

Terms of Reference for the “Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region”

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I. Background

Migration is a reality that impacts millions of lives in the Arab region, which has witnessed unprecedented levels of human mobility in recent years. The Arab region continues to be marked by complex migration patterns, with many Arab countries serving as countries of origin, transit and destination. In 2019, the numbers of international migrants in the region exceeded 40 million, about 33 percent of them women, while more than 31 million people migrated from Arab countries, almost half of whom stayed in the region.¹ Migration carries immense potential for development for the region, with the region receiving US\$59.7 billion in remittances in 2019, almost twice as much as it received in official development assistance and twice the amount received in foreign direct investment in the same year. Poorly governed migration can create or exacerbate exploitation, abuse or other vulnerabilities faced by migrants and also posits significant challenges for origin and destination countries, which include ensuring the human rights and protection of all migrants.

a. The Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region

Given the increasing salience of migration on policymakers’ agendas, the need for inter-agency coordination to respond to the complex effects of migration and to ensure that the United Nations system and other international organizations speak with one voice on the issues of migration, the League of Arab States (LAS), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA) launched in 2013 the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region (Working Group) under the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM), and have since acted as its co-chairs.

The Working Group’s objectives were to coordinate the complementary efforts of actors in the Arab region and promote joint research, interventions, and regional dialogue and collaboration on migration. Under the auspices of the Working Group, groundbreaking resources on migration were produced, the highlight being the Situation Report on International Migration (of which three issues were developed in 2015, 2017 and 2019). The Working Group also organized high-level conferences to encourage regional dialogue and collaboration on migration, as well as capacity building workshops to support Member States to develop their migration governance frameworks. The Working Group has also accompanied Member States in the process leading up to the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in 2018, and has since implemented several activities to support the implementation and follow up and review of the GCM.

The Working Group consisted of 18 UN entities and the League of Arab States.² The Secretariat function of the Working Group had been assumed by UN ESCWA.

¹ UNESCWA-IOM (2019) E/ESCWA/SDD/2019/3: Situation Report on International Migration 2019: The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Context of the Arab Region.

² Members of the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region (in alphabetical order): Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), International Organization for Migration (IOM), League of Arab

b. The United Nations Network on Migration

In his December 2017 report, entitled “Making Migration Work for All,” the UN Secretary General outlined his vision on strengthening the UN system’s coordination on migration, to enable the UN to act as a source of ideas and policy guidance, as well as a convener, for the implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted in September 2016, and which paved the way for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) adopted in 2018.

Following system-wide consultations and the proposal by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, the Secretary-General decided, at a meeting of the Executive Committee on 23 May 2018, to establish a UN Network on Migration, as a successor to the Global Migration Group (GMG), to ensure effective, coordinated system-wide support to the implementation, follow up and review of the GCM.³

c. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

The global dialogue on international migration has gained increased momentum in the past decades that has led to the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016 by the UN General Assembly.⁴ In this Declaration, Member States committed to launch a process of intergovernmental negotiations that culminated in the landmark adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which was formally endorsed by UN General Assembly resolution 73/195 on 19 December 2018.⁵

The GCM is the first inter-governmentally negotiated agreement, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, covering all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It presents a non-legally binding, cooperative framework that builds on the commitments agreed upon by Member States in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. It fosters international cooperation among all relevant actors on migration, acknowledging that no State can address migration alone, and

States (LAS), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), World Health Organization (WHO).

³ In paragraph 45 of the GCM, Member States “welcome the decision of the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations network on migration to ensure effective and coherent system-wide support for implementation, including the capacity-building mechanism, as well as follow-up and review of the Global Compact, in response to the needs of Member States. In this paragraph, it is noted that (a) IOM will serve as the coordinator and secretariat of the network; (b) The network will fully draw from the technical expertise and experience of relevant entities within the United Nations system; and (c) The work of the network will be fully aligned with existing coordination mechanisms and the repositioning of the United Nations development system.

⁴ UN General Assembly, Resolution 71/1. New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted 19 September 2016, A/RES/71/1 (3 October 2016).

