

Voluntary GCM Review
Survey conducted to inform the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation
of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
Bangkok, (18-20 November 2020)

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) (General Assembly Resolution 73/195) calls for review of the progress of “implementing the Global Compact in the framework of the United Nations through a State-led approach and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders” (OP48), and “invites United Nations regional economic commissions ... to review the implementation of the Global Compact within the respective regions, beginning in 2020” (OP50)

This voluntary GCM review is issued to fulfil this mandate, by enabling member States to provide information on their progress towards the objectives of the Global Compact. The results will inform the preparation of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to be held at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok from 18 to 20 November 2020, the preparation of the 2020 Asia-Pacific Migration Report and related background documentation.

The survey has been informed by the suggested outline prepared by the United Nations Network on Migration (Proposed framework to assist Member States in the organization of regional reviews – Annex II: Indicative outline for Member States) to review the status of implementation of the GCM at national, sub-regional, regional and cross-regional levels (General Assembly resolution 73/195, OP48 and OP50). It has been structured according to the four round tables to be organized for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review meeting which correspond to the four round tables of the International Migration Review Forum in 2022 (General Assembly resolution 73/326, OP21). 2

Please identify the office responsible for coordinating the responses to this survey and include the contact information.

Country:	Cambodia
Office:	Phnom Penh
Name:	Chou Bun Eng
Title/Position:	Secretary of State Ministry of Interior, Permanent Vice chairperson, of the National Committee for Counter Trafficking in persons, NCCT
E-mail:	cbeng1155@gmail.com
Telephone:	+855 12872639
Mailing address:	Ministry of Interior sub-building, Boeung Snor, Sangkat Nirot, Khan Meanchey, Phnom Penh City, Cambodia

(Please return the completed survey to the ESCAP secretariat by **31 August 2020**, preferably by email (escap-sdd@un.org) with a copy to the Regional Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific (UNRNAP-regreviews@iom.int). Any queries can be forwarded to these same addresses.

Kindly indicate whether you would be willing to share your report at the IMRF/regional reviews site on the UN Network on Migration at <https://www.migrationnetwork.un.org/>. Please contact UNRNAP-regreviews@iom.int if you have a query or suggestion in this regard. =Yes =No)

Instructions:

Please provide answers to the following set of questions (about 500 words per question) as they relate to **clusters of objectives** of the Global Compact for Migration (General Assembly resolution 73/326, para 21).

If needed, please provide the answers in a separate document and attach it to this survey.

Please provide **references or links to relevant policy documents in a separate document**, attached to this survey.

If possible, please identify any **innovative policies or practices** related to any of the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.

Also, information should be based on **statistical as well as qualitative data**.

Questions (about 500 words per question 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d - please attach paper and documents, as needed):

<p>1. Ensuring that migration is voluntary, orderly and regular</p>	<p>GCM Objectives: 2, 5, 6, 12, 18</p>
<p>a. Please highlight the migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.</p>	
<p>Cambodian workers mostly migrate overseas for labour employment due to poverty, often combined with other push and pull factors including family debts incurred by family capital loans and/or family illnesses, lack of local job opportunities, low wages in home country, low or lack of skills, better overseas employment opportunities, higher wages in destination countries and easy to cross border to seek for jobs at the neighboring country especially Thailand. According to a 2019 study conducted by IOM and Chulalongkorn University’s Asian Research Centre for Migration on ‘Potential Changes in the Migration Patterns of Cambodian Migrants and Their Impacts on Thailand and Cambodia’ (IOM, 2019)¹, most Cambodian migrants were quite poor before they migrated to Thailand. They chose to migrate because they saw better job opportunities and higher wages in Thailand. For example, an IOM Assessment (IOM, 2016) on the Profile of Returned Cambodian Migrant Workers found that wages in Thailand were nearly five times as high as what the migrants received in Cambodia.²</p>	
<p>The majority of Cambodian migrants in Thailand engaged in either long-term or seasonal work in sectors such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and fishing. The IOM study (IOM, 2019) found that 97% of them were in ‘good’ or ‘satisfactory’ working conditions. The study also found that Cambodian migrants annually remit an average of THB39,312 (i.e. over USD1,200); which is crucial to improve or maintain their families’ living conditions back in Cambodia. The migrants also have expressed positive experience of migration because it has increased their savings and provided opportunities for them to develop new skills that would help them to secure better jobs with higher wages in Thailand or Cambodia in the future.</p>	
<p>Although there is an MOU between the government of Cambodia and Thailand for the Cooperation on the Sending of Migrant Workers through the regular channel as well as bilateral agreement on the elimination of human trafficking between Cambodia and Thailand, there are persistent problems of irregular migration and migrant exploitation. The porous nature of the border and insufficient cross-border cooperation and the willingness of the employers to hire irregular migrant</p>	

¹ Assessing Potential Changes in the Migration Patterns of Cambodian Migrants and Their Impacts on Thailand and Cambodia (2019). <https://thailand.iom.int/assessing-potential-changes-migration-patterns-cambodian-migrants-and-their-impacts-thailand-and>

² Assessment Report: Profile of Returned Cambodian Migrant Workers (2016). <https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/docs/IOM-AssessmentReportReturnedMigrants2016.pdf>

workers in Thailand (IOM, 2019) result in the MOU being not sufficiently enforced. Although employed in Thailand, irregular migrants face worse experiences than the regular migrants. The study (IOM, 2019) found that Cambodia irregular migrants receive lower wages than the regular migrants. They are also prone to arrest and deportation. For example, each year, the Thai authorities deport between approximately 50,000 to 100,000 Cambodian irregular migrants back to Cambodia. Moreover, irregular migrants are more likely to face many forms of vulnerability and exploitation including lack of freedom of movement, poor workplace safety, poor working condition, being cheated and/or deceived in overall work experience and violence/abuse at workplace³. The IOM Assessment (IOM,2016) found that amongst the migrants who reported abuse and/or exploitation, 83 per cent had entered Thailand through irregular channel and without any documentation⁴.

b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).

