Networks or other UN coordination structures involved in encouraging support for GCM implementation.
- **Strengthening engagement of stakeholders.** Support to ensure meaningful engagement of all relevant stakeholders cited in the GCM: 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 such as women, children and young people.
- **Knowledge management and information sharing.** The identification of good practices and lessons learnt from a wide range of stakeholders and across countries and regions through the GCM's Global Knowledge Platform and Connection Hub. Access to these experiences will help ensure that Member States can draw on relevant knowledge, experience and expertise to develop tailor-made GCM solutions.
- **Review and reporting.** Support the review and reporting on the implementation of the GCM, including as it relates to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the context of regional reviews of the GCM, the first IMRF to be held during the first half of 2022 as well as the regional reviews for the high-level political forum on sustainable development.
- **Pilot testing of relevant tools** developed by the Network's core and thematic working groups.

Contact

The Network, its Coordinator, Executive Committee and secretariat stand ready to provide further information and support to UN country and regional offices interested in supporting

GCM implementation. Please do not hesitate to contact the Network via its secretariat at unmignet@iom.int.

Annexes:

- 1- The Global Network ToRs
- 2- The Global Network Inaugural Workplan
- 3- National or regional UN Networks on Migration (as of October 2020)
- 4- Note on Champion Countries
- 5- Proposed framework to assist Member States in the organization of regional reviews