



## **National Review Report of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in Sierra Leone.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020.**

### **I. Methodology**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation coordinated the review with the Director-General and Ambassador-at-Large as Chair. All the Directors were involved in the planning for the review process. Government had established an Inter-Ministerial Committee/Task Force to handle migration issues, and this committee played a significant role in the review process. The Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the Committee/Task Force include Ministries of Social Welfare, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Internal Affairs, Labour and Social Security, the Office of National Security, Ministry of Youths, and the National Commission for Social Action .

A variety of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have also been involved in the reviewing process, these include: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Office of National Security (ONS) Sierra Leone Immigration Department, National Commission for Social Action (NACSA), Ministry of Youths Affairs, Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, Transnational Organized Crime Unit, Interpol and The Family Support Units, Traditional and Religious Authorities, CSOs, Human Rights Commission etc.

The National UN Network on Migration is still in its formative stage but a presentation was made to the UNCT, and UN Agencies nominated Focal People on this network.

The non-government sector has a vital role in the reviewing process of GCM:

World Hope International, Sierra Leone Overseas Recruiters Association, Advocacy Network against Irregular Migration, Diaspora focus, Labor Migration capacity links, Network of Journalist against irregular Migration, Domestic Helpers Association, Action for Youth and Children network and ECOWAS Youth Council Sierra Leone all participated in the process.

The Government of Sierra Leone focuses on all the GCM objectives and did not prioritize. Within this process, the government has a strong partnership with the UN team, especially FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, UNFPA, IOM, and Office of the Residence Coordinator.

### **II. Policy and enabling environment**

The Government of Sierra Leone, with support from IOM, has engaged stakeholders on GCM objectives and implementation. Since 2018, the government has developed the Labor Migration Policy, National Migration Policy, and National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons (2020 – 2023).

The government of Sierra Leone, with support from IOM, held several Dialogues on GCM implementation, Migration Governance Indicator assessments/ dialogue, Feedback on the Labour Migration survey findings,



Review and Validation of the National Action Plan, Review of the National Migration Policy, Dissemination workshop and the Review of the TVET Curriculum for Technical and Vocational Education.

Stakeholders also involved in all these consultations and dialogues include.

- World Hope International
- Sierra Leone Overseas Recruiters Association
- Advocacy Network Against Irregular Migration
- Diaspora Focus
- Capacity Links SL Limited
- The Network Of Journalist Against Trafficking
- Domestic Helpers Association
- Action for Youth and Children network
- ECOWAS Youth Council Sierra Leone
- Human Rights Defenders Network

Government entities that were involved include the following: below.

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of gender and children Affairs
- Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Social security
- Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Education
- Office of National Security
- Sierra Leone Immigration Department
- Trafficking in Person Secretariat/task force
- National Commission for Social Action
- National Youth Commission.

There is high commitment and political will on the side government to address migration challenges. The Government's National Medium Term Development Plan (NMTDP) (2019 -2023) includes a cluster for addressing Migration Challenges (Cluster 6) whose strategic objective is to ensure that internal and external migration is reduced and effectively managed. The key Policy actions under this cluster include:

- Conduct an awareness campaign on irregular migration, human trafficking, and violent extremism in partnership with youth and women's groups.
- Develop a coherent policy and legal framework on migration.
- Combat human trafficking through the training of border operatives and supplying them with the necessary tools and equipment.
- Promote the acquisition of technical and vocational training/skills among youth to promote employability by establishing district-level vocational centers in partnership with the private sector.
- Review the 2005 Trafficking in Persons Act and include sufficiently severe sentences with longer prison terms.



- Increase efforts to arrest, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including addressing procedural delays and judicial corruption, as well as ensuring survivors' safety and enabling their participation in judicial processes, both to increase prosecution rates and offer survivors compensation.
- Training of Investigators on Human Trafficking
- Train prosecutors and judges to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases.
- Training of CSOs and Media on Human Trafficking
- Enact the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.
- Upgrade the existing structure of industrial growth centers pioneered to provide vocational and entrepreneurial skills that are employable and market-driven to youth, women, and other vulnerable groups.

The above strategic objectives and policy actions are aligned with SDG target 10.7; Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies and Agenda 2063; free movement of persons and goods/services within REC member states is in place. Cluster 6 of the MTDP 2019 – 2023) aligns with outcome 4 of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2019 – 2023) that seeks to protect and empower the most vulnerable.

Since the GCM adoption, the Sierra Leone government has approved Labor Migration Policy. In addition, the Sierra Leone government has prepared the National Migration Policy. Even though Parliament is yet to pass it into law, but it is on track for the final stage.

The National Migration policy provides for gender considerations in migration. The relationship between migration and gender is complicated, and an understanding of migration's gendered differentials is essential for effective migration management. In the past, men tend to migrate more than women do, as they must stay home and take care of children. However, in recent years, many women are moving as independent migrants. Women dominate commercial migrants (migrating for trading). However, men still primarily dominate irregular migration flows across the desert to Europe. Apart from the fact that migration patterns are gendered, migration policies have engendered outcomes, costs, and benefits. In Sierra Leone, it is perceived that female migrants face more dangers, including trafficking, harassment at the border, and sexual exploitation during internal and international migration, and are likely to end up in low-income jobs. However, female migrants sometimes find jobs more efficiently in many countries' informal sector, as domestic workers and traders, while unskilled men are unemployed. As migration affects men and women differently, gender needs to be mainstreamed as part of an effective migration management policy. In the National Migration Policy, the government has set to achieve the following policy objectives about gender and migration.

The government has started institutional reforms to respond to the GCM. These are the example of the institutional reforms.

- The inter-ministerial Committee on Migration
- Taskforce to address migration issues, repatriation, protection assistance, and Reintegration



- MDAs, CSO Migration networks
- Established District task forces (16) for combating human trafficking. The National -Taskforce on TiPs was already in existence but was restructured and expanded to the district level
- Establishing Youth Taskforces in border communities that are addressing youth-related challenges, including migration challenges

Finally, regarding the Cross Regional Framework: MIDAWA. In line with MIDWA, NACSA is now mainstreaming locally integrated Refugees and vulnerable migrants into National Development Programs, including the Sierra Leone Community Driven Development Project.

### III. Progress on GCM objectives

1. **GCM Objective 1:** Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies
  - The capacity of Trafficking in Persons Secretariat has been strengthened to collect Migration related data, especially on Irregular Migration, human trafficking, people smuggling. Through training, computers & internet (to improve data collection, and information sharing, reporting). SOPs have been developed for the identification and referral of victims of trafficking.
  - A labor migration survey was conducted, and this has documented migration patterns and trends, characteristics of migrants, as well as drivers and impacts of migration
  - Sierra Leone has developed a country-specific migration profile.
2. **GCM objective 2** Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin
  - The government has developed a National Medium-Term Development Plan (2019 -2023): A New Direction for Improving People's Lives through Education, Inclusive Growth, and Building Resilient Economy. This plan further elaborates policy actions and strategies for reducing the drivers and structure factors leading to Migration; Cluster 1 (Human capital development), Cluster 2 (Diversifying the economy and promoting growth), Cluster 3 (Infrastructure and economic competitiveness), Cluster 5 (Empowering women, children, and persons with disability), Cluster Six (Youth employment, sports, and migration). Cluster Seven (Addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience). For cluster 6, the policy actions are conduct skills training for youth through technical and vocational education and training. Review the current design of the national youth Service and enforce its implementation, establish a Youth Empowerment Fund to support youth to engage in small and, medium-sized entrepreneurship ventures.
  - Conduct an awareness campaign on irregular migration, human trafficking, and violent extremism in partnership with youth and women's groups.
  - Develop a coherent policy and legal framework on migration.
  - Combat human trafficking through training border operatives and supplying them with the necessary tools and equipment.
  - Promote the acquisition of technical and vocational training/skills among the youth to promote employability by establishing district-level vocational centers in partnership with the private sector.
  - Review the 2005 Trafficking in Persons Act and include sufficiently severe sentences with longer prison terms.



- Increase efforts to arrest, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including addressing procedural delays and judicial corruption, as well as ensuring survivors' safety and
  - Above all, these clusters align with regional and international development agendas, including the Africa Union Agenda 2063, the g7+ Peacebuilding and State-building Goals, and the Sustainable Development Goals.
  - Creation of information sharing center through advocacy by CSOs partnership with government. (by Domestic helpers' organization)
  - TOCO contributed the screening to employers for all migrant data for international recruitment
  - Interpol provides the info of international recruitment agency to MOFAIC.
3. **GCM objective 3** Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration
- With ECOWAS, MRU, Government of Kuwait, Sierra Leone has established bilateral and regional arrangements to promote and improve international cooperation dialogue to exchange information on migration-related trends.
  - Face with the problem of irregular migrants that do not have any form of identification, IOM in collaborated with the Immigration Department and the Office of National Security carry out interview of migrants virtually to establish their identity.
  - At the end of the interview, temporary travel documents are provided by the Immigration Department to enable migrants return home.
4. **GCM objective 4;** Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation
- Sierra Leone has made tremendous progress in legal reform with the National Civil Registration Act, 2016, which improved the uncoordinated and fragmented registration system, established the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA), and introduced an integrated Civil Registration Vital Statistics based ID management system of the population of Sierra Leone at national, regional, district and chiefdom level.
  - Government has also established an Inter-Ministerial Committee to address statelessness.
5. **GCM objective 5;** Enhance the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration
- The government had developed a labour migration policy; the overriding aim of this policy is to mainstream Labour Migration into the development agenda by creating an enabling environment into which labor migrants can be integrated and make a significant contribution to the development of the country. Therefore, the policy's main thrust is to harness the gift of Sierra Leone's emigrants and immigrants for national development.
  - Sierra Leone also has signed MoU with Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana to accelerate the mobility of skilled workers and professionals to improve labor mobility.
  - The United Kingdom (UK) and Sierra Leone signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2012, focusing on facilitating the return and readmission of Sierra Leonean nationals from the UK
6. **GCM objective 6:** Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work
- The labor migration policy provides for the Protection of Sierra Leonean Migrant Workers and their Families in Host Countries through the following policy objectives.
- To promote decent and productive work for Sierra Leonean emigrants in conditions of freedom, security, and human dignity.



- To equip departing migrants with reliable and accurate information regarding their employment and life abroad, their return, and reintegration.
- To offer protection to Sierra Leonean potential and actual migrant workers and their families abroad against exploitation and abuse by employers and recruitment agencies.
- To regulate the activities of private recruitment agencies operating in Sierra Leone.
- To provide social support and care services to vulnerable Sierra Leonean emigrant workers and their families.
- To provide counseling and support services to migrants who return to prepare them for adjustment and reintegration.
- Effective 2020, the government has started providing return and reintegration assistance to migrants, especially those stranded in the Middle East.

**7. GCM objective 7;** Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

- Faced with the problem of irregular migrants without any form of identification, the government collaborated with IOM, through the Immigration Department and the Office of National Security to interview migrants virtually to determine their true nationality.
- Temporary travel documents are issued by the Immigration Department to migrants to enable them return home.

**8. GCM objective 8;** Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants

- The government has saved the lives of struggled migrants from Lebanon, Algeria through coordination with IOM.
- In 2019, government in collaboration with IOM has repatriated 1,922 migrants especially from the Middle East and some other countries.

**9. GCM objective 9:** Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants.

Sierra Leone has signed bilateral mechanisms with Guinea and Liberia to share relevant information and intelligence on smuggling routes, modus operandi and financial transactions of smuggling networks, vulnerabilities faced by smuggled migrants, etc. data to dismantle the smuggling networks and enhance joint responses.

- Security agencies like ONS and the Immigration Department have collaborated in information data collection regarding migrant smuggling
- National Migration policy has been drafted and waiting to be enacted into law by Parliament.

**10. GCM objective 10;** Prevent, combat, and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration

**Government achievements (policies, strategies, and actions):**

- Sierra Leone has reviewed the Anti- Human trafficking Legislation (2005) to enhance prosecution of traffickers, avoid criminalization of migrants who are victims of trafficking in persons for trafficking-related offenses, and ensure that the victim receives appropriate protection and assistance, not conditioned upon cooperation with the authorities against suspected traffickers.
- Sierra Leone had developed a new national action plan against trafficking in persons (2020 – 2023). This has improved coordination of all activities done by different stakeholders to fight human trafficking
- Through working with partners, IOM, WHI, Government continues to provide some protection assistance to victims of trafficking to promote physical, psychological, and social recovery,



- -Government, in collaboration with partners, is implementing awareness raising campaigns for migrants and prospective migrants on the risks and dangers of trafficking in persons and provide them with information on preventing and reporting trafficking activities.
  - Government has existing laws against trafficking in persons
11. **GCM objective 11;** Manage borders in an integrated, secured, and coordinated manner
- Sierra Leone has developed cross border collaboration MOUs signed with Guinea and Liberia on public health responses and cross border security.
  - In a nationwide feasibility study carried out in 2019 by the Immigration Department, it was discovered that there is a lack of security at the Falaba crossing points to other countries. In this regard, the Immigration Department instituted border patrols and provided them with motor bikes.
12. **GCM objective 12;** Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessments, and referrals.
- Government, through the Ministry labour and Social Security has drafted a Migration policy which after Enactment by Parliament will take care to strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessments, and referrals.
13. **GCM objective 13;** Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives
- Sierra Leone allows exemptions to the immigration procedures for non-nationals claiming asylum. The Refugees Protection Act (2007) establishes that a person who "illegally enters Sierra Leone or is illegally present in Sierra Leone" and seeking asylum shall not be declared an irregular immigrant or detained, imprisoned, or penalized.
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14. **GCM objective 14** Enhance consular protection, assistance, and cooperation throughout the migration cycle
- The government is continuously strengthening consular capacities through training of consular officers to identify, protect and assist nationals abroad who are in a situation of vulnerability, including victims of human and labor rights violations or abuse, victims of crime, victims of trafficking in persons, migrants subject to smuggling under aggravating circumstances, and migrant workers exploited in the process of recruitment.
15. **GCM objective 15;** Provide access to essential services for migrants
- The Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991) guarantees health care to all people within Sierra Leone. It states that the government will make provision for "adequate medical and health facilities for all persons, having due regard to the State's resources." Migrants can access both free and paid health-care services regardless of status, under the same condition as nationals. The scope of free health care remains limited, as such access for both residents and migrants is also limited. The National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2017- 2021) includes as a key objective (Outcomes 1-7 on Prevention; Treatment, Care and Support; and Enabling Environment) increased "access to tailored HIV combination prevention services" for key populations, including migrant workers and traders, by "90% from 2015 to 2020".
  - The National Social Security and Insurance Trust Act (2001) sets up a National Social Security and Insurance Trust to administer Sierra Leone's National Pension Scheme. The Act covers all formally employed persons, including migrants employed in the formal sector.



16. **GCM objective 16:** Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion
- To minimize the discrimination against migrants, the community received the power through sensitization; the government has conducted education/ and sensitization to partners.
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17. **GCM objective 17;** Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration
- Domestic helpers conduct media engagement, town hall meetings, seminars, and workshops, to change the minds of the young.
18. **GCM objective 18;** Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications, and competences
- Through OSIWA, the Domestic Helpers Organization has trained domestic workers on the use of household equipment to gain employment. (laundry machines, electrical items)
19. **GCM objective 19;** Create conditions for migrants and Diasporas to contribute to sustainable development in all countries fully
- The government has restructured the Office of Diaspora Affairs that has the mandate to strengthen diaspora engagements. It was previously under the Ministry of Political Affairs, but as of March 2020, the Office of Diaspora Affairs operates as a Division within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Its main objectives are to promote skills transfer from the Sierra Leonean diaspora to the country, enhance remittances' developmental impacts, and encourage investment diaspora for development. The Office of Diaspora Affairs links unions – organizations formed by Sierra Leoneans abroad to support diaspora communities – with the Sierra Leone Government. The Office works with these unions, and sometimes embassies abroad, to contact members of the Sierra Leonean diaspora and inform them about employment and business opportunities in Sierra Leone. The country has an Office of Diaspora Affairs that coordinates some diaspora activities, yet it is not fully functional due to funding challenges.
20. **GCM objective 20;** Promote faster, safer, and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants.
- The government has hosted several diaspora investment forums to attract and promote diaspora investment
  - NACSA provides a small grant to startup businesses.
21. **GCM objective 21;** Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable Reintegration
- Government has developed a migrant return and reintegration Policy.
  - For the most vulnerable returnee migrants, especially from the Middle East, the government, on some occasions, provides reintegration packages, psychosocial support, and protection assistance. The Ministry of social welfare provided reintegration packages worth \$ 300 to 100 vulnerable returnee migrants from Kuwait.
  - For countries where Sierra Leone has consular offices, the government continues to foster institutional contacts between consular authorities and relevant officials from countries of origin and destination and provide adequate consular assistance to returning migrants by facilitating access to documentation,



travel documents, and other services, to ensure predictability, safety, and dignity in return and readmission.

**22. GCM objective 22;** Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

- The Labor migration Policy provides for mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits for Sierra Leoneans as a way of encouraging them to return.
- Sierra Leone has agreements on the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits with some member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In 2016, under the Intra-Africa Talent Mobility Partnership Program, Sierra Leone signed a memorandum of understanding with Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana, which states that State Parties are to "identify policy areas affecting coordination/portability of social security benefits and legal requirements necessary

**23. GCM objective 23;** Strengthen international Cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly, and regular migration

- Sierra Leone is a member of the Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA) – a regional consultative process (RCP) established in 2001 to encourage the member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to discuss common migration issues in a regional context. It is also a member of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process), which was established in 2006. It brought together countries from North, West and Central Africa, the European Commission, and the ECOWAS to tackle migration-related questions. Sierra Leone also participated in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP) – European Union (EU) Dialogue on Migration, the Pan-African Forum on Migration (PAFoM), AU regional economic communities, RCPs in Africa, UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations to deliberate on issues affecting migration governance in Africa.
- The United Kingdom (UK) and Sierra Leone signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2012, focusing on facilitating the return and readmission of Sierra Leonean nationals from the UK. Sierra Leone also signed an MoU with Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana in 2016 to accelerate the mobility of skilled workers and professionals amongst these countries to improve labor mobility.

**IV. Means of implementation** (*should not exceed 500 words*)

- Increase Budgetary allocation for migration management to:
  - o Strengthening embassies and consulates
  - o Provide reintegration packages for return migrants
  - o Provide funds for NGOs working on migration issues
- Building partnerships
  - o Government to take the lead to build more partnerships with INGO's civil Society organization etc. towards the implementation of the GCM
  - o Capacitate implementing Agencies through training
  - o Government to priorities migration issues in development planning
  - o Government to intensify skill development programs for migrants, especially for the low skilled
  - o Government to develop a database of all emigrants and immigrants
  - o The government should have a system to track unregistered migrants



In addition, the Government of Sierra Leone acknowledges the variety of challenges as below.

- Lack of resources.
- Commitment from donor organizations
- Outdated legislation on migration
- Delays in the enactment of and new and reviewed migration laws
- Lack of practical Cooperation and coordination between and amongst implementing partners

To overcome these issues, the government needs the below support or coordination mechanism.

- Funding
- Human resources and capabilities
- Policy implementation
- Plans to mobilize resources
- Lobbying for funds from other donors
- Develop project proposals to attract additional funding from development partners
- Lobby Government to increase budgetary allocations to Institutions involved in migration management

V. Next steps *(should not exceed 500 words)*

From 2021, the government will lead the GCM related activities, mainly the below actions.

- The popularization of the GCM
- Community sensitization
- Radio discussions programs
- Stakeholders engagements at the regional and local levels
- Government to enhance participation and coordination with like mind organization