Cambodia has developed Labour Migration Policy and has been revising it twice to meet the developing needs. The Policy was first developed in 2010 to promote labour migration as a coping strategy to contribute to poverty alleviation. The Policy also promoted the rights and protection of labour migrants from the sending county to the destination country. The Policy was amended in 2014 in the wake of the return of exodus of the Cambodian irregular migrants from Thailand in June 2014 by the Junta government of Thailand. The overall purpose of the amendment of the Policy was to ensure all Cambodian migrant workers have access to free passports and to make the regular migration process more affordable to all migrants so that they would no longer be prone to arrest and deportation. Following the adoption of the GCM in 2018, Cambodia developed the Labour Migration Policy Action Plan for 2019-2023. The Policy and Action Plan applied a holistic and whole-of-government approach to labour migration governance to leverage the benefits of labour migration for the country's long-term development.

Other policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by the government to contribute to implementing the GCM include:

In addition to the 2003 MOU between Cambodia and Thailand on Cooperation in the Employment of Workers which aimed to promote the regular migration process (MOU Process) for Migrant workers from Cambodia to Thailand as well as to regularize the status of the Cambodian irregular migrants already in Thailand, the Cambodian government supported private sectors in Cambodia in 2018 to sign an MOU to promote the rights, well-being and protection of Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand. This MOU was signed by three private entities including the Manpower Association of Cambodia, the Association of Cambodian Recruitment Agencies and the Thai-Cambodian Relations Association. The MoU indicates an improved action by the three private agencies to cooperate with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training to protect and increase the benefits of Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand. Moreover, to respond to the COVID-19 impact on the Cambodian migrants in Thailand, Cambodia managed to lobby the Government of Thailand to allow Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand to extend their nearly expired contracts for another two years to avoid the mass return of the Cambodian migrants amid the crisis.

Cambodia, represented by the Ministry of Planning, has developed the *National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023*, outlining migration-related challenges and measures, and the *Rectangular Strategy Phase IV 2018-2023* highlights that the Government is to strengthen the

³ Criminalizing irregular migrant labor: Thailand's crackdown in context. Migration Policy Institute (2017). <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/criminalizing-irregular-migrant-labor-thailands-crackdown-context>

⁴ Assessment Report: Profile of Returned Cambodian Migrant Workers (2016). <https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/docs/IOM-AssessmentReportReturnedMigrants2016.pdf>

enforcement of the Law on Immigration by “**preventing illegal migrant inflows**”. The plan sets as a policy priority the reintegration of returning migrants through skills recognition and portability of social protection.

The Ministry of Tourism implements in partnership with the National Committee for Tourism Professional, a programme, under the 2017 – 2025 Strategic Plan for Tourism Human Resources Development, aimed at opening a pathway for migrant workers to reskill and upskill through the recognition of **prior learning**. The Ministry also collaborates with the IOM to provide **skills development** in Thailand for migrant workers through a cross-border training programme in Hospitality. As a result, under this collaboration, 100 migrants have been supported to participate in the Hospitality Training and 60 of them have been assisted to legally work in Thailand. Another group of 40 migrants are being supported to participate in the skill development training programme.

Cambodia has also developed measures to promote the ethical recruitment of migrant workers. In January 2020, the Association of Cambodian Recruitment Agencies and the Manpower Association of Cambodia collaborated with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training to develop the Code of Conduct for Cambodian Private Recruitment Agencies, which aims at promoting and protecting the rights of Cambodian migrant workers during the recruitment process.

c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?

Despite the RGC’s efforts; through development and implementation of migration related-policy and other regulatory frameworks; to address the irregular migration issue; which largely exists in the movement from Cambodia to Thailand; many Cambodian migrant workers still continue to choose to migrate via irregular channel. The common reasons behind the fact that many migrant workers prefer the irregular channel to the regular or MOU process include cost and time for the migration process and work opportunities that remain in Thailand for irregular migrants.

The whole regular migration process would cost the migrants over US\$700 for documents and other fees, and, in addition to that, the migrants would have to wait three to six months for approval. However, it would cost the migrants only between US\$100-US\$150 to use the services of an informal facilitator and the arrangement could take only a few days⁵. This more complex, time-consuming and costly procedures of the formal process has also discouraged some employers in Thailand from hiring regular migrants fearing that they may not continue to work for them and that employing irregular migrants is an easier and lower-cost option⁶. However, the acceptance the huge number of irregular migrants to work in Thailand is not the solution, because irregular migrants or undocumented migrants have been exploited at all stages of stay and work process in Thailand as well. It is recommended that the irregular migration process should be safe, orderly and regular.

d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned by your Government in implementing these objectives.

Through the implementation of the Labour Migration Policy, Cambodia has signed MOUs with nine different migrant receiving countries to promote the safe, orderly and regular migration process, including Thailand, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia,

⁵ Criminalizing irregular migrant labor: Thailand’s crackdown in context. Migration Policy Institute (2017).

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/criminalizing-irregular-migrant-labor-thailands-crackdown-context>

⁶ Assessing Potential Changes in the Migration Patterns of Cambodian Migrants and Their Impacts on Thailand and Cambodia (2019). <https://thailand.iom.int/assessing-potential-changes-migration-patterns-cambodian-migrants-and-their-impacts-thailand-and>

Kuwait, Qatar. Cambodia has licensed 104 private recruitment companies to formally facilitate the safe, orderly and regular migration from Cambodia to work in these destination countries.

The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training as the lead Ministry for the implementation of the Labour Migration Policy to promote safe, orderly and regular migration of Cambodians has been working to promote the rights and other benefits for migrants. For example, MOUs and other agreements are being entered into between not only the Cambodian Government and the governments of the migrant-receiving countries, but also the private companies for ethical recruitment, protection and more benefits including pension scheme to the Cambodian migrants.

Following the enforcement of the Thai Royal Ordinance with a strict measure to punish undocumented migrants and Thai employers who hired irregular migrant workers, the Cambodian national committee - consisting of 230 technical officials from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation – conducted nationality verification from July 2018 to June 2019 for the irregular Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand. In Cambodia, the government intensified the legal recruitment process (the MOU Process) for migrants who wished to return to Thailand for employment. As a result, approximately 1.5 million Cambodian migrants had legal status in Thailand including those possessing full documentation from the MOU Process and those with a Pink Card only provided by the Thai government as part of the Nationality Verification Process. In addition, the Cambodian government extended the passport issuance service to the border provinces as well as at the Aeon Mall supermarket to provide easy access to legal identity documents to Cambodian migrants and people in general.