⁵ UN General Assembly, Resolution 73/196. Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, adopted 19 December 2018, A/RES/73/195 (11 January 2019).

upholds the sovereignty of States as well as their obligations under international law. The GCM presents a significant opportunity to improve the governance of migration, to address the challenges associated with today's migration, and to strengthen the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development. The GCM rests on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), international human rights, labour and transnational criminal law, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is framed in a way consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to leave no one behind and to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration.

c. The UN Reform

In response to the General Assembly landmark resolution 71/243,⁶ which called for a United Nations development system that is more strategic, accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient, effective and results-oriented, the UN Secretary-General initiated a review to reposition the United Nations development system to better service the 2030 Agenda, at the national, regional, and global levels.

At the regional level, the restructuring of UN development system assets were outlined in the UN Secretary-General's report titled "A/74/73–E/2019/14: [Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, 2019](#)". Among the main structural reforms was the move to create "Regional Collaborative Platforms" (RCPs), which aim to "foster collaboration on sustainable development across entities of the United Nations development system operating at the regional level. These platforms will absorb the different United Nations coordination mechanisms that currently exist, in particular the regional coordination mechanisms convened by the regional commissions and the regional teams of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, which bring together agencies, funds and programmes at the regional level providing backstopping support to entity in-country operations" (para 110).

RCPs will ensure optimal regional collaboration through establishing flexible, time-bound "issues-based coalitions" (IBCs) to respond to specific cross-border or sub-regional issues. Membership of IBCs is open to relevant regional actors, including the United Nations, civil society organizations, businesses and academia (para 112).

During the Regional Directors' meeting, convened in April 2020, the Regional Directors agreed on establishing the Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region.

d. Moving Forward

Building on the success of the Working Group, and in light of the continued need for enhanced collaboration on migration at the regional level, as well as the implications of the UN reform and the adoption of the GCM, it has become necessary to adapt the functions and objectives of the Working Group and to scale up its response to ensure that migration works for all in the Arab region.

The Terms of Reference for the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region from 2013 until 2019 were in effect amended to reflect new structures, functions, and objectives as well as to boost its agility to ensure that this inter-agency coordination mechanism aligns with the regional and global frameworks and reforms, and responds to increasing demand for support on migration governance from

⁶ UN General Assembly, Resolution 71/243. Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, adopted 16 December 2016, A/RES/71/243 (1 February 2017).

Member States. The Working Group is now transformed to the new coordination mechanism, the Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region, which will encompass the Regional UN Network on Migration in the Arab Region with independent functions and its own governance structure..

II. ISSUE BASED COALITION ON MIGRATION IN THE ARAB REGION – TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. OBJECTIVE

The Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region (the IBC/M) aims to facilitate effective, timely and coordinated efforts to promote a better understanding of current and emerging issues on migration in the Arab region, foster dialogue and collaboration between different relevant stakeholders to ensure a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to migration governance, and support Member States in their implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, in line with its Guiding Principles, and to align migration policies with relevant global frameworks.

B. SCOPE

The IBC/M scope of interest will include the different dimensions of human mobility, including the nexus of migration and development, international migration, rural to urban migration, climate change induced migration, labour migration, migration-related aspects of mixed movements in various situations. It will in relation to the above context, address the specific priorities and capacities of different migrant populations – men, women, child migrants together with other intersecting inequalities and vulnerabilities based on age, economic status, ethnicity, nationality, etc. Refugee related matters are governed within the framework of the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR).

C. FUNCTIONS

To achieve its objective, the IBC/M will carry out the following functions:

1. Foster regional coordination and collaboration based on a whole of government and whole of society approach, taking account of the heterogeneity and intersecting vulnerabilities of migrant populations.
2.
 - a. The IBC/M will engage with relevant government ministries and agencies on the basis of a whole-of-government approach and with other stakeholders on the basis of a whole-of-society approach, such as migrants, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations, trade unions, parliamentarians, National Human Rights Institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media, and other relevant stakeholders at global, regional and national levels.
 - b. The IBC/M will actively seek to engage with global and regional initiatives, such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development and Regional Consultative Processes on Migration from the region and beyond.
 - c. With LAS as a co-convenor and key member, the IBC/M seeks to strengthen the UN – LAS collaboration and coordination to achieve common goals.
3. Foster collaboration among IBC/M members by enabling members with complementary mandates, agendas and expertise to form Working Groups and Task Forces on specific migration issues under the IBC/M's umbrella.
 - a. Ensure coordination on emerging and time-bound issues, for example through establishing a Task Force on COVID-19 and Migration and Mobility in the Arab Region.
4. Build knowledge and share information and innovative research on migration in the Arab region.

