

Voluntary GCM Review*

Survey conducted to inform the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation
of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
Bangkok, (10-12 March 2021)

The [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#) (GCM) (General Assembly Resolution 73/195) calls for review of the progress of “implementing the Global Compact in the framework of the United Nations through a State-led approach and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders” (OP48), and “invites United Nations regional economic commissions ... to review the implementation of the Global Compact within the respective regions, beginning in 2020” (OP50)

This voluntary GCM review is issued to fulfil this mandate, by enabling member States to provide information on their progress towards the objectives of the Global Compact. The results will inform the preparation of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to be held at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok from 10 to 12 March 2021, the preparation of the 2020 Asia-Pacific Migration Report and related background documentation.

The survey has been informed by the suggested outline prepared by the United Nations Network on Migration ([Proposed framework to assist Member States in the organization of regional reviews](#) – Annex II: Indicative outline for Member States) to review the status of implementation of the GCM at national, subregional, regional and cross-regional levels (General Assembly resolution 73/195, OP48 and OP50). It has been structured according to the four round tables to be organized for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review meeting which correspond to the four round tables of the International Migration Review Forum in 2022 (General Assembly resolution 73/326, OP21).

* Reissued for technical reasons on 17 August 2020.

Please identify the office responsible for coordinating the responses to this survey and include the contact information.

Country	NEPAL
Office	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

Instructions:

*Please provide answers to the following set of questions (about 500 words per question) as they relate to **clusters of objectives** of the Global Compact for Migration (General Assembly resolution 73/326, para 21).*

If needed, please provide the answers in a separate document and attach it to this survey.

*Please provide **references or links to relevant policy documents in a separate document**, attached to this survey.*

*If possible, please identify any **innovative policies or practices** related to any of the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.*

*Also, information should be based on **statistical as well as qualitative data**.*

1. Ensuring that migration is voluntary, orderly and regular

GCM Objectives: 2, 5, 6, 12, 18

- a. Please highlight the migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.

International migration for higher studies and employment opportunities are the defining feature of Nepal's socio-economic landscape. The Nepali migrants living abroad have been contributing significantly to the national economy for a long time. The volume of remittances reached USD 8.79 billion in the fiscal year of 2018/2019, accounting for an equivalent of 28 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the same year¹.

The Government of Nepal has set various policies and programs to ensure that migration is voluntary, orderly and regular. Migration governance involves multiple agencies of the government. Nepal has instituted a number of laws, policies and strategies to regulate migration. The labour migration governance in Nepal is led by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MOLESS). Over the past few years, Nepal has signed Bilateral Labour Agreements (BLA), Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) and Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) with 9 destination countries. In 2018, Nepal signed MoUs with Malaysia and in 2019 with United Arab Emirates and Mauritius. Some of the principles set in the BLAs/MoUs are: the Employer Pays Principle, Standard Employment Contracts, the Equality of Treatment, and minimum referral wages for Nepali migrant workers. The Government of Nepal has also set in policies to minimize recruitment costs and fees borne by the worker– an initiative started in 2015 after the introduction of the “Free Visa and Free Ticket” (in some countries) policy for foreign employment as a step towards the Employer Pays Principle. The initiative was established to promote ethical and fair recruitment practices in Nepal, and to prevent workers from being over-burdened with recruitment fees and associated costs and to regulate unscrupulous recruitment agencies -aligned with the GCM objective 6.

One of the major factors compelling people to migrate for foreign employment is poverty. To address this concern, the Government has prioritized creation of employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities within the country. The job creation policies also target returning migrants to match them with the skills set needed in the local labour market. The Prime Minister Employment Programme (PMEP) is an initiative to provide jobs locally, support income-generating opportunities and concessional loans to promote entrepreneurship. For this, the Local Governments are mandated to collect data of the unemployed population. Through the establishment of Employment Service Centers (ESC), the government plans to create a bridge between the employers and the unemployed population. One of the Foreign Employment Policy goals of the Government of Nepal is to develop a competitive skilled workforce to maximize the benefits of foreign employment. The Vocational and Skill Development Training Academy (VSTDA) - an institution under MOLESS - is responsible for the skills development initiatives to enhance the employability of Nepali youth in both the domestic and international labour market.