Recently, after the bilateral MOUs between both Governments of the Kingdom of Cambodia and of the Kingdom of Thailand on the Collaboration in responding trafficking in persons and to send and use labor forces legally have been going step forward to have Standard of operation Procedures, eg. SOP on Victims Protection and trafficking cases reintegration; and there are regular meetings between both countries' Ministries of Labor, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Immigration Directorates, border-provinces, as well as between the National Committee for Counter Trafficking in persons (NCCT), Cambodia and relevant Ministries of Thailand to develop SOP on Law Enforcement related to Trafficking in persons cases.

Questions (about 500 words per question 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d - please attach paper and documents, as needed):

2. Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance measures	GCM Objectives: 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 21
---	--

a. Please highlight migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.

Many Cambodian migrants migrate to Thailand through unofficial channels. Their illegal status (i.e. being in Thailand without a passport and/or a work permit) makes them prone to many vulnerabilities including arrest and deportation by the Thai authorities. Thousands of Cambodian irregular migrants are reported to be deported back every month. In June 2014, when the Thai government started to crackdown on irregular migrant workers in Thailand, over 250,000 Cambodian migrants – mostly irregular migrants - returned to Cambodia⁷. The main reason for

⁷ Assessment Report: Profile of Returned Cambodian Migrant Workers (2016).
<https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/docs/IOM-AssessmentReportReturnedMigrants2016.pdf>

their return was related to lack of possession of a passport and/or a work permit. As a response, the RGC amended the Labour Migration Policy in order to ensure all migrants planning to return to Thailand for work obtain a free passport as proof of legal identity so that they would have legal status in Thailand.

In addition to this, the RGC advocated for speeding up the implementation of the Nationality Verification process; which is the second strategy of the 2003 MOU between Cambodia and Thailand for the Cooperation on Sending of Migrant Workers. As part of the process, the RGC also announced and encouraged Cambodian irregular migrants in Thailand to participate in the Nationality Verification process in order to receive the legal status in Thailand. As a result, 420,000 Cambodian undocumented migrant workers received the legal documents⁸.

Despite the policy and MOU implementation efforts, many Cambodian migrant workers still continue to migrate through irregular channels to Thailand. A study found that, two years after the exodus return and RGC's effort (i.e., in 2016), many Cambodian migrants still were undocumented and many challenges remain the same⁹, including lengthy and costly regular migration process, insufficient cross-border cooperation between sending and destination country authorities, and the willingness of the employers to hire irregular migrant workers in Thailand. An estimate made in 2018 found that among nearly two million Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand, 20 percent were undocumented¹⁰. Many of them still continued to face various vulnerabilities and especially deportation. For example, in 2019 the Thai authorities deported nearly ten thousand Cambodian irregular migrants to Cambodia via Poi Pet¹¹.

b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).

To provide protection to the Cambodian migrant workers from abuse, exploitation and especially trafficking, the RGC has developed a strategy to combat human trafficking – the *National Strategic Plan for Counter Trafficking in Persons 2019-2023*. The Plan was developed by the National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT)¹², and seeks to explore new measures and methods to prevent and eliminate all forms of human trafficking. Its core values include adopting a gender-responsive approach to preventing and responding to trafficking, ensuring the active participation of civil society, and establishing a robust monitoring and evaluation system on the enforcement of the law. In addition to this, NCCT also has organized Regional Workshops on Safe Migration of Sending Countries, involving Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam, with the purpose of sharing experience related to migration management and prevention of abuse and exploitation of migrant workers working abroad.

⁸ Thousands of illegal migrant workers deported from Thailand (2018).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/511479/thousands-of-illegal-migrant-workers-deported-from-thailand/>

⁹ Cambodian migrants to Thailand still lack papers: IOM (2016). <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodian-migrants-thailand-still-lack-papers-iom>

¹⁰ Cambodian workers 'vulnerable' in Thailand (2019). <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodian-workers-vulnerable-thailand>

¹¹ Cambodia: Thailand deports nearly 10 thousand of undocumented Cambodian migrant workers in 2019 (2019).

<https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/cambodia-thailand-deports-nearly-10-thousand-of-undocumented-cambodian-migrant-workers-in-2019/>

¹² NCCT is the National mechanism led by a Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Ministry of Interior, Samdech Krolahome Sar Kheng, which involved 21 ministries and five main units (National Police commissionaire, Gendarmerie, General Department of Immigration, General Department of Civil Registration and Border Management Office of the Ministry of Defense) and has its structure down to sub-national level.

The General Department of Immigration (GDI) and the General Commissariat of National Police (GCNP) have been working in collaboration with IOM Cambodia to build the border management capacity of the frontline immigration and border police officials. The training includes fraudulent travel document and identity detection, traveler risks and assessment, counter irregular migration, counter migrant smuggling, and counter migrant trafficking.

The Police Academy of Cambodia (PAC) of the Ministry of Interior has been working in collaboration with IOM Cambodia to develop a training manual on Immigration and Border Management for frontline police officials. This training manual consists to many modules related to border management and counter trans-border crimes. Modules include fraudulent travel document and identity detection, traveler risks and assessment, counter irregular migration, counter migrant smuggling, and counter migrant trafficking, community policing and border management, and gender and human right-based border management. The Manual will serve as a national police training curriculum for PAC to provide training to the police cadets as well as the in-service frontline immigration and border police officials with the purpose of preventing trans-border crimes in Cambodia including migrant smuggling.

During COVID-19 pandemic, the border closure measure has been taken by destination countries, such as Thailand, caused thousands of Cambodian migrants to cross the border back to Cambodia through irregular channels. The RGC respects the rights of migrants who decided to return home, by providing protection and basic needs support to them from the border crossing stage to arrival in Cambodia and at their home . As the result, from the beginning of the crisis up to the present, over 150.000 of returning migrants, have been supported by the RGC in close collaboration with UN, IO, NGO, CSO and private stakeholders.