- a. Act as a source of ideas, tools, reliable data and information, analysis, and develop policy guidance and tools that can support stakeholders in addressing migration priorities in the Arab region.
- b. Provide regionalized and comparable data and analysis on migration in the Arab region, through continuing to produce cutting-edge research, including the Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region.
- c. Capitalize on complementarity of specialization of members of the IBC/M to produce analytical and policy-relevant research on key migration issues related to the specific priorities of different migrant populations e.g women, children, in order to foster a holistic understanding of migration in the Arab States.
- d. Conduct mapping exercises of policies, programmes and activities, and products to identify existing gaps and opportunities related to the specific priorities of different migrant populations e.g women, and children, for collaboration in the Arab region.
- e. Ensure effective, timely, coordinated support to the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM in the Arab region, through encompassing in its governance structure the Regional UN Network on Migration. IOM, serves as Coordinator and Secretariat of the global UN Network on Migration, established by the UN Secretary General and welcomed in UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/73/195 adopting the GCM, para 45, and is tasked with fostering collaboration and consensus among Network members in all aspects of its functioning and work, and ensuring effective collaboration with existing coordination mechanisms and stakeholders. The Regional UN Network on Migration will ensure effective and coherent UN system-wide support for the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM at the national and regional levels through active coordination, joint fundraising, such as through the Multi Partner Trust Fund, and provide support to UN Country Teams and the UN national Networks on Migration.

D. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

1. Membership

The Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region is comprised of UN agencies that expressed interest to join, and the League of Arab States. The IBC/M will make efforts to expand the existing membership to other UN agencies and relevant regional actors, civil society organizations, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations, and academia, through the establishment of Working Groups and Task Forces. Agencies may be represented at senior/director and/or technical levels, as determined by each individual entity.

Stakeholders interested in joining the IBC/M can submit an expression of interest to the Secretariat of the IBC/M. The Co-Conveners review and approve the membership of new non-UN entities according to agreed-upon selection criteria in consultation with IBC/M members.⁷

a. Members at large

- Members of the IBC/M will contribute to the implementation of the IBC/M objectives and workplan and provide input and advice on strategic priorities.
- Members of the IBC/M will work towards providing in-kind and/or financial contributions in support of the implementation of IBC/M activities on an annual basis, as feasible.

⁷ Once the TOR is finalized, this section will be revised to reflect the final setup and agreed-upon selection criteria.

- Members of the IBC/M will provide substantial technical support, including in the development of position papers, reports, and other products, as needed.
- Members at large will engage in the formation of Working Groups and Task Forces under the umbrella of the IBC/M, provide guidance as needed, and periodically review their work, as required.

b. The Co-Conveners

- *Composition:* The Co-Conveners include the three co-chairs of the former Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region (ESCWA, IOM and LAS), and ILO.
- *Co-Conveners' Obligations:* In addition to substantial in-kind and financial contributions towards the implementation of IBC/M activities, Co-Conveners are expected to be able to dedicate the necessary time and human resources to fulfil the functions detailed below.
- *Functions:* The Co-Conveners will provide overall guidance to the work of the IBC/M. To this end, they will:
 - i. Guide the development of strategic priorities to achieve the IBC/M's mission.
 - ii. Guide the development of the IBC/M workplan and budget.
 - iii. Coordinate efforts to raise additional funds from donors, and other sources of funding to finance the IBC/M activities.
 - iv. Oversee timely delivery of implementation of the workplan.
 - v. Coordinate with the Regional UN Network on Migration on efforts regarding the regional review of the GCM every four years, beginning 2020.
 - vi. Agree on the Working Groups and Task Forces formed under the umbrella of the IBC/M, provide guidance as needed, and periodically review their work.
 - vii. Ensure coordination and encourage collaboration between members of the IBC/M, including in the context of the work of the Regional UN Network on Migration, to avoid duplication of efforts, optimize use of available resources, and ensure coherent support at the national and regional levels.
 - viii. Ensure effective communication and collaboration with existing coordination mechanisms and stakeholders.
 - ix. Assess and respond to the needs of the IBC/M Secretariat.