Similarly, to address the vulnerabilities in recruitment processes of Nepali migrant workers in Nepal – the Government has initiated a mandatory attestation of the job demands by Nepali missions abroad before approval of labour permits. The Government has also established a Brain Gain Center at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to harness the skills and expertise of the

Nepali diasporas communities.

¹ Annual Report 2075/76, Nepal Rastra Bank.

- b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) recognizes the need for migration governance and regulation of foreign employment in order to make migration safe from exploitation, free and orderly to guarantee the labourers' and migrants rights. The prevailing periodic plan of the government of Nepal (2019/20-2023/24) also sets out a long-term ambitious development vision - including eradicating multidimensional poverty, and to graduate from the Least Developed Country status in 2024.

The 15th Plan recognizes that remittances as important factors for capital formation; and that integrated financial literacy and entrepreneurship training to the remittance receiving households are needed. Further, there is a need for partnerships with financial institutions to promote investments of remittances in the productive sectors. The plan also seeks to ensure that Nepalis have the opportunity to benefit from economic opportunities without needing to migrate, as well as to ensure that migration is well regulated and prioritizes the poor and socially excluded women to receive support for economic empowerment and social transformation. It also prioritizes on utilizing the skills and expertise of the migrants and diaspora communities for the national development. Similarly, the National Health Policy 2019 addresses the health vulnerabilities of migrant workers, as well as seeking to protect the health of host communities from public health threats related to migration.

The Foreign Employment Board (FEB) - a welfare entity of the Government providing services to the documented Nepali migrant workers—has initiated to recognize the skills of the returnee migrant workers and certifying the skills they have acquired while working abroad. Other initiatives include the Prime Minister Employment Programme (PMEP), aims to provide a minimum of 100-days employment in a year to the unemployed people, including to those who lost their jobs due to COVID-19 and also to returnee migrants. The government has taken steps towards ethical recruitment through the introduction of the “Employer Pays’ policy, and the Bilateral Labour Agreements and Memorandum of Understandings signed with destination countries in line with the principles of International Recruitment Integrity System and General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment.

Nepal is a Champion Country for GCM Objective 6. Furthermore, Nepal has been actively engaged in regional and global processes on labour migration such as: the Regional Consultative Process on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia (Colombo Process), Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), the Bali Process, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD). Nepal has been the chair for the Colombo Process since March 2017 till now. Nepal is also a path-finder country Alliance 8.7.

- c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?
These gaps and challenges may include challenges at national, regional and global levels; capacity challenges; data needs; financing and others.

The sustainable reintegration of the large number of the returnee migrants and revitalizing the national economy will be the major challenges in the post-COVID situation. The regional international migration pattern suggests that many elements of the foreign employment process in Nepal are in line with many international commitments, yet the challenge is to implement them in timely and effective manner. The Colombo Process, for example, platform has played an important role in sharing good practices of the labour sending countries on issues of

contractual labour migration, yet it has been challenging to regulate such contracts. This has far-reaching implications to the implementation of the foreign employment cycle.

Challenges also incur in the process of having bilateral labour agreements or understandings. These include, but not limited to, articulating provisions of social security to Nepali workers abroad, employer pay principle and access to free justice in some labour destination countries.

- d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned by your Government in implementing these objectives.

The establishment of Migrant Resource Center (MRC) at selected locations in Nepal has created an atmosphere in which potential migrant workers can get advice and support to seek for decent work overseas. The creation of Employment Service Centre (ESC) in all local governments in Nepal further supports both potential migrant workers and returnees with advice and information about local employment opportunities². Initiatives such as these have contributed in ensuring informed decision about foreign employment.

In the Kathmandu Declaration of the Sixth Ministerial Consultation of the Colombo Process held on 16 November 2018 under the theme “Safe, Regular and Managed Migration: A Win-Win for All” and hosted by Nepal - the Member States agreed to sustain joint efforts towards no recruitment cost to migrant workers, further alignment of regulatory frameworks with global initiatives, and appropriate policies and programmes towards the transformation of the recruitment industry.³ The Member States also agreed to strengthen migration governance to enforce decent work norms and policies, including to respect, protect and fulfill all rights of migrants and to address gender sensitiveness – and to stretch this to be fully observed by recruiters, employers and service providers in order to prevent all forms of exploitation, slavery, servitude and forced labour of migrants.

2. Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance measures

GCM Objectives: 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 21

- a. Please highlight migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.

Labour migration from Nepal is concentrated to the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Malaysia with over 1,500-1,600 Nepali youths migrating daily in pre-Covid period to these countries⁴. India is one of the major destination countries for Nepali migrant workers, but as the border between Nepal and India is open, and because Nepalis can freely work in India without specific labour permits. The post-Covid scenario of Nepal-India border has slightly changed, with decision from both governments to record the mobility of people crossing the border. The nature of migration to India is considered different in its nature, as it is often low-cost, informal and often seasonal.

² www.pnep.gov.np

³ [Kathmandu Consultation 2018 - Colombo Process Meetings - Colombo Process](#)

⁴ www.dofe.gov.np

However, the majority of the Nepali migrants aiming to pursue jobs in GCC and Malaysia go through Private Recruitment Agencies (PRAs). In addition to this practice, individual Nepali citizens can also seek jobs in these countries via their personal connections. In both circumstances, individuals are required to demonstrate that they hold valid Machine Readable Passports as prescribed by the ICAO standards. The Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS), a web-based application is designed to read the data from several government entities, including the Department of Passports, which enables to have an updated and actual data of Nepali migrant workers. The government agencies have thus access to these records at all times. This practice eventually helps the government to track migrants working abroad hence limiting the possibility of Nepali migrants being undocumented or missing throughout the migration process.

The Government of Nepal ratified Palermo Protocol in March 2020. The Palermo Protocol, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, aims to prevent, to suppress and punish trafficking in persons, and to protect especially women and children. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens are taking necessary measures to amend the current laws and legislation under Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act to align with the Protocol. Further, under the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens (MoWCSC) an Inter-agency National Committee on Combating Human Trafficking (NCCHT) is established comprising of various stakeholders including the security agencies to combat trafficking in person. Emergency shelters and community service centers for victims of trafficking including for children have been opened and Local Committees for Controlling Human Trafficking have been established within the past years.

- b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).

The government of Nepal certifies the skills and expertise acquired abroad, including the introduction of a scheme to encourage recent returnee migrant entrepreneurs by subsidizing interest rates up to 10 million NPR (Nepali Rupee). The provincial governments have initiated programmes such as the Youth Entrepreneurships Programme, to generate access to agricultural loans at low-interest rates, the establishment of Investment Promotion Centers to channel remittances to development, skills training, and to provide information for an informed choice for migrating and to provide sustainable reintegration for the returnee migrants. The local governments have also initiated returnee migrants focus programmes.

- c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?

One of the challenges facing the tackling of trafficking in persons is the lack of reliable data and ever-changing nature of this organized crime. Irrespective of intra-governmental cooperation among various federal government entities in Nepal, estimates produced by several government and non-government (including the National Human Rights Commission) suggests that the trend of human smuggling and trafficking during the course of foreign employment is increasing. In circumstances where Nepal does not have bilateral agreements or memorandum of understandings, it has been a challenging task to detect, control and combat human smuggling and trafficking. All these scenarios have resulted in loose regulatory capacity of the government.

d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned by your Government in implementing these objectives.

To address the irregular status of the Nepali migrant workers including the victims of trafficking, the Government through its diplomatic missions provides temporary travel documents to those who do not have access to their identity document to return back to the country. The missions also support the vulnerable migrants with legal issues including with returns and reintegration in coordination with diaspora groups, CSOs overseas and international development partners. The Foreign Employment Welfare Fund (a mandatory contribution made by the regular migrant workers) is also mobilized to support the documented migrant workers including in providing compensation in case of death and or disability of the migrant to their family members and scholarships to their children. The Department of Consular Services of the MoFA has also launched a mobile application to support the Nepali migrants and their families and to track the process of the registration requests.

