



Multi-Stakeholder Consultation

Africa Regional Review of the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Thematic area 3

“Supporting the integration of Migrants and their contribution to Development”

Thursday, 1 July 2021

Co-leads: WHO, ILO and IOM

Rapporteur: Hakima Haithar

Introduction

1. In line with the commitments outlined in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), including the guiding principle of a “whole-of-society approach” to GCM implementation, follow-up and review, and in preparation for the first African regional review of the implementation of the GCM in August 2021, the International Labour Organization(ILO), the World Health Organization(WHO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the African Union Commission (AUC), in coordination with the United National Network on Migration(UNNM) jointly convened a multi-stakeholder consultation with all relevant stakeholders on the thematic area 3 **on ‘Supporting the integration of Migrants and their contribution to Development’** to ensure transparent, inclusive, diverse and meaningful stakeholder engagement and participation during the review process.
2. With the participation of the various stakeholders, the online meeting organised on the Thursday 1 July 2021 was an inclusive and multi-stakeholder consultation. More than two hundred and eighteen participants, including diaspora organizations, academia, media, child- and youth-led organisations, civil society organisations, women’s organisations, national human rights institutions, and trade unions contributed to the discussion. The stakeholder consultation focused on the following GCM objectives :
 - Objective 14: Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle;
 - Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants;
 - Objective 16: Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion;
 - Objective 19: Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries;

- Objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants; and
 - Objective 22: Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits.
3. The consultation consisted of an opening plenary, followed by panel discussions, break out groups and a summary of the day.

Opening session

4. The consultation commenced with welcoming remarks from UNECA and the UNMN.
5. **Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo**, a representative from UNECA, representing IOM, AUC and the Kingdom of Morocco thanked the organizers. She encouraged participants to engage in the discourse for the day. She mentioned migrants' contributions to the objectives being discussed as very crucial to the Global Compact and will ensure that the African narrative is adequately reflected and reported on. She emphasized the protocol on free movement as key to achieving Africa's prosperous agenda, particularly considering the growing anti-migrant sentiments globally. She spoke to the need for appropriate labor and migration policies as being key as well as the lifting of restrictive barriers. She highlighted that the global discourse tended to criminalize migration and mobility, with evidence showing that liberal border regimes tend to lead to more return, safe journeys and the abuse of migrants' limits access to simple basic rights such as mobility and access to basic health and societal services.
6. **Ms Monami Maulik**, from the Secretariat of the UNNM gave a background to the GCM, its objectives and principles that guide it. She discussed the progress and update of the Network, the MMPTF, the knowledge platform hub as well as shared the dates for the IMRF. She encouraged participants to send written submissions of their assessments and recommendations to the UNMN. The submissions will be posted on the regional review webpage and will feed into the IMRF.

Session 1: Panel Discussion

7. The Panel Discussion was facilitated by **Prof Davide Mosca**, Honorary Associate Professor, University College London(UCL). He praised the GCM as a framework for accountability and encouraged open discussions on the objectives. He introduced the various panellists who shared their experiences and assessed the progress challenges and opportunities made in Africa.
8. **Mr Charles Munyao**, Deputy Director of Migration Services and Secretary of the National Coordination of Migration Kenya spoke to theme 1, which focused on objective 14 of the GCM (*consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle*). He highlighted the role of the consular services which included; protection, assistance and cooperation. As a country, Kenya have started to move consular services where they are needed rather than in capital cities. He also noted that the main areas of concerns for citizens were labour related and the country now has labour attaches at consular offices especially in the Middle East. The country has

also enhanced protection through labour agreements with countries that citizens mainly travel to. Although some progress has been made, challenges include: (i) Undocumented citizens in the country of destination not registering with consular offices which makes protection difficult and leads to inadequate data on the diaspora; (ii) Inadequate capacity at consular offices as on average the office had one consular per diplomatic post which is not sufficient in countries with large number of citizens; (iii) Budget allocation and personnel are also another challenge; (iv) Lack of cooperation between member state has also lead to the duplication of consular services; (v) Incorrect information as to the reason for travel by citizens also makes it difficult for the consular to support its citizens adequately. He ended his session with the **recommendations below for the enhancement of consular services:**

- There is a need for bilateral labor agreements with host countries in order to strengthen regulatory framework for employment agencies;
- Governments need to deploy additional staff to missions in countries with a high concentration of citizens;
- The need to develop a framework for the transferability and portability of social security benefits; and
- Implement strategies aimed at enhancing constructive dialogue and conducting civic education between citizens abroad and other stakeholders to create better understanding for mutual engagement.