2. Work Modality

- a. Different members of the IBC/M could lead varying teams of agencies and non-UN stakeholders which become members of the IBC/M on different outputs in the context of work undertaken in the Working Group and Task Forces and Regional UN Network formed under the IBC/M's umbrella. Working Groups, Task Forces and the Regional UN Network maintain their independence and autonomy in terms of setting their work plans and outputs. Not all agencies, including the Co-Conveners, would have to be part of all outputs. Outputs developed by IBC/M Working Groups or Task Forces could be issued (endorsed) under the IBC/M as IBC/M products after informing the Co-Conveners and using the Logos of the participating agencies only.
- b. Whichever agency or agencies take/s the lead on a specific output would be responsible for clear ToRs and delivery of that output, for coordination with other contributing members, and for reporting to the Co-Conveners on progress made.

3. Decision Making

The general principle of the decision making across the different structures that compose the IBC/M is by consensus by members. Each structure (including Working Groups, and Task Forces, Regional UN Network) are to determine the most suitable decision-making process and governance structure.

4. Working Groups and Task Forces

Under the umbrella of the IBC/M, members are encouraged to explore areas of collaboration when and where needed and to form Working Groups and Task Forces, which serve to focus on specific priority issues of migration in the Arab region. The Working Groups and Task Forces also offer an ideal platform to bring together non-UN actors, including civil society organizations, the private sector, workers' and employers' organizations, academics and other regional fora, who wish to join the IBC/M. Collaboration could be in the form of joint activities and workstreams.

- a. Working Groups and Task Forces are formed based on the request of two or more members of the IBC/M.
- b. Proposals to form a Working Group or a Task Force and its workplan are submitted to the Co-Conveners for guidance and decision, as necessary.
- c. Working Groups and Task Forces can include IBC/M members that choose to join, in addition to non-members and partners, as deemed appropriate.
- d. Working Groups and Task Forces are encouraged to periodically update the Co-Conveners and the IBC/M of their activities and progress.

5. The Regional UN Network on Migration

In coordination with the IBC/M, UN entities (agencies, funds, programmes and related organizations) members of the IBC/M will come together in the Regional UN Network on Migration.

a. Regional UN Network Functions

- Allow for collaboration among its members at the global, regional and national levels to actively seek out synergies and ensure better-coordinated delivery on implementation, follow up and review of the GCM in the Arab region;
- Coordinate the quadrennial regional review and reporting processes from 2020 in the Arab region in close coordination with the IBC/M co-conveners.
 - Strengthen the regional partnership and involvement of all the relevant stakeholders by engaging with other external partners to promote joint work with and involvement of partners from outside of the UN, including in policy dialogues and exchanges.
 - Ensure that the regional review of the GCM is in line with the guiding principles of the GCM, provides a 360-degree reflection on progress towards implementation of the GCM, and engages with all relevant stakeholders.
- Provide information and guidance to RCs and UNCTs with regard to the establishment, transitioning, functioning and work of National UN Networks on Migration and promote peer learning among National Networks across the region in support of GCM implementation, follow-up and review upon requests from National Networks and/or RCs/UNCTs, and coordinate information sharing from Regional to National Networks and vice versa.
- Support the joint work planning and resource mobilization of the National UN Networks on Migration, inclusive of supporting of development of applications to the Multi Partner Trust Fund, and other potential project and programme funding.

- Provide support to UN Country Teams in their migration-related inputs to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in close consultation with National Networks to avoid duplication.
 - Provide technical assistance to the UN Country Teams’ strategic and analytical work on migration, including the incorporation and mainstreaming of migration into National Development Plans, development of Common Country Analyses and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.
- Promote the application of relevant international and regional norms and standards relating to migration and the protection of the human rights of migrants
- Ensure coordinated public advocacy on issues related to migration in line with and support of the global UN Network on Migration.
 - Ensure joint messaging, strengthening and promoting advocacy on issues related to migration, which would be delivered and amplified using a joined-up voice.
 - Develop and promote common UN approaches to raise awareness of the rights of migrants and to counter xenophobia
- Closely collaborate and coordinate with the Working Groups and Task Forces formed under the IBC bringing together multiple stakeholders to ensure a whole of society approach to the Network’s work and activities.
- Inform the Co-Conveners of its workplan and any emerging requests.
- Provide inputs and support to the global Capacity Building Mechanism’s connection hub and global knowledge platform through the UN Network on Migration.
- Provide updates to the global Network and regional input to Secretary General’s biennial report to the General Assembly.
- Inform national UN Networks with regards to its activities and of other regional and global processes in the area of international migration and related subjects at the national and regional levels to ensure optimal coordination, enhance information sharing, and create a community of practitioners.
- Ensure close coordination with the global UN Network on Migration, including its Coordinator, Executive Committee, Secretariat and Working Groups to ensure synergies and avoid duplication.