One of the recent advancements is that the DOFE has upgraded its FEIMS with features to apply for new or renew labour permit online. The new software now can link with medical insurance companies, banking service providers and the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund. Thousands of Nepali workers overseas are expected to get benefitted of this upgrade in the next few months. Additionally, although it has not been adopted as a policy measure, the provision No Objection Certification (NOC) issued by the Embassy of Nepal in India ensures that Nepali migrant workers who use Indian airports are documented.

<p>3. Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development</p>	<p>GCM Objectives: 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22</p>
<p>a. Please highlight migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.</p> <p>Nepali diplomatic missions abroad are responsible for the protection of the rights and interests of Nepali migrant workers. The diplomatic missions play a significant role to ensure the safety and security of migrant workers in the country of destination. Since 2007, the Foreign Employment Act (FEA) has ruled to have labour counselors and attachés in all diplomatic missions in countries with more than five thousand Nepali migrant workers. Labour counselors and attachés are responsible for solving labour-related issues, coordination with the employers for grievance handling and support Nepali migrant workers. The diplomatic missions – through their standard working procedures – disseminate information related to the rights and responsibilities of migrant workers, health and safety issues and available support mechanisms. Specifically in the Covid-19 context, the diplomatic missions abroad are regularly interacting with current Nepali migrants to understand their situations and mobilize the Nepali diasporas to help their fellow Nepali migrants. Necessary actions are regularly taken by diplomatic missions – in coordination with Nepali communities overseas – if recruitment agencies and employers are found unscrupulous. Migrant workers can register their grievances at the diplomatic missions. The Department of Consular Services in Nepal handles complaints related to the rescue and repatriation of migrant workers including bringing back the dead bodies of the deceased migrant workers abroad.⁵</p> <p>To promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants, migrant workers are requested to have a bank account at home in either their own name or in the name of a close relative. This is to assist in the formalization and streamlining financial transactions carried out by the migrant worker. In order to facilitate the transfer of remittances through formal means there has been increase in the number of banks and remittance companies both in Nepal and the major destination countries. So far, Nepal Rastra Bank (the Central Bank of Nepal) has licensed over 51 remittance companies for the transaction. The remittance transfer costs are relatively low in Nepal compared to global averages which are above 5 per cent.</p>	
<p>b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018).</p> <p>The pre-departure orientation is mandatory for aspirant migrant workers to attend before going for foreign employment. The orientation provides information about the legislative provisions of the host countries, social and cultural customs, health and safety related subjects, promote savings among others. The Foreign Employment Board (FEB) formulates syllabus for such orientation programs. There are a number of private sector orientation organizations – along with a few government training centers – licensed by the DOFE provide pre-departure orientation.</p> <p>The <i>Non-Resident Nepali (NRN) Act 2008</i> has as its objective motivating non-resident Nepalis to contribute to Nepal’s development. In 2018, the first NRN “Global Knowledge Convention” was held in Kathmandu and included a plenary session on the “Role of Nepali diaspora for development policies.” The government of Nepal has also set up a “Brain Gain Centre” as a unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to recognize and foster contribution to Nepal’s social and</p>	

⁵ Publications – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepal MOFA

economic progress by the many diasporas Nepali experts and professionals around the world.

In an effort to encourage self-employment and entrepreneurship among youth and returnee migrant workers, the government has introduced the Unified Working Procedures on Interest Subsidy for Concessional Loans in 2018. It provides a framework for providing concessional loans targeted towards educated unemployed youth, returnee migrants, farmers, women entrepreneurs and targeted communities to promote income-generation and self-employment.

