



Summary

UN Network on Migration - Executive Committee (EC) Principals Meeting Wednesday, 5 May 2021, 15.00 – 16.00h (virtual)

Participants:

António Vitorino, Director General, IOM, Network Coordinator
Michelle Bachelet, High Commissioner, OHCHR
Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner, UNHCR
Guy Ryder, Director-General, ILO
Achim Steiner, Administrator, UNDP
Ghada Fathy Waly, Executive Director, UNODC
Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General, UNDESA
Omar Abdi, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF
Santino Severoni, Director of the Health and Migration Programme, WHO

The Coordinator provided an update covering:

- The new Network workplan ready for endorsement.
- The regional reviews of the GCM, of which four out of five have already been held, with the Africa review to take place in July;
- The Champions initiative which includes 21 countries, yet SIDS were not represented, while Canada and Portugal were the only OECD countries represented;
- The Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) including its first rotation of its Steering Committee to take place this June whereby UNICEF and UNFPA will join the Steering Committee, replacing ILO and UN Women. The first 7 joint programmes covering all 5 thematic areas of the MMPTF are underway, with another 32 joint programmes ready to be implemented pending funding. The Steering Committee established a funding target of \$30m for 2021, yet is only 10% funded; and
- There are currently 48 country-level Networks and 6 regional Networks or other strengthened existing migration platforms.

The Principals had before them an agenda to consider the following, each accompanied with a brief background note:

- Network engagement with Member States heading towards the IMRF;
- Network contributions to the HLPF;
- Network advocacy on returns and reintegration; and,
- Network advocacy on migrants' access to the COVID-19 vaccinations and consideration of immunity passports

Workplan

The Coordinator proposed, and the Principals agreed, to endorse the Network workplan.



The International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and Member State engagement

The Principals noted the importance of the upcoming IMRF as the first occasion for Member States to review the GCM at the global level. The Network is working on the next SG's Report to be released by February 2022, with the suggested timeline that the IMRF will take place in May 2022. Such dates will be confirmed once the Coordinator speaks with the next President of the UN General Assembly in the Fall.

The Principals underlined the importance of Network support to Member States in the run-up to the IMRF as well as the linkages between the GCM and the 2030 Agenda. It was suggested that the Network systematically examine the Voluntary National Reports (VNRs) from this year's HLPF, which is reviewing the status of implementation of SDG 1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 16, 17 as well as Goals 8 and 10, which includes the only migration-specific targets (8.8 and 10.7). It was proposed that the Network convenes a VNR lab, focusing on the experiences and good practices of Member States in integrating migration into their VNRs. The need for outreach activities and advocacy messages in the context of the HLPF was highlighted.

It was suggested that the members of the Network convene a series of substantive, multi-stakeholder events with a view to preparing Member States and stakeholders for the first IMRF. In this regard, the Network could organize four webinars, one for each of the four roundtables to be held during the IMRF. It was stressed that delegations in both New York and Geneva should be regularly briefed on the status of preparations of the IMRF and be consulted in preparing the SGs report. Due support should also be provided to the work of the co-facilitators, to be appointed later this year.

It was emphasized that the Network should support whole-of-society approaches at all levels by creating expanded spaces for meaningful stakeholder engagement and for building collaboration in service of the GCM objectives, including in preparation for the IMRF.

As a number of Member States have already contributed to the regional reviews, they may also wish to update their inputs towards the SG Report. In addition, the importance of including youth in the IMRF process was underscored as was ensuring that the processes for the GCM and Global Compact for Refugees remained distinct given the difference between migrants and refugees also acknowledged by the Coordinator. Finally, the importance of promoting the Network's guidance to UNCTs as a tool to operationalize the GCM at country level was underscored.

The Principals emphasized the need for member agencies of the Network, both as a Network and through their own channels, to *engage* Member State, including in the run-up to the IMRF beyond the Champions, notably with the anticipated change in US position towards the GCM (and the Global Compact on Refugees) and how this may shift the positions of other Member States on the GCM. An offer was made to explore avenues to enhance system-wide collaboration, complementing efforts made by the Coordinator, to leverage support for GCM implementation by Member States. The Principals referred to the US interest around climate change and migration, and opportunities to use the UNFCCC COP 26 later this year as a point of Network engagement, noting the Network's new workplan included this topic. These signals also present an opportunity for the Network to mobilize resources for the Migration MPTF. It was suggested to hold a GCM event during the high-level week of the



September UNGA relating to the SDGs, and a Network briefing to Member States in October for the IMRF.

It was further suggested and supported that the SG's Report must strongly address organized crime which is driving the abuses and violence faced by too many migrants, especially in smuggling and trafficking. The Network had engaged a consultant who had begun work on the SGs report with the EC entities.

Action Points:

- *Develop key advocacy messages for the HLPF.*
- *Proceed with the Network timeline on the Secretary-General's Report for the IMRF.*
- *Pursue the organization of a VNR lab for the HLPF.*
- *Consider September event on the GCM and links with the Agenda 2030 during UNGA high-level week.*
- *Organize substantive, preparatory events for the IMRF, in particular focusing on the four IMRF roundtables.*
- *Engage in COP 26 on climate change and migration.*
- *Regularly brief Member State in New York and Geneva about the preparations of the IMRF, including the preparation of the SGs report.*
- *Continued engagement of Member States to support the GCM, including through renewed efforts to secure more Champions.*

COVID-19 Vaccinations and Immunity Certificates

The Principals emphasized that advocacy towards migrants' universal access to the COVID-19 vaccinations should be linked with accelerating universal health coverage and access to services. A key priority must be expanding the availability of vaccines across the board, are explicitly included in all countries' National Development and Vaccination Plans, including in transit and immigration detention and in ensuring firewalls. While there is evidence of unequal access of vaccinations including within countries, it was also noted that there are discrepancies between the National Deployment and Vaccination Plans and the in practice roll out of vaccination campaigns. For instance, some governments tend to keep a low-profile when ensuring that both migrants (regardless of status) and refugees are included, in practice, in their national vaccination roll-out; for other states it was an issue of lack of overall access to the vaccines rather than an issue of exclusion. It is important that the different Network entities tracking migrants and refugees' access to vaccination share and continue to align their data.

Several expressed concerns, in the current context, over governments' consideration of immunity certificates. Such certification may lead to and exacerbate discrimination and stigmatization, infringe on human rights and refugee law, and exacerbate inequities. It was underlined that the term 'passports' was associated with ethical ramifications and may not be appropriate in this context.

At the same time, a number of governments are adapting border measures on health grounds. It is important that any such measures are applied in a non-discriminatory manner.



Given the evolving nature of the pandemic, of vaccination deployment plans and collective understanding of the science regarding transmission, it is important that any Network advocacy on the subject be both nuanced and contextualized and evolve alongside evidence.

Action Points:

- *Strengthen Network advocacy on universal coverage of vaccination access, ensuring greater alignment of the presentation of the different analyses on this issue developed by Network entities.*
- *Remain updated on the issue of immunity certificates as evidence evolves.*

Network advocacy on returns and reintegration

Without discussion, the Principals endorsed the Network position paper on returns and reintegration and the recommendation for the working group to further develop its operationalization.