b. Regional UN Network on Migration Working Principles

In its work, the Regional UN Network will be guided by the following principles:

- *Accountability:* The UN Network and its members have the responsibility to implement their decisions as agreed and will be accountable to the Secretary-General who, in turn, is accountable to the General Assembly, including through the biennial reporting requested by the GCM, and other follow-up mechanisms of the GCM;
- *Human rights-based, gender-responsive and child-sensitive approach:* The UN Network will uphold and advocate the laws and principles to respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of all migrants and their communities, especially those in the most vulnerable situations;
- *Coherence:* The UN Network will draw from the mandates, technical expertise and experience of relevant entities within the UN system in supporting GCM implementation and promoting the overall coherence of the system’s work on migration;
- *Unity of purpose:* All members of the UN Network will be jointly committed to its success, placing emphasis on the added value of their coordinated work and of collaborating to achieve common goals;
- *Efficiency:* The UN Network will be fully aligned with existing UN system coordination mechanisms and will adopt a streamlined and efficient approach in all its activities;

- *Inclusivity*: The UN Network, in its own working methods and in engaging others, will operate in an inclusive, systematic, predictable and transparent manner;
- *Results-oriented*: The UN Network will focus on supporting the progress of Member States towards achieving implementation of the GCM;
- *Agility*: The UN Network will regularly review – both formally and informally – and where necessary recalibrate its methods and the focus of its work to ensure its impact is maximized.

c. Regional UN Network on Migration: Executive Committee

IOM will serve as the Coordinator and co-secretariat of the Regional UN Network on Migration which was established to ensure effective and coherent system-wide support for implementation, including the capacity-building mechanism, as well as follow-up and review of the Global Compact, in response to the needs of Member States. The Regional UN Network on Migration will be governed by an Executive Committee in line with the global UN Network on Migration. The below may entail:

- The Executive Committee will provide overall guidance to the work of the Network, setting strategic priorities to support Member States in the effective implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, including in the International Migration Review Forum established in the GCM.
- The Executive Committee will support the Secretariat in coordinating the work of the Regional UN Network, overseeing coherent country- and regional-level Network support, and ensuring effective collaboration with existing coordination mechanisms and stakeholders.
- The Executive Committee will, working with other members of the Regional UN Network, decide on the annual workplan for the Regional UN Network, propose the establishment, focus and composition of relevant Working Groups as the need arises.
- Executive Committee members will be jointly responsible for the Regional UN Network attaining its objectives and adhering to its working principles. They could provide, as appropriate, technical and/or human resources to the Network's Secretariat.

6. Secretariat roles (of the IBC/M and of the Regional UN Network)

- a. *The Secretariat* will be responsible for ensuring the timely and effective implementation of the workplan. It will fulfil the following duties:
 - Ensure day to day running of the IBC/M and the Regional UN Network and support the implementation of the respective workplans.
 - Convene meetings of the IBC/M and of the Regional UN Network.
 - Facilitate regular interaction between the members.
 - Brief Member States and other key stakeholders on the activities of the IBC/M and the Regional UN Network.
 - Keep the list of IBC/M and Regional UN Network members, including focal points and their alternates, updated and share it regularly with its members.
 - Maintain a web-based platform to include key working documents of the IBC/M and the Regional UN Network.
 - Coordinate with the Global UN Network on Migration regarding all activities of the Regional UN Network.
 - Co-sign all messages sent out by the Secretariat with representatives of the Executive Committee agencies and other relevant agencies as needed.
- b. Secretariat duties of the IBC/M and the Regional UN Network on will be undertaken by IOM and UN ESCWA.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- a. IBC/M will meet on a quarterly basis at technical level or more frequently as and when needed, and once a year at the senior/director level, or as needed, via VTC to discuss the progress of implementation of the IBC/M's workplan. The IBC/M will seize the opportunity of regional activities to hold in-person meetings whenever possible.
- b. The Co-Conveners will meet at least once a month via VTC to review progress on the workplan and follow up as needed on IBC/M activities.
- c. The IBC/M Secretariat regularly reports to the RCP in accordance with the RCP work modalities.
- d. As the Regional UN Network Secretariat, it will also regularly report through the Global Network Secretariat to the Secretary-General.
- e. The IBC/M will review the regional coordination structure and revisit the TOR as needed to discuss further based on the lessons learned.