9. **Ms. Annika Lenz** of the UN-Habitat spoke to theme 2 of the consultation (access to basic services for migrants, inclusion and social cohesion). This theme covered, *Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrant and Objective 16: Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion*. She highlighted that access to health care, water, sanitation, housing, and education are basic human rights and should never be limited. However, migrants around the world have a challenge to realize these human rights. It is estimated that in 30 years, cities in Africa will double in size, migration internally will also increase. The provision of services with regards to migration is the responsibility of local authorities in cities where access to services tends to be better. However, in Africa most migrants live in slums. Most of the urban growth in Africa will also happen in cities, which is problematic as there is insufficient financial infrastructure and the lack of political will and data gaps remain problematic as mapping for the necessary financial and service programmes become uncertain. The challenge to access services include housing with migrants disproportionately affected from homelessness living in substandard accommodations such as slums, and in overcrowding housing. Migrants are also more affected from forced evictions, and they tend to be spatially segregated in areas with poor public services that are not well connected to other parts of the city. Financial barriers and long distances keep many migrants from seeking care. For undocumented migrants, the situation is even more difficult as they fear any contact with authorities or official institutions.

Recommendations:

- Migrants should be included in data collection exercises to help towards the creation of safe and inclusive public spaces;
- Cities need to plan ahead for migration population growth;
- Housing and property rights need to be strengthened to help migrants with a more stable and formal space in society; and
- Local authorities need to install more stable policy infrastructures for the displaced.

10. **Ms. Almaz Negash**, Executive Director of Africa Diaspora Network spoke to theme 3 which speaks to *objective 19 of the GCM (Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries) and objective 20 (Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants)*. She highlighted the contributions of migrants in societies they lived in. She focused on migrants living in the United States of America. The Africa Diaspora Network research found that overall Black immigrants from Africa are more likely to have a college or higher degree than Americans. She emphasized that migrants did not take but gave both to their host countries and countries of origin. In the USA, Africans contributed US\$36 billion in taxes. In 2020, remittance to sub-Saharan Africa increased to US\$42 billion an amount three times higher than foreign aid to the continent. She implored African governments to treat Africans better on the continent and only then would they get the respect they deserve elsewhere.

Recommendations:

- Harmonize remittance market regulation, reduced transactional costs and increase the interoperability of remittance infrastructure;
- Establish conducive policy and regulatory frameworks that promote a competitive and innovative remittance market;
- Establish conducive policy and regulatory frameworks that promote a competitive and innovative remittance market;
- Develop programs and instruments to promote investments from remittance senders in local development and entrepreneurship;
- Enable migrant women to access financial literacy training and formal remittance transfer systems, as well as to open a bank account; and
- Provide access to and develop banking solutions and financial instruments for migrants.

11. **Ms. Samia Kazi Aoul**, of the ILO, spoke to theme 4 of the consultation (*portability of social security entitlements and benefits*), which speaks to objective 22 of the GCM (*establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits*). She informed participants that social protection, or social security, is a human right and is defined as the set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle. The portability of social security rights and benefits requires cooperation between the host and origin

countries. She observed that in Africa the number of ratification of ILO Conventions was low. However, despite the low number 71% of African countries provided equality of treatment in social security despite a lack of ratification. The coverage of social protections in Africa remains limited with only 18% of the population being covered by social protection benefits. South Africa has the most comprehensive social security on the continent but different countries have varying degrees of social security, some with only medical, unemployment or old age.