<p>4. Improving value-driven and evidence-based policymaking and public debate, and enhancing cooperation on migration</p>	<p>GCM Objectives: 1, 3, 7, 17, 23</p>
<p>a. Please highlight migration levels and trends, including drivers (if possible), and migrant experiences relevant to this cluster of objectives.</p> <p>In order to ensure that Nepal’s foreign employment policy is backed up by evidence and data, the government of Nepal has recently initiated to keep records of the mobility of Nepali people. Such records are maintained at the Department of Immigration and Department of Foreign Employment, with great efforts to harmonize data across two distinct yet interrelated information systems. The information system has improved the process of collecting and reporting migration related data while engaging other stakeholders to contribute to data collection. The aim is to have a one-stop portal which addresses key issues along the migration cycle including stages like pre-departure, during migration and after the return. The information system has already shown to be effective and efficient in information management on recruitment, employment and repatriation of the workers, easing the renewal process of labour approvals for the returnee migrant workers, facilitation of support mechanisms to migrant workers and most importantly in the evidence-based policy making.</p> <p>The Constitution of Nepal 2015 directs the local governments to collect statistics of the unemployed population and authorizes to formulate relevant plans, policies and budget and implement them within their jurisdiction. The Local Government Operation Act (LGOA) 2017, has enabled the local governments to collect data and develop information systems of the employed. Along with this, Migrant Resource Centers (MRCs) are based in the various regions in Nepal. The MRCs offer services related to access to information, access to justice, skills development training, psychological counseling and financial literacy in relation to foreign employment.</p> <p>The Government of Nepal has also introduced a mobile application called “Baideshik Rojgari App”. The application enables the users to keep track of their labour permits and provides information about institutions that conduct orientation training and biometric tests while also connecting users to the financial institutions linked with foreign employment-related transactions. The app also provides information on complaints registration mechanisms, public notices, and the contact information of the labour attaches, Embassies and Consulates. The Government has also initiated attestation and pre-approval of labour demands through the online information management system since January 2020.</p>	
<p>b. Please highlight the concrete policy, legal, and programmatic actions taken by your government to advance these objectives in recent years (in particular since the adoption of the GCM on 10 December 2018). <i>Examples could include policy reforms undertaken, adoption of new laws, drafting of national-</i></p>	

level implementation plans, entering into bilateral/regional agreements, signature/ratification of relevant conventions, engagement in dialogue processes.

To address the vulnerabilities associated with recruitment process and to ensure transparency of the process, the Department of Foreign Employment has operationalized a comprehensive information system (Foreign Employment Management Information System – FEMIS) that are linked with all the stakeholders engaged in the process of recruitment and placement of the migrant workers to foreign employment. This system captures the information of the entire process: clearance of pre-departure orientation, medical assessment, insurances, agreement with employers, lists of demands and jobs available and details including salary, working hours, and benefits among others. The system has also started capturing data of the returning migrant workers for the first time – info which was missing earlier. This will provide for good evidence-based policy planning. Similarly, the Department of Immigration has also introduced a new system to capture biometrics and data of the travelers which is also linked with the FEMIS.

- c. What are the main gaps identified and challenges faced in addressing these objectives?
These gaps and challenges may include challenges at national, regional and global levels; capacity challenges; data needs; financing and others.

During the consultation with civil society activists and stakeholders, they pointed the need to integrate legislative arrangements on controlling human trafficking and regulating migration. This has also been echoed in several research works carried out by think tanks in Nepal. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has recently initiated to study and analyze the prevailing migration-related policies, legislation and procedures with the aim to integrate them.

Other gaps are related to the centralization of the migration governance, less policy focus on internal migration, and regulating foreign workers in Nepal.

- d. Please share some of the results of these actions, effective solutions, best practices and lessons learned by your Government in implementing these objectives.

Based on the existing information and the systems in place, the government publishes various research and statistics to inform about the status and progress of the migration sector. For the first time, a Migration Profile of Nepal was published in 2019⁶ which provides a comprehensive picture of migration in Nepal. Similarly, the government in coordination with international development partners, publishes reports such as the Census, Labour Migration Status Report⁷, the National Labour Force Survey, the National Health and Demographics Survey among others. All these initiatives help with evidence-based policy making.

Recent labour policy reforms on Foreign Employment Act have decentralized labour permit system at provincial level. Thousands of aspirant migrant workers have been benefitted by this policy. Additionally, the Chief District Officers (CDOs) are now empowered to assist DOFE in settling fringe migration related disputes at the district level.