Foreing migrants who have overstayed their visas, migrants who have been smuggled or trafficked, as well as migrants who have illegally worked in Cambodia as irregular migrant who should not be liable to criminal punishment. If identified as a victim or as being vulnerable, the RGC often makes referrals to other relevant government units, UN, IO, or NGOS/CSOs for assistance and support. For those and the other types of irregular migrants who are not vulnerable, they are subject to immediate removal as well as liable to pay the visa overstay fines. The immigration officials only keep these irregular migrants in the immigration detention center when the migrants have no means of self-support and there are no other support options available while looking for other alternative for removing them.

Although Cambodia does not yet have procedures or policies to ensure the minimization of risks for all migrants in transit towards an international destination or at the national border, the National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023, developed by the Ministry of Planning, has now set as a policy priority the reintegration of returning migrants through skills recognition and transfer of their social security entitlements.

Cambodia does not have an overall migration strategy. However, its Labour Migration Policy addresses migrant reintegration, through policy goal 16, which aims for the "return and reintegration of women and men migrant workers being enabled through evidence-based policy, and strengthened service provision for social and economic reintegration, including employment services, skills development and recognition, enterprise development training, and investment programmes". The Policy notes some examples of policies and programmes aimed at reintegration of migrants coming from ASEAN countries and includes Action Points for improving migrant reintegration, such as research (into institutional migration structures), capacity building (on areas uncovered by research), gender-sensitive approaches (on return and reintegration) and coordination with private recruitment agencies to assist in repatriation of migrants.

c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?

Although the frontline immigration and border police officials play a crucial role in the national border management and border security especially to counter transnational crimes including migrant smuggling, they are irregularly trained. There is no regular national training program for frontline immigration and border police officials.

Despite the immigration authorities' understanding of the rights of migrants, there is no policy or strategy in place to ensure that migrant detention is only used as a measure of last resort. Therefore, the practice may vary depending on the knowledge and skills of the immigration officials. Under the Law on Immigration (1994), Article 29 imposes a penalty of three to six month imprisonment upon persons who enter the country illegally, prior to their expulsion from the Kingdom. This law is now being reviewed to fit the current situation as well as to include the current more right-based practice. Moreover, for irregular migrants entering Cambodia for the purpose of seeking asylum, there is a Sub-Decree on Procedure for Recognition as a Refugee or Providing Asylum Rights to Foreigners in the Kingdom of Cambodia (2009). However, this document makes no reference to detention.

Cambodia does not have any systems, including formal cooperation agreements with other countries, to trace and identify missing migrants within the national territory. General cooperation can sometimes be given, but this depends on the individual relationships between countries. Nevertheless, Cambodian embassies in the destination countries; that are under the management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFA-IC), also closely cooperate with the host countries to protect Cambodian migrants as well as provide some assistance to them including emergency repatriation, passport renewals and the granting of special travel permissions.

Migrants in fishing industry are at high risks given its 3D¹³ conditions. Although there is no policy or any other minimum standard framework to regulate it, such business is still up running due to the needs of consumers in the world and Thailand is still requesting migrant sending countries to supply migrants for fishing industry. NCCT will propose and organize a consultative meeting among stakeholders - between sending and receiving countries before recruiting and sending migrants to work in fishing industry abroad - to provide inputs into the policy development for protecting migrant fishermen. This will include safety and benefits during their work which should be clearly discussed and written in the contracts.

Although the Cambodia's National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023 sets the reintegration of migrations as a policy goal, it does not outline or reference any programme to achieve this.

d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned by your Government in implementing these objectives.

International cooperation is essential in implementing these objectives. As such, in order to promote this, the RGC has ratified international conventions and protocols, participated in the regional consultative processes, and signed MoU with destination countries especially migrants in receiving countries to increase international/cross-border cooperation, to facilitate regular migration processes as well as to promote the rights and protection of Cambodian migrant workers.

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training has its schedule to discuss with Thailand, to ensure that migrants are under their security protection. Cambodia also is part of the CLMVT High level

¹³ 3D jobs are dirty, difficult and dangerous job.

meetings to discuss the transfer of social security fund for returned migrants. From the national down to the sub-national levels, the Royal Government of Cambodia has applied the same policies and guidelines to solve the issue of trafficking in persons by establishing multi-disciplinary groups to address prevention, victim protection, law enforcement, prosecution and justice, migration and international cooperation, in which civil societies and international partners are also engaged.

Questions (about 500 words per question 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d - please attach paper and documents, as needed):

3. Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development	GCM Objectives: 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22
--	---

a. Please highlight migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.

Cambodia’s economy depends largely on agriculture, manufacturing, construction, and tourism. In order to create more jobs for the local people, the government has attracted many local and international businesses to invest in Cambodia. The jobs generated for all the sectors do not provide adequate places to meet the annual labour forces. As a coping strategy, the Royal Government of Cambodia promotes labour migration for overseas work and incomes to contribute to the national poverty alleviation strategic plan.

Migration brings the benefits of not only acquiring the work experience and skills of the migrants, but also improving the migrants’ families and the country’s economics through remittances. According to the World Bank, Cambodian migrant workers sent home USD1.6 billion in 2019, contributing to 5.9 percent of the Cambodia’s national GDP. These remittances often are used for education, health care and other basic necessities.

Thanks to the labour migration contribution to the national development, the RGC has been promoting the inclusion of the needs of labour migrants in the national policies as well as increase national and international cooperation in order to improve the labour migration management so that migrants will benefit the most from their migration process.

b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).

Migrants are now included in the Cambodian national health policy. Health care is also included in the social security coverage. Migrant workers with a regular status have equal access as citizens to government-funded health care under Cambodia’s social security scheme – the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). The NSSF covers health prevention services, medical care services, and daily allowance for the duration of the work suspension due to medical treatment or other non-occupational accidents and maternity leave. The NSSF also covers pension and invalidity benefits to all regular migrant workers, regardless of their nationality, as outlined by the Law on Social Security Schemes for Persons Defined by the Provisions of the Labour Law (2002).

Cambodia and other member states of the Colombo Process have been committed to and have made progress promoting cheaper, faster and safer transfers of remittances for migrants. The Cambodian Policy on Labour Migration also highlights the importance of remittances as an important source of income for migrant families. At the Fourth Meeting of Thematic Area Working Group on Remittances in 2018, Cambodia and other members of the Colombo Process gathered to carry out in-depth discussions on remittances, covering key topics, including reducing costs of

remittance transfers in line with the Sustainable Development Goal target; improving access to formal remittance channels; and maximizing the use of remittances through building financial literacy among migrant workers and their families.

The Cambodia's new Policy on Labour Migration (2019-2023) focuses on "cross-border migration for employment among Cambodian workers" and identifies three priority areas; i) good governance of labour migration for legal, policy, and institutional frameworks coherence ii) protection and empowerment of migrant workers against abuses, malpractice, and exploitation through well-informed migration, pre-departure training and dissemination of information regarding the migration process and iii) harnessing migration for development through remittances, skills acquisition, lower unemployment and strong national foreign currency reserves.

Under the MoFA-IC, the RGC provides other basic services to its migrants and other citizens living abroad through its embassies and consulates. These services include passport renewals, birth certificate issuance, translations of driver's licenses, official authorization or certification of documents, and special travel permissions. Cambodian consular services also include assistance for emergency repatriation of migrants but based on the available fund of the nationals themselves or of any humanitarian organization (e.g., IOM, NGOs) working in collaboration with the consulate.

c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?

The Cambodia's Identification of Poor Households Programme (2005) identifies beneficiaries of the NSSF according to a points-based system that takes into account sources of income, the features and condition of the family house and land available for plantation, among other factors. "Poor" households are entitled to receive cash transfers and benefits to improve access to health care, education and water. There is no requirement to be a Cambodian national or a regular migrant. However, the mechanism for determining the recipients of the Programme involves a process of commune or village-level selections and approvals. Thus, the Programme may fail to include migrants of other nationalities or characteristics.

Cambodia does not have a government agency or department responsible for an overall migration policy, rather there are multiple departments involved. For example, the General Department of Labour, within the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training is the primary body governing labour migration, in association with the MoFA-IC and the Ministry of Interior. The MoFA-IC is in charge of distributing all relevant documents and regulations, facilitating legal labour migration (Cambodian citizens working in other countries) and managing and resolving disputes between workers and their employers in migrant receiving countries via Cambodian embassies. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training is responsible for designing and coordinating the Policy on Labour Migration for Cambodia.

Cambodia does not have a specific agency responsible for emigration (the permanent migration out of Cambodia) despite the fact that the Department of Employment and Manpower of the General Directorate of Labour is the major office managing the migration of Cambodian workers abroad and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational training is responsible for the protection of the rights of Cambodians who migrate overseas for work. Cambodia does not keep a record of its nationals living abroad, an emergency number to call for consular assistance, data collection on numbers, location and profile of nationals abroad, etc.

Although Cambodia maintains 27 embassies and 29 consulates to assist its nationals living abroad, there are no labour attachés or ministries/offices of diaspora. There are only a few NGOs working with Cambodian diaspora communities located outside of Cambodia, mostly the minority groups,

such as Khmer Kampuchea Krom for Human Rights and Development Association and Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation. In general, Cambodia does not formally engage members of the diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda setting and implementation of development policy. Despite this, in Cambodia there are many original Khmer Kampuchea Krom holding some higher positions in the Government without discrimination such as at the supreme court, NCCT, and other ministries.

In March 2018, IOM Cambodia collaborated with International Justice Mission, PAC and the Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Police conducted training for Cambodian diplomatic and consular personnel of the MoFA-IC on How to Identify and Assist Victims of Human Trafficking. The purpose of the training was to (1) increase their understanding of what human trafficking is, why it takes place and the international legal framework to combat human trafficking; (2) to increase their capacity to identify victims of human trafficking and how to refer them to the right people and organizations, including understand the special considerations that need to be kept in mind when dealing with victims of trafficking; (3) to increase their capacity to protect individuals and nationals against exploitation and assist in cases of safe return for identified victims through cooperate with relevant organizations. A total of 30 participants who were responsible for delivering pre-departure briefings or trainings to consular staff of the MoFA-IC Participated in the training.

IOM Cambodia has now been working with the MoFA-IC to develop, design and pilot the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) e-learning course as a consular service training course and e-learning platform for Cambodian consular officials, labour attachés and diplomats to respond to the increasing demand for assistance and protection by Cambodian migrant workers and citizens abroad. It is expected that the e-learning course would be readily online by the end of February 2021 and the MoFA-IC's consular officials, labour attachés and diplomats will be able to access the training and apply the skills and knowledge from the training to provide improved support and assistance to Cambodian migrants overseas.

d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned by your Government in implementing these objectives.

As a member of the Colombo Process, Cambodia has committed to maximizing the contribution of remittances to development by providing migrants with financial education and promoting the financial inclusion of remittance receivers. The Policy on Labour Migration also notes the importance of remittances as an important source of income for migrant families. However, there are no specific programmes in place to actively promote the financial inclusion of migrants or the creation of formal remittance schemes.

The RGC always focus the solution at three stages in the cycle of migration, including the pre-departure stage, the destination country stage, and the return and reintegration stage. International and national laws and policies are in place and enforced, as well as bilateral and multilateral memorandum of understanding and agreements between relevant countries are being used to strengthen collaboration to protect migrant rights, dignity and benefits. NCCT, the National mechanism in charge of counter trafficking in persons, is very keen in taking action to improve the situation of child migrants who are the next generation of migrants and who are at high risks of losing their identity including nationality, education, and other rights and status as the normal Cambodian citizens.

Questions (about 500 words per question 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d - please attach paper and documents, as needed):

4. Improving value-driven and evidence-based policymaking and public debate, and enhancing cooperation on migration	GCM Objectives: 1, 3, 7, 17, 23
a. Please highlight migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.	
<p>The RGC has proved its commitment to promoting the labour migrants’ rights and their well-beings by supporting as well as implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The government sees that there are a lot for the government to do in collaboration with health, non-health and private sectors within the countries as well as with other countries that receive the Cambodian labour migrants.</p>	
<p>While the national discourse focuses commonly on ways to address the issue of irregular migration of Cambodian migrant workers to Thailand, close attention is also being paid to developing the current regular/MOU processes that still have a lot to improve including reducing the vulnerabilities at all stages of migration, eradicating all forms of discrimination, collecting accurate data, promoting evidence-based policy, and strengthening international cooperation.</p>	
<p>Cambodia still has limited capacity and resources in gathering and maintaining data of Cambodian migrants working abroad. Data collection and management is a huge challenge when dealing with irregular migration. This presents a lot of challenges for rescues and tracing when a migrant has gone missing for a particular reason. It even is harder for the government to develop responsive policies that are based on adequate evidence when there is inadequate or inaccurate data about migration.</p>	
<p>Seeing the needs for collecting systematic and accurate data about migration for evidence-based policies and the needs for increasing the international cooperation for an improved migration management process, in 2020 the RGC officially selected two objectives as priority for implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. They are Objective 1 - Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies; and Objective 23 - Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration.</p>	
b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).	
<p>The 2003 MOU between Cambodia and Thailand on Sending of Migrant Workers; which is still in use; has the objectives of providing the proper procedures for the employment of workers, protecting workers from trafficking and illegal border crossing and employment, effective repatriation of workers, and protection of workers' rights. Protections focus on the rule of law for providing rights to workers (Article 17), principles of non-discrimination and entitlement to wages (Article 18), and due process for dispute resolution (Article 19). The MoU promotes the rights of workers from both countries and Article 20 and 21 provide protection against illegal border crossings, trafficking and illegal employment and require the parties (Cambodia and Thailand) to share information to this end. In January 2020, the Association of Cambodian Recruitment Agencies and the Manpower Association of Cambodia, in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, developed a Code of Conduct for Cambodian Private Recruitment Agencies aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of migrant workers in recruitment.</p>	
<p>The Cambodia’s NCCT, established in 2014 and chaired by the Ministry of Interior, collects and analyzes data; develops laws, policies and plans. The NCCT also has been coordinating efforts</p>	

with other ministries, institutions, non-governmental organizations, private sectors and other stakeholders to advance evidence-based policymaking and public debate and enhance cooperation on migration as well as respond to human trafficking issues through prevention, suppression, rescue of the victims, prosecution of the traffickers and protection of vulnerable people.

Cambodia regularly participates in bilateral migration discussions with other countries. In April 2019, Cambodian and Thai Government representatives participated in the 2nd *International Exchange Visit for Dialogue* – an ad hoc forum aiming at strengthening the multi-stakeholder dialogue between the two countries to improve the implementation of the MoU on Cooperation in the Employment of Workers. In October 2019, Cambodia hosted the Conference for Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Myanmar on *The Role of Sending Countries in the Protection of Migrant Workers*. In February 2020, NCCT worked with IOM to host the Regional Workshop on Safe Migration of Sending Countries, involving Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.

Cambodia has also participated in the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) assessment and in 2020 Cambodia cooperated with IOM to look at what the government has done well and what the government needs to focus more for a planned and well-managed migration process in Cambodia. In January 2021, Cambodia launched the MGI report with relevant ministries to present the key findings. The report, although in near final stage, was very informative since it gave insights into the best practices, lessons learnt, and gaps for a good migration governance.

Following the selection of the two GCM objectives in July 2020 related to data collection and international cooperation for improved migration management, NCCT wrote a report to officially inform the decision/policy makers of the relevant and key ministries about the result. To increase the implementation, NCCT also requested the key ministries to identify their existing relevant activities that are contributory to the two GCM objectives. Moreover, NCCT also requested the ministries to identify gaps as well as develop more strategies under their respective sectors to contribute to the implementation of the objectives.

NCCT and IOM support the Ministry of Health to develop a “policy on Migrant Health” and it will be launched in early of 2021. The implementation plan will be developed afterward. NCCT also support the initiative of Plan International and Cambodia-Act to establish a collaboration between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education in Thailand to set up a bilingual education for children at the border, Thailand-Cambodia to have a common educational program and will consider expanding the program to child migrant in Thailand.

In early January 2021, NCCT collaborated with IOM Cambodia to provide technical guidance to Cambodian key ministries to develop GCM implementation activities in their national strategic plan. To do this, NCCT and IOM presented the MGI report as samples and examples and highlighted key activities that were done well by the government to promote safe, orderly and regular migration as well as potential areas that the government should focus in their strategic action plan with a highlight on systematic data collection for evidence-based policy making and increased international cooperation to promote safe, orderly and regular migration.

c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?

Despite the fact that documentation is always made about the information of Cambodian irregular migrants being sent back by the Thai authorities through deportation, there is no accurate data about the overall number of Cambodian irregular migrants in Thailand. According to the Cambodia’s NCCT, anecdotal data about Cambodian irregular migrants in Thailand may be up to one million, but the national estimate is a lot smaller. This presents many challenges for the

government to develop and implement evidence-based policy to address the irregular migration issues. There is a need for all the relevant stakeholders that are involved with working on irregular migration issues to strategize and coordinate data about the Cambodian irregular migrants.

Migration discourse at the national and sub-national levels only focuses on internal and international migration of the Cambodian nationals.

The government's GDI collects information on migrants entering and leaving Cambodia, however their policy is to not publish this data.

There are other government units that collect migration-related data, but this is not regularly carried out. For example, the Ministry of Planning has conducted a one-off Women and Migration study which collected migration data disaggregated by sex. The data includes statistics on the educational attainment of female migrants in Phnom Penh, motivations for migration to Phnom Penh, occupations of male and female migrants, and average salary of male and female migrants. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training's Labour Migration Policy (2014) also contains migration data, including the number of migrants who registered in Thailand in 2014 and the deployment of Cambodian workers in foreign employment between 2005-2014 disaggregated by sex. The Ministry of Planning also conducted a Cambodia Rural-Urban Migration Project in 2012, which assessed rural to urban migration based on push-pull factors, ease of transition and gender. Additionally, the National Population Policy 2016-2030 (2015) contains statistics about migration disaggregated by sex, but it is was published on a one-off basis.

d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned.

The Thai Government officially closed its borders with Cambodia and other neighboring countries on 23 March to curb the COVID-19 impact. NCCT anticipated that migrants would return to their home country due to the loss of employment and income and fear of COVID-19 pandemic. The measure that NCCT took was to inform the governors of border provinces to establish multidisciplinary groups to receive the migrants and to create a template for collecting data (on health screening, home addresses and contact details) of the migrant returnees as well as to develop the referral and support system from the border to their homes.

The data collected in the template has been used to create response interventions, including health and COVID-19 check-up, care and support at the quarantine facilities, resource allocation to the migrants' needs, program development at the national level. In addition, the data has also been used to create a joint program between the UN agencies (WHO, IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF) and the Government (led by NCCT) under the UN-MPTF to respond to the needs of migrant returnees amidst the COVID-19 impacts in three selected provinces with the highest number of returnees (over 60%) namely Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Siem Reap. IOM, UNFPA, other organization and the government have conducted some surveys to explore more about the migrants' needs to respond to the medium and long-term impact of COVIC-19.

5. What steps has the Government taken to integrate the **vision and cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles** of the Global Compact for Migration (see paras 8 to 15 of the Global Compact (see General Assembly resolution 73/195)) into its implementation? How was this accomplished? (please check against the principles that have been integrated)

Guiding principle	Principle has been integrated <input type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	Explanation (please provide explanation on additional paper and attach relevant documentation)
People-centred	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
International cooperation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
National sovereignty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Rule of law and due process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Sustainable development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Gender-responsive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Child-sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Whole-of-government approach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Whole-of-society approach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	

Questions (about 500 words per question 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 - please attach paper and documents, as needed and relevant):

6. How is the Global Compact for Migration contributing to realizing the achievement of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**? What has your Government done to integrate the implementation of the Global Compact objectives into SDG implementation?

Answer: The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) is implementing the GCM because it also contributes to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under Target 10.7 “facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”. The RGC’s key ministries have been officially involved in the discussion and selection of the GCM objectives for implementation to address the current priorities and needs in Cambodia.

In order to ensure the implementation of the two nationally-selected GCM objectives, NCCT sent out a letter to all the key ministries and directorates to inform them in writing about the prioritized objectives and to request them to identify their existing activities in their strategic plans as well as to develop and incorporate strategies for implementing the SDG that will contribute to achieving them. On 12th January 2021, NCCT organized a national consultation workshop with decision and policy makers from key ministries to collect inputs for the GCM voluntary review and to provide orientation and guidance to the representatives for developing their respective ministries’ strategies for implementing the two GCM objectives as parts of their SDG implementation. Another national consultation workshop will be organized in March 2021 in order to follow up with the GCM implementation.

7. From the Government’s perspective, are there any objectives of the Global Compact for Migration that are of particular importance in the national context? Please name the **objectives that the Government has prioritized and explain why.**

Answer: RGC, with technical and logistical support of IOM, has organized several high-level consultation workshops to sensitize the decision makers and policy makers of key ministries and directorates with the migration issues in Cambodia as well as to introduce the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the RGC's commitment to the international community to implement it. On 30th July 2020, RGC officially selected two objectives at a high-level consultation meeting held at the Ministry of Interior, as the RGC's priority to implement the GCM. These objectives include:

The Two Selected GCM Objectives:

A. Objective 1: Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies:

The reason Objective 1 is prioritized because the RGC consider the adequate data related to migration very important to create evidence based strategies and measures to respond to the concerns and needs of migrants, to protect their rights and overcome risks and all types of exploitation and crime against them. However the gathering of accurate and adequate data is hard for the government because migrants, victims and perpetrators is everywhere, and we need these data to develop effective and evidence-based policies to address issues affecting both migrants going through the regular and irregular channels, and will help the RGC to achieve the safe, orderly and regular migration process and to help migrants' children who were born overseas can access to legal identity status. For those going through the regular channel or MOU process, there is data maintained by the Ministry of Labour about the number of migrants sent to work abroad. However, there is no data about the number of migrants who return home for reasons of finishing the job assignments or having their contract terminated. This lack of data makes it hard for the RGC to provide further reintegration or other follow up support. Therefore, this objective is priority for RGC and it need to be improved by involving stakeholders.

There are many Cambodian irregular migrants in Thailand, but there is no clear data about them. According to the National Committee of Counter Trafficking, there is a large discrepancy between such data counted in Cambodia by the national census and that counted in Thailand. There is also concern about the number of children of Cambodian born in Thailand to irregular migrants with no identity. This discrepancy in the data management of the Cambodian migrants working overseas make it hard for the RGC to develop policy strategies to effectively address the irregular migration issues.

With the selection of this Objective 1 as the priority to implement the GCM, the RGC is expecting to involve whole-of-government approach to coordinate and accurately manage shared data of both the regular and irregular migrants from departure to return/reintegration. The purpose of implementing this Objective 1 is to ensure all migrants will go through the safe, orderly and regular process and that all their children born overseas have legal identity.

B. Objective 23: Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration.

RGC has prioritized objective 23 as it sees the importance of internal, international and global cooperation and partnerships for enabling all Cambodian migrants to benefit from a safe, orderly and regular migration process. The NCCT, as the lead government unit with membership consisting of all the government, UN, IO, CSO, and private sectors, has been tasked to lead all the sectors in Cambodia and its counterparts in the Cambodian migrant-receiving countries to establish a joint and coordinated mechanism for a safe, orderly and regular migration for the Cambodian migrants. This mechanism is expected

to improve national, international and global cooperation to address all dimensions of issues and crisis of the whole migration process including pre-departure, departure, stay and work, and return to home country upon completion of job assignments.

8. From the Government's perspective, how and to what extent have **regional plans and strategies** incorporated the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration? What are the main achievements, gaps and challenges to existing regional approaches, strategies and implementation plans?

Answer: The RGC sees many regional initiatives/consultative processes as the joint efforts to incorporate the GCM objectives in the regional plans and strategies. Some examples of these include:

- A. **The Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT):** COMMIT is one of the regional consultative processes established in 2004 in which Cambodia participates as a member state. COMMIT has other member states including China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Initiative seeks to promote member state cooperation in combating trafficking, protecting victims and prosecuting criminals. In addition to the COMMIT, these member states signed the MoU on Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region in the same year.
 - B. **The Regional Consultative Process on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia (Colombo Process):** Colombo Process is another regional consultative processes established in 2003 in which Cambodia participates as a member state. There are eleven other Asian labour-sending countries that are also members of the Colombo Process. The Colombo Process aims to allow its members to share best practices on overseas employment and contractual labour, consult each other on issues faced by overseas workers and offer solutions for their well-being, optimize development benefits from organized overseas employment and monitor the implementation of ministerial recommendations.
 - C. **The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):** ASEAN is a regional intergovernmental organization of which Cambodia is a member. Through the ASEAN framework on Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA), Cambodia has agreed to mutually recognize employment standards and qualifications with other Member States in some professions, such as engineering, architecture and tourism.
 - D. Cambodia also participates in the **Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process)** and the **Asia-European Union Meeting's Conference of the Directors General of Immigration and Management of Migratory Flows**; which were both established in 2002; for policy dialogue, information sharing and practical cooperation to help the region address the challenges related to migrant smuggling, human trafficking and other transnational organized criminal activities.
9. What **methodology** was adopted for completing this voluntary GCM review; how was a whole-of-government approach applied through engaging the various relevant ministries and other sectors of government; what mechanisms were used to engage civil society and other relevant stakeholders for a whole-of-society approach?

Answer: IOM Cambodia provided technical and logistical support. The RGC represented by NCCT, with IOM as co-facilitator, led the consultation to collect inputs for completing this voluntary GCM review. The plan was to engage all the key stakeholders to discuss and share the inputs including the key government ministries, UN, IO, NGOs/CSOs and private sectors who had been always invited to the consultations for the implementation of the GCM. Due to the COVID-19 crisis and the government's restriction, the consultation was organized in hybrid mode. Only decision and policy makers from key ministries; which also already represented the NGOs/CSOs and/or private sector through their partnership; were invited to participate face-to-face at a hotel conference room. (For example, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training collaborate with ILO, IOM and migrant worker union). The UN Migration Network members were invited to attend virtually.

For the first step of the consultation, NCCT sent out the hard invitations with the questionnaire enclosed to the key ministries to invite them to attend face-to-face and to request them to review the questionnaire in advance. IOM sent out emails to invite the UN Migration Network members to participate virtually. Similarly, the questionnaire was attached with the email to request them to review in advance for inputs.

The second step was the collection of the inputs during the consultation workshop. Face-to-face participants formed groups to discuss their answers. One IOM staff member per each group facilitated the discussion and note down their answers. Virtual participants were also requested to share their inputs through the chat box of the Teams software.

Due to the reason that participants at the consultation had not had a chance to read the questionnaire before they came to the workshop, they were able to provide only some answers. They needed more time to discuss with their management as well as their technical colleagues. Therefore, the third step was to request the face-to-face participants to discuss the inputs with their respective ministries and provide their answers through a Telegram group. Virtual participants were also requested to share their additional inputs to the questionnaire to IOM.

The last step was the consolidation and translation (into English, by IOM) of the inputs from both the face-to-face and virtual participants. The consolidated and translated inputs were then used to complete the questionnaire.

10. Given the outbreak of **COVID-19** which has affected all countries in the region, what challenges has the Government identified in implementation of the Global Compact for Migration as part of the COVID-19 response, and what has the Government done to address the specific situation of migrants and their families?

Answer: Although the COVID-19 pandemic has seemingly slowed down the implementation of GCM, the crisis has given a lot of opportunities for the RGC to focus more on the needs of the migrants, especially those returning from overseas due to fear of COVID-19 transmission and loss of jobs. Although the original plan was to hold the national consultation workshop to determine GCM objectives for implementation in early 2020, the COVID-19 persistently caused the delays. The commitment was only fulfilled on 30th July 2020 when the RGC finally managed to organize the high-level national consultation workshop to officially confirm the selection of the two GCM objectives. Despite the postponement, the mass return of migrants from overseas, especially Thailand, raised a lot of concerns related to their health risk and their socio-economic challenges. The RGC with the support of the UN Country Team shifted the focus of the GCM implementation to the needs for addressing the health and socio-economic support to migrants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result, more government, UN, CSO, and private sectors have started to focus on the needs of migrants from the policy to the implementation levels. Obviously, the GoC, in collaboration with the UN Country Team, organized a high-level National Consultation Meeting on 22 April 2020 on Rapid Responses to Short, Medium and Long Term Needs of Migrant Workers During the COVID-19 Crisis. The Meeting was chaired by Samdech Krolar Home Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, and attended by 32 policy and decision makers from relevant ministries and nine representatives of the UNCT. The Meeting resulted in two main outputs including (1) migrants and their families are now included in the National Social Security Fund and (2) establishment of two working mechanisms for rapid response to the COVID-19 crisis amongst the returning migrants and their communities. The two mechanisms include: (a) Health and Protection Mechanism; and (b) Food Security and Livelihood.

The Health and Protection Mechanism is led by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with WHO. This Mechanism has other relevant ministries, UN, IO, SCO organizations and private sectors involved in the health-related work as members. It ensures that migrants and their families have access to COVID-19 health-related information including awareness about signs and symptoms, how the virus spreads, how to prevent transmission, when and where to seek medical intervention. The Mechanism also builds on the skills and knowledge of the public health system to ensure that migrants and their families have full access to the testing and treatment of COVID-19.

Food Security and Livelihood is led by the Ministry of Commerce and Finance in collaboration with IOM. This Mechanism has other members including relevant ministries, UN, IO, SCO organizations and private sectors involved in work to improve the socio-economic wellbeing of the migrants and their families.

END