Recommendations:

- Establish or extend comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems for all workers including migrant workers;
- Ratification and implementation of relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations;
- Conclusion and enforcement of social security agreements (bilateral/multilateral);
- Adoption of unilateral measures including ensuring equality of treatment or the establishment of national social protection floors;
- Inclusion of social security provisions in bilateral labour arrangements (BLAs) or Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs);
- Complementary measures addressing the administrative, practical, and organizational obstacles faced by migrant workers; and
- Gender considerations, needs of specific groups, social dialogue.

Session 2: Open consultation in plenary

12. During the second session of the consultation, participants shared their experiences, challenges, and recommendations for the Africa continental review that will be held on the 31 August - 1 September 2021. Four groups were set up to discuss the objectives of the consultation.

13. **Group one discussion was facilitated by Ernest Dabire, Senior Advisor/response monitoring, WHO African Regional office.**

- Participants discussed the need to bring in social partners, employees, and workers organizations. They highlighted the need to find ways to ensure opportunities to bring in critical stakeholders to ensure policy decisions are taken in a consultative manner. Reference was made to the need for social dialogue and migrant workers to have access to organize themselves, as well as the opportunity to access their rights. The positive role of the ILO was mentioned for its convening role.
- Health and nutrition were a concern noted by participants. The need for collaboration between different sectors was mentioned as well as the role of NGOs to ensure migrants accessed health. Participants further highlighted the importance of empowering migrants to be part of host societies. There was a discussion on the lack of good governance on migration and health on the continent. The effects of Covid-19 was a case in point with thousands of migrants having been left stranded and left out of aid support. The need to include migrants in planning was further emphasized.

- Challenges faced by migrants in Uganda during the Covid-19 period was shared and included gender-based violence, clandestine movements, the abuses at borders and the effects this had economically, socially, and spiritually.
- A good practice was shared from Ghana where labor unions played an important role in the protection of the rights of migrant workers. Suggestions were made that the UN continues to work with labor unions for the protection of workers' rights.

14. Group two discussion was facilitated by Jason Theede, Regional Specialist Labour Mobility and Human Development, IOM regional office for Southern Africa

- Participants discussed migrant's resilience, with over US\$42 billion sent in remittances to Africa as recorded by the World Bank. An expectation in the increase of remittances in 2021 was also mentioned, noting the large financial inflow to developing countries. There has also been an increase in the number of migrants who have registered for digital transfers, with an expected increase of 2.5% this year. This is evident through examples like the Central Bank of The Gambia which has recorded a 20% increase, and the Central Bank of Kenya which has recorded an increase of over 10%, thereby signifying an increase in the use of formal channels.
- Legal frameworks were highlighted as important and conducive for children, as well as the challenges of integration faced due to language barriers. Civil society organizations have continued to provide health services to young girls and women, to ensure access similar to the citizens. Although efforts had been made by civil society, the absence of assistance from social services and embassies were visible, especially with separated or unaccompanied migrant children. The need for improved conditions for migrant children and an African mechanism that protects migrant children's rights was emphasized.
- A good practice was shared from Uganda with the constitution recognizing the rights to seek asylum in Uganda without discrimination, as well as the role of the Ministry of Gender Labor Social Development to protect, promote cultures, traditions, and customs under constitution.

15. Group three discussion was facilitated by Felicitas Mukurarinda, the Head of Project Support to the African Union on Migration and Displacement, GIZ AU Office- Addis Ababa

- Participants made reference to the importance of the consular authorities with regards to upholding human rights, legal identities, as well as enhancement of the consular protection assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle.
- Participants highlighted the need for policies to be created that can be adopted by Africa as a continent and highlighted the need to learn from the Middle East as one of the premium destinations for migrants, dealing with these issues on a regular basis. There was also a call on organizations to include migrants in their work, to influence the integration of migrants, as well as to make it easier to collect

data with regards to migrants. They also noted the need to educate people on migrants and migration.

- The participants also gave reference to disintegration as a problem, pointing out that the more disintegrated Africa is, the more Africans are mistreated in labor migration. They also depicted the need for negotiations for labor migration, human rights, and the need for a consensus at a regional level, for the changes to impact everyone. There was also a request made to the UN and IOM to assist and intervene in cases where young migrants are being jailed and killed globally.

