United Nations Network on Migration

Working Better Together

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Regional Review in Latin America and the Caribbean
26-28 April 2021

Background note

Thematic table 1: Promoting fact-based and data-driven migration discourse, policy and planning

GCM Objective #1. Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies.	**GCM Objective #3**. Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration.
GCM Objective #17. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration.	**GCM Objective #23**. Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

I.   What is the importance of this thematic table?

The GCM fosters discussions on the need to improve and strengthen national migration information systems and enhance the availability of multidimensional evidence for the management and formulation of regulations, policies, programs and agreements, including in particular initiatives that are aimed toward eliminating discrimination and xenophobia against migrants and refugees. This is one of the most relevant and cross-cutting challenges that the thematic table can address. Currently, there is a consensus around the need to organize and strengthen migration information systems in the region through alliances where public and academic institutions interact, in addition to strengthening international cooperation and the participation of civil society, while considering different existing data sources (for example, censuses, household surveys, specific surveys on migration, the wide spectrum of administrative data, as well as emerging innovative sources of data such as big data, field monitoring of migration flows and more).

These developments will make it possible to obtain better evidence that allows countries to design and implement assistance and response programs with an adequate knowledge of real migration needs. In addition, they will make it possible to establish priorities, take advantage of current strengths and opportunities and generate evidence in multidimensional areas of the migration process / cycle, ranging anywhere from emigration and immigration, to return and transit, or the analysis of remittance flows, remittance transaction costs and the potential benefits of remittances, pension portability and even human trafficking and migrant smuggling, amongst others. Additionally, strengthening national migration information systems will assist in identifying situations of pre-existing vulnerability, both those related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other aspects that are strongly related to discrimination and xenophobia.

Finally, as established in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, it is necessary to generate evidence disaggregated by different characteristics, such as age, sex, ethnicity and disability.

II. What are key challenges and opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean in regard to the objectives of the round table? *(2-3 paragraphs)*

Among the most important challenges that must be addressed in the existing evidence base are the elimination of discrimination, and concurrently strengthening and fortifying relevant international cooperation agreements in the region that have an impact on the matter. Aside from this, countries must also begin by establishing baselines with shared definitions of safe, orderly and regular migration. Going forward, it is particularly important for the Global Compact to address the definition of metadata and establish goals and indicators, based on baselines, which measure progress on the action items for each objective moving forward.

Countries have made progress in recent years in terms of building evidence on and combatting discrimination and xenophobia, especially in the world of work. The evaluation of advances made in this area is still pending but could serve as an important starting point for sharing experiences. Synergies with initiatives such as the 2013 Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, the initiatives of international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as academic networks and civil society are a matter to take into account.

One of the challenges present in fighting xenophobia and discrimination perpetuated towards migrants and refugees is the development of effective operational tools to counter and address the harms caused by hate speech. This includes not only the participation of Member States and international organizations, but also the participation of technology companies and social media, news outlets, civil society as well as affected communities.

III. What are key priority issues to be addressed in the region under the overall objective of the round table? *(1 bullet describing each priority)*

- Establish common languages through the creation of baselines on the status of migration information systems (paying attention, for example, to migration categories) and the possibilities of eliminating different forms of discrimination through instruments available in each country.
- Identify information needs and priorities throughout the migration cycle and within different dimensions of migration. Examples include identifying information needs and collecting data and information in emergency situations (i.e., disasters caused natural hazards, or migrant caravans), as well as information about population groups in situations of heightened vulnerability, such as unaccompanied and separated children, missing persons and victims of trafficking in persons, among others.
- Identify the institutional frameworks available (or that may be needed) to eliminate discrimination against migrants both due to their status as a migrant and also as a result of their association or membership of specific groups or possession of certain sociodemographic or cultural characteristics (e.g. ethnic status, sexual orientation and more).
- Establish national and regional initiatives for the definition of metadata, goals and indicators associated with the lines of action of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), taking advantage of both recent institutional developments at the national level and those that can be strengthened through international cooperation and academic initiatives.

- Strengthen the involvement of the media as key actors that can responsibly support in making the positive contributions of migrant communities visible. This can be accomplished through the elaboration of media pieces that include factual data that dispel myths or misinformation and promote a public discourse based on evidence.
- Contribute to improving the capacity of the media to cover migration issues and encourage media coverage based on learning, including training initiatives in terminology, concepts and the use of data and statistics that can generate fact-based journalistic coverage.