In the Kathmandu Declaration of the Ministerial Level Consultation of the Colombo Process, the Colombo Process Member States agreed to join efforts to provide gender-responsive and evidence-based information of all stages of migration and to empower migrants to facilitate their inclusion in the work place and in their host societies, with a view to contributing to the global efforts towards the Objective 3 and 16 of the GCM. The Member States also agreed to

⁶[https://nepal.iom.int/sites/default/files/publication/Migration in Nepal - a Country Profile 2019.pdf](https://nepal.iom.int/sites/default/files/publication/Migration%20in%20Nepal%20-%20a%20Country%20Profile%202019.pdf)

⁷<https://moless.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Migration-Report-2020-English.pdf>

enhance the Colombo Process engagement at global, regional, and inter/regional forums.

5. What steps has the Government taken to integrate the **vision and cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles** of the Global Compact for Migration (see paras 8 to 15 of the Global Compact (see General Assembly resolution 73/195)) into its implementation? How was this accomplished? (please check against the principles that have been integrated)

Guiding principle	Principle has been integrated <input type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	Explanation (please provide explanation on additional paper and attach relevant documentation)
People-centered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
International cooperation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
National sovereignty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Rule of law and due process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Sustainable development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Gender-responsive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Child-sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Whole-of-government approach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	
Whole-of-society approach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> =yes <input type="checkbox"/> =no	

5. How is the Global Compact for Migration contributing to realizing the achievement of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**? What has your Government done to integrate the implementation of the Global Compact objectives into SDG implementation?

In a statement by Prime Minister and the Leader of Nepali Delegation Right Honorable Mr. K. P. Sharma Oli at the General Debate of the 75th Session of United Nations General Assembly, 25 September 2020 said Nepal attaches high priority to the safety, security and well-being of the migrant workers. Providing adequate safeguard from exclusion, xenophobia and discrimination against migrant workers must be a common agenda of all at this difficult time. And that wider ownership and implementation of Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is essential to make migration work for all.

The Government has committed itself to ensure that the Governments at the sub-national levels actively participate in the implementation of the SDGs. For this, the National Planning Commission of Nepal has made efforts in not only internalize the SDGs in its national Monitoring and Evaluation System but also to design frameworks for sub-national level. Nepal also participated in the National Review of the SDGs and has published its efforts towards realizing SDGs on June 2018. ⁸ The report has highlighted *inter alia* on impact of COVID-19 and managing employment opportunities for the returning youths as well as unemployed youths in the country. Many targeted policy and programmatic measures have been initiated to offset the impacts of the pandemic including health-related interventions which has received the topmost priority. Greater emphasis has been given on agriculture, skills development and employment generation for migrant returnees and unemployed youths.

⁸[VNR 2020 Nepal Report.pdf \(npc.gov.np\)](#)

The 15th Plan and the Voluntary Review of SDGs have given greater emphasis on migration – highlighting on protection concerns, consular support, sustainable reintegration of the returnee and skills development. These are the key objective of the GCM. Nepal is a champion country of GCM and implementation of the GCM actionable commitment will help Nepal achieve SDGs on time. The Government is also in a process of developing a national implementation plan of the GCM which will also provide base on execution of the commitments.

7. From the Government’s perspective, are there any objectives of the Global Compact for Migration that are of particular importance in the national context? Please name the **objectives that the Government has prioritized and explain why.**

While all the objectives are in line with the SDGs and its implementation will help achieve SDGs, Nepal is selected as one of the Champion countries of “Objective 6” of the GCM considering good practices of labour migration and migrant workers in the socio-economic development of the country. On an average, every year (with an exception to the pandemic year) over 400,000 Nepalis migrate to the Middle East and Malaysia mainly on lower skilled job categories, are the major source of foreign currency earning. Additionally, large number of Nepali migrant workers also migrates to India as seasonal migrant workers on various sectors of work.

8. From the Government’s perspective, how and to what extent have **regional plans and strategies** incorporated the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration? What are the main achievements, gaps and challenges to existing regional approaches, strategies and implementation plans?