16. Group four discussion was facilitated by Gloria Moreno-Fontes Chammartin, *Regional Labour Migration and Mobility Specialist ILO Regional Office for Africa*

- The participants spoke to the social protection of migrant workers, giving reference to paragraph 38 of the GCM. They also pointed out the importance of member states in committing to assist migrant workers at the skill levels to have access to social protection in countries of destination, as well as benefits.
- The establishment of non-discriminatory national social protection systems aligning with ILO recommendation 202 on social protection flows was recommended and reciprocal bilateral regional or multilateral social security agreements on the portability of earned benefits for migrant workers.
- There were further recommendations to integrate provisions on the portability of entitlements and earned benefits into national social security frameworks and designate focal point countries for transit and destination that facilitate portability requests from migrants.
- Contributions were also made with regards to a lack of coherence of social protection on the continent. However, Kenya was hailed as a good practice for coherence and alignment of its laws with current social protection realities.
- The lack of agreements between Central African countries was referred to. The facilitator also highlighted the high rate of mobility in Western Africa, also pointing out the social security agreements signed between the French government and North and West African states. The facilitator further highlighted the need to for countries to act with regards to this issue, as well as to ensure that social security laws make nationals and non-nationals equal.
- The facilitator also reflected on the importance of migration as a human right. She mentioned the benefits of migrants as not an allocation or surplus but simply an integral part in shared prosperity in all countries. Improving Africa's situation was called upon as priority, pointing out governments' failures, calling on countries to work with organized businesses to fight child labour, to increase productivity, and share benefits.
- There was a call for more advocacy for visibility, more sensitization, in regard to influence governments on health issues . There was also mention of the need for improved cooperation and collaboration, and adaptation of changes, care, and services. They also pointed out the need to increase the sharing of information to

improve joint processes, to improve rights and protection, highlighting upon the need to pay attention to Africa's weak social protection systems.

Wrap up session of the group/ Key takeaways:

- Africa can learn from the ASEAN approach when it comes to labor migration to have better protection measures for migrant workers in Countries of Destination.
- Even though there is solidified starting points between the Africa Union member states through the regional economic commission, there is also a need to create a "African joint process" to promote labour rights and protection.
- The Ratification of the African Union Free Movement Protocol needs to increase amongst member states to enable freedom of movement in Africa.
- There is a need to increase capacity building activities for countering/preventing trafficking of persons.
- There is a need to increase information sharing, with a clear differentiation between counter trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

Closing remarks

17. Prof. Davide Mosca Honorary Associate Professor, University College London, London (UCL), Phumza Manqindi, from the AU and Michela Martini, senior regional specialist migration health, IOM regional office for East and Horn of Africa concluded the meeting.
18. **Professor Davide Moska, IOM**, thanked the panellists, facilitators, notetakers and participants for the fruitful input and discussions. He requested participants to share any further input they may have with the relevant representatives to ensure all institution's inputs are considered in the global report.
19. **Phumza, AU Liason Office**, was encouraged that member states had submitted their reports although the GCM is not binding, 22 reports were received regionally on the implementation of the GCM. The review meetings will be an opportunity for regions to share their findings, concerns and progress. Stake holders have been encouraged to share their written submissions in preparation for the continental meeting which will take place from the 31 of August to the 1 of September 2021 and will further provide stakeholders with the opportunity to convey their progress in implementing the GCM on the continent.
20. **Michaela Martini, IOM**, informed participants that the consultation was an opportunity for African stakeholders to contribute at a global scale on the issue of migration. She highlighted advocacy, collaboration and cohesion as being key areas for the continent. She encouraged a continued multi stakeholder approach at national and international levels. She mentioned health as a component of migration that

should not be undermined but be a priority to ensure that migrants can contribute socially and economically to their countries of destination.

Conclusion

The meeting proved to be very useful and showed the existence of opportunities for African stakeholders to contribute to global reporting, signifying the beginning of an impactful route to development in Africa.