IV.   Guiding questions

- What are the immediate information needs on the migration cycle (emigration, return, reunification, immigration, transit, circulation) in different countries, subregions and sectors?
- How can we strengthen the generation of evidence-based regulations, programs and policies geared toward the elimination of discrimination against migrants?
- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, what are now the major challenges that exist in countries and subregions in LAC for which we are in particular need of additional evidence? (e.g., remittances, migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, pension portability, profiles of migrant communities, their life conditions, and access to health and recovery programs in the face of the pandemic).
- How could data and information be better used to save the lives of migrants during their journeys in the region?
- In your views, how far has the region progressed in disaggregating SDG indicators by migration status? What needs to be done to close gaps?
- What are the biggest challenges for today's migration data capturing systems?
- What would be the necessary steps involved in order to collect better disaggregated data and in turn allow the region to have quality evidence for planning programs and responses?
- How can we strengthen the capacity of governments, academia and civil society stakeholders in order to counterbalance the myths and hate speech directed against migrants? How do we enhance the visibility of migrants' contributions to both origin and host communities?

V.   Additional related resources *(videos, bibliography, relevant reports or other documents provided by AFPs)*

It is important that countries be at the forefront of developing national migration information systems while coordinating with stakeholders to combat discrimination and xenophobia, and ensuring that the fundamental human rights of migrants, in particular women and children, are upheld. It is also necessary to identify international cooperation needs based on existing initiatives while taking inspiration from other sources as well, including academic proposals, civil society activities, and regional and international organizations.

At this roundtable, interventions are expected to be based on initiatives that are currently underway, as well as proposals for action in the short and medium term, continually taking into account the need to create baselines regarding the actions included in each thematic objective of the GCM. Below are key resources related to this thematic area:

- Regional Platform for Migration Information (PRIMI) in Central America and Mexico, available here.
- Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Regional Portal for Central America, North America and the Caribbean, and list of publications, available here.
- Regional DTM portal for South America, and list of publications, available here.
- Northern Triangle Migration Information Management Initiative (NTMI) platform, available here.
- DTM Situation Reports on Migrant Caravans, IOM NTMI, available here.
- Regional Knowledge HUB on Migration (KM HUB), available here.
- Migration Data Strategy, 2020, available here.
- IOM C4D toolbox: Step-by-step guide on how to apply Communication for Development (C4D) counter-trafficking activities, available here.
- Somos Colmena – website for the Communication for Development (C4D) information campaigns, availabe here.
- XenofobiaCero – Comunidad de práctica contra la discriminación y la xenofobia, proyecto nacido en el seno del Issue Based Coalition de movilidad humana. Nota conceptual y sitio Web disponibles.
- IOM Regional Strategy for Central America, North America and the Caribbean, 2020-2024, available in Spanish and English.
- Global Migration Data Portal, available here.
- Características del proceso de recolección y uso de los registros administrativos sobre migración en Centroamérica, México y el Caribe, available here.
- World Migration Report 2020, available here.
- Missing Migrants Project portal for the Americas region, available here.
- Platform to monitor the human mobility impacts of COVID-19, available here.
- United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Statistics: Concepts, Definitions, Data and Indicators, available here.
- United Nations Statistics Division, Technical Report on Monitoring Migration-related SDG Indicators, available here.
- United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, "Suggested questions on international migration (based on country practices)", available here.
- Measuring disability, migration, and marriage registration – recommended questions for inclusion in census, available here.
- Toolkit to assess national migration data capacity, available here.
- The impact of COVID-19: An opportunity to reaffirm the central role of migrants' human rights in sustainable development, available in Spanish and English.
- Social Panorama of Latin America 2019, available here.
- Social inequality matrix for Latin America, available here.
- Migración internacional e inclusión en América Latina: análisis en los países de destino mediante encuestas de hogares, serie Políticas Sociales, available here.
- Nuevas tendencias y dinámicas migratorias en América Latina y el Caribe, Population and Development series, available here.
- Protección social y migración: una mirada desde las vulnerabilidades a lo largo del ciclo de la migración y de la vida de las personas, available here.
- Migración y desarrollo sostenible: la centralidad de los derechos humanos, available here.