The Constitution directs the local governments to collect statistics of the unemployed population and authorizes to formulate relevant plans, policies and budget and implement them within their jurisdiction. The Local Government Operation Act (LGOA), formulated following the mandates of the Constitution, has enabled the local governments to collect data and develop information system of employed and unemployed human resources under the broad theme of ‘data collection of unemployed’, which also includes of internal and foreign migrants. The Act mandates multiple roles and responsibilities of local governments concerning foreign employment including to create awareness regarding safer migration, conduct financial literacy and skill-development training for those migrating to foreign employment.

Considering that the migrant workers face several challenges while accessing basic services (passport, medical tests, insurance, pre-departure orientation etc.) prior to their departure for foreign employment, concentration of these services in capital/Kathmandu has posed challenges to the migrant workers who come from outside Kathmandu. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has decentralized many of such services at the provincial level. The services related to labour approval at the provincial level has entailed cost and time savings to the migrant workers. Many services related to the student migrants such as acquiring no objection certificates and foreign employment are yet to be devolved or decentralized to the provincial and local level.

9. What **methodology** was adopted for completing this voluntary GCM review; how was a whole-of-government approach applied through engaging the various relevant ministries and other sectors of government; what mechanisms were used to engage civil society and other relevant stakeholders for a whole-of-society approach?

The preliminary draft of this review was carried out by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security. The draft was then further discussed among different international development partners including the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Such discussion has produced a useful document to have further deliberation with relevant government ministries at the federal level in Nepal.

The document produced thereafter was further put forwarded to civil society actors for their expert views. A two-day consultative workshop with government, international organizations, and nongovernment stakeholders (NGOs and CSOs) was organized on the 29-30th December 2020 to discuss on priorities, challenges, needs and gaps to be reflected on this document.

10. Given the outbreak of **COVID-19** which has affected all countries in the region, what challenges has the Government identified in implementation of the Global Compact for Migration as part of the COVID-19 response, and what has the Government done to address the specific situation of migrants and their families?

With the outbreak of COVID-19, both the countries of origin and countries of destination of migrants have been affected adversely. The supply-chain mechanism and usual process of migration has been disturbed. Many destination countries have not recruited foreign workers and as a consequence, the aspiring migrants who were about to fly for foreign employment from Nepal have been stranded. In the destination countries, owing to COVID-19 and shrinking of their economy, significant scale of job loss has been experienced. This has forced Nepali foreign workers to live in a dire situation which has aggravated further chaos because of the lockdown measures implemented by labour receiving countries. Many migrants remained stranded without food and shelter and have experienced exploitations of various forms. The repatriation process was challenging and cumbersome with limited number of rescue flights. The Government of Nepal through its diplomatic missions provided emergency consular support services for the repatriation of migrant workers in coordination with the host government, Nepali diasporas communities and civil societies. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal also had bilateral calls and discussions with higher authorities and counterparts in host countries to ensure necessary services and protection to the Nepali Migrant Workers and also provided necessary support to the foreign migrants in Nepal.⁹ With the resuming of regular flights, thousands of Nepalis are returning to their homeland. Timely repatriation of Nepali workers had been a major issue during this period of pandemic. The Covid-19 Crisis Management Center (CCMC) was established with the objective of conducting collaborative efforts to combat and prevent the Covid-19 crisis. The CCMC formulates strategies to combat the severity of this pandemic and suggests the Government to take appropriate measures. The CCMC – in close collaboration

⁹[Publications - Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nepal MOFA](#)

with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and Ministry of Home Affairs – keeps records of returnee migrants along with the information of the skill they have learned. Quarantines and isolation centers have been managed by both provincial and local governments, though the funding for such arrangements were also contributed by the federal government. The Government of Nepal has also formulated directive to guide the process of rescuing of stranded Nepalis in the foreign countries.

END

Annex.

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration - Objectives for safe, orderly and regular migration (GA resolution 73/195)

1.	Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies
2.	Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin
3.	Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration
4.	Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation
5.	Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration
6.	Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work
7.	Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration
8.	Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants
9.	Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants
10.	Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration
11.	Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner
12.	Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral
13.	Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives
14.	Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle
15.	Provide access to basic services for migrants
16.	Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion
17.	Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration
18.	Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences
19.	Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries
20.	Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants
21.	Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration
22.	Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits
23.	Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration