



First Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

National report for the review and implementation of the Compact in Mali

Introduction

Mali, a country of departure, transit and immigration, has been subject to intense population movements since the time of empires. Migration represents both a real opportunity for development and a challenge in view of the multiple challenges associated with irregular migration. Faced with these challenges, the Government of the Republic of Mali has made its management a priority.

In Mali, migration is characterised by the implementation of the National Migration Policy (PONAM – *Politique Nationale de Migration*), which the Government adopted on 3 September 2014. It serves as a reference framework for migration. This policy document, which takes a comprehensive approach to migration, is essentially based on migration issues which are defined in terms of opportunities, on the one hand, and multiple challenges on the other.

Mali is also one of 152 countries that signed the negotiated UN intergovernmental agreement, the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) in December 2018. The GCM and its 23 objectives were taken into account during the review of the PONAM and the validation of a new policy action plan (2020-2024) during a national workshop held in October 2020 in Segou, Mali with the participation of all relevant stakeholders at governmental and civil society level, as well as international organisations.

Mali's vision is to turn migration into an asset for the country's development, on the one hand, and to manage migration in accordance with international commitments and standards, on the other hand.

I. Methodology

At the national level, the coordination mechanism is provided by the Ministry of Malian Nationals Living Abroad and African Integration, which is the government department in charge of migration management. Although a formal chairmanship was not established, the Ministry in charge of Malian Nationals Living Abroad, in conjunction with other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, coordinated the review and follow-up process. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), provides important support to the Government in the implementation and monitoring of the Global Compact for Migration and has technically supported the Government in the preparation of the national review. For this process, the following stakeholders were involved:

Tasks	Department involved
Coordination of the review mechanism (data collection and compilation)	Ministry of Malian Nationals Living Abroad and African Integration
Support to the review mechanism (data sharing, activity reports)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, • Ministry of Health and Social Development • Ministry of Security and Civil Protection • Ministry of Youth, responsible for civic education and citizenship development • Ministry of National Entrepreneurship, Employment and Vocational Training • Ministry of Economy and Finance • Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation • Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family • International Organization for Migration • Migrant organisations

These departments have helped to collect data including the number of Malian nationals living abroad, returning Malian migrants, the number of repatriation of women and children, the volumes of remittances from the Malian diaspora and studies carried out on migration in relation to the Compact.

All the objectives of the GCM are subject to the implementation of the GCM (with regard to the socio-cultural, political, economic and geographical context and the actions carried out on a daily basis by the various technical services linked to migration and the Technical and Financial Partners). However, Objectives 1, 7, 16, 19, 21, 23 receive particular attention for this review, as they are at the heart of the system in place for migration management in our country. These include the protection of migrants, reintegration of returning migrants, data collection on migration, migration and development and prevention of irregular migration.

II. Policy and Enabling Environment

Given the transversal nature of migration, collaboration with different stakeholders to implement the Global Compact is fundamental. Projects have been effectively carried out with these stakeholders, which are specified below, in terms of placing migrants abroad, implementing community development projects, promoting local dialogue on migration issues, and conducting studies to inform decision-makers on migration issues. The development of the National Action Plan for the Migration Compact brought together all relevant stakeholders.

These include (1) migrant associations (2) youth associations (3) study centres (4) employment offices (5) local authorities (6) financial institutions (7) universities (8) international organisations (9) National Development Agencies, etc.

The Government has effectively integrated the implementation of the Compact taking into account the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national, regional processes in line with the objectives of the Compact. The national development framework, the Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development (CREDD - *Cadre Stratégique pour la Relance Economique et le Développement Durable*) 2019-2023, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the ambitions of the African Union’s Agenda 2063, is positioned as an ambitious strategy that aims at a major change in the way Mali’s development is approached and how public policies are delivered accordingly. The CREDD emphasises this in its Goal 5 (Human Capital Development). Through this objective, the Government of Mali intends to invest more in health, education and social protection for poverty reduction and sustainable development in line with the SDGs. Among the specific objectives, two (2) are directly related to migration. These are objectives 5.5.2 and 5.5.3. For public policies on migration, there are the National Migration Policy (PONAM) and the revised migration policy of the African Union. These processes are part of the implementation of the SDGs by aligning the objectives of the Compact with the priorities of these processes at national and regional levels and by determining the indicators for monitoring these processes and the Compact.

Since the adoption of the Compact in 2018, Mali has developed and adopted a national action plan for the implementation of the Compact with all stakeholders. In the development of the National Action Plan all the following actors have been involved and meetings on the Global Compact for Migration are held with their participation. The aim is to promote the appropriation of the Compact by these actors through conferences on the Compact and other migration issues. These include the private sector, trade unions, civil society organisations, universities, migrant communities, foreign communities and international organisations. The revision of the National Migration Policy Action Plan also took into account the objectives of the Compact according to its priority approaches¹. Mali has also developed and adopted in the Council of Ministers the national policy on African integration which also takes into account the 23 objectives of the Compact. On migration and development Mali has also adopted a national strategy for productive diaspora investment and a mechanism to support productive investment by the diaspora. As existing policies already refer to specific categories of migrants, the government remains committed to strengthening the policy framework to address the needs of all migrants in Mali and Malian nationals abroad.

Date	Public policy
March 2019	Adoption of the national policy on African integration
August 2019	Development of the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration

¹ The 8 key actions of PONAM are the following: (1) Protecting and ensuring the safety of migrants (2) Organising and facilitating legal migration (3) Promoting better reintegration of returning migrants (4) Valuing and mobilising the capital (potential) of diasporas for development (5) Strengthening the capacities of migrant organisations and civil society (6) Aiming for a better strategic positioning of Mali on migration issues (7) Improving knowledge about migration (8) Readjusting the conditions of entry, stay and residence in Mali.

October 2020	Review of the National Migration Policy Action Plan
March 2021	Launch of the national strategy for productive diaspora investment
May 2021	Presentation of the mechanism to support productive investment by the diaspora

Regarding COVID-19, it is planned to provide psychosocial and health assistance to migrants (addressing COVID-19 needs and other pathologies). The Action Plan for the Prevention and Response to COVID-19 includes in its health strategy the reactivation of 15 border security cordons and the mobilisation of resources at entry points. The government has also put in place an assistance strategy to repatriate Malian nationals stranded between borders after their closure.

III. Progress in Achieving the Objectives of the Compact

The Government has developed the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Compact in 2019. For the implementation of the Compact, notable progress has been made in Mali. In one way or another, all objectives have been covered by actions. The government has also organised several capacity-building activities, in particular in project planning and management (2019), resource mobilisation (2019) and advocacy techniques (2019), as well as training sessions for radio journalists, NGO leaders and migrant associations in Bamako and the regions. During the reporting period, the main actions carried out included:

In relation to GCM objective 1 “Collect and use accurate and disaggregated data for evidence-based policy-making”:

- Creation of the Migration Information and Management Centre (CIGEM), as a National Migration Observatory in 2019. The Centre aims to improve the knowledge on migration through producing and sharing reliable migration data. It was created in March 2019 as a Scientific and Technological Public Institution.
- Database management training (2019)
- Training on data collection and analysis (2019)
- Creation of the African Centre for Research and Studies on Migration (CAREM) in Bamako
- Creation of a master’s degree in migration and development to improve knowledge on migration

In line with objective 6 of the GCM “Promote fair and ethical recruitment practices and ensure decent working conditions”:

- Development of a guide on labour migration

In relation to the GCM objective 7 “Addressing and reducing migration-related vulnerabilities”:

- Assistance to 10,000 Malian nationals in distress between 2019 and 2021

In relation to objective 21 of the GCM “Cooperate to facilitate the return and readmission of migrants in safety and dignity as well as their sustainable reintegration”:

- Support for the reintegration of 2,500 Malian returnees

- Operationalisation of reception, orientation and assistance centres and transit centres for migrants in Kayes and Gao in 2020
- Elaboration of a guide on the support of Malian returnees in their socio-economic reintegration
- Training of DGME (general delegation of Malian nationals abroad) staff on project design and management (2018)

In line with GCM objective 19 “Create the conditions for migrants and diasporas to contribute fully to sustainable development in all countries”:

- Mobilisation of 105 intellectuals from the Malian diaspora to strengthen the capacities of national structures
- Support for the implementation of 110 community development projects with the Malian diaspora in the localities of origin
- Support for the implementation of 15 productive investment projects of the Malian diaspora
- Completion of a study on the diagnostic status of existing diaspora investment mechanisms
- Completion of a study on promising sectors in Mali with a view to promoting productive investment in Mali
- Five (5) training sessions to strengthen the operational capacities of the High Council of Malians Living Abroad (HCME - *Haut Conseil des Maliens de l’Extérieur*)
- Annual support from the State to the HCME in view of its status as an association of public utility

In relation to the GCM objective 23 “Strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration”

- Strengthening of international cooperation with the participation of Mali in several international meetings on migration issues
- Strengthening capacity building actions of actors in relation to migration
- Signature of a Memorandum of Understanding with Morocco on the exchange and implementation of migration policies
- Implementation of consultation frameworks for better coordination of actions in the field of migration and synergy between actions

All these efforts demonstrate the strong will in place for the implementation of the Global Compact to which Mali remains strongly committed notwithstanding difficulties on the operational and budgetary levels and in the coordination of actions.

Nevertheless, the challenges and gaps encountered in the achievement of the Global Compact’s objectives are linked to the main weaknesses facing Mali, and in particular (i) the lack of coordination of actions in relation to migration; (ii) the lack of reliable migration data for better planning of actions in relation to migration; (iii) the lack of proven technical skills and support for migrants carrying out investment projects; and (iv) the lack of financial means for the effective implementation of the global action plan.

The difficult economic and security context of our country and of our traditional partners involved in migration constitutes the main difficulty encountered in the implementation of the Global Compact. In relation to reintegration actions, we note the absence of more promising business activities and occupations such as jewellery, food processing, local fruit processing, sanitary plumbing, tiling, staffing, building electricity, building painting, photovoltaic installation and craft trades.

Based on the above, we can draw the following conclusions: The Global Compact has brought the migration issue to the forefront of the national and international agenda, demonstrating a strong commitment to migration issues by national and global decision-makers. The commitment of the State and its partners to better governance of migration is real and the implementation of the Compact's national action plan is a real opportunity. In addition, the Compact has undoubtedly strengthened multi-stakeholder cooperation to address the root causes of irregular migration. This is an example of good practice to be encouraged in order to address the common challenges of migration. Given that the implementation of the Compact has enabled the creation of networks of national and local stakeholders on migration who are at the heart of migration issues and accompany the initiatives of the State and its partners in the migration sector, it is necessary to formalise how these networks function and to better coordinate their actions. For national authorities, migration is a priority, which ensures the country's commitment to effectively implement the Global Compact.

IV. Means for Implementation

As part of the implementation of its migration policy, the Government allocates budget lines that also contribute to the implementation of the Compact. In addition to these funds, there are funds dedicated to other issues related to migration management, e.g. security issues, social protection, administrative issues, etc. There are also partnerships with international organisations, local authorities and civil society organisations, whose support takes the form of:

- Technical capacity building through training of staff in the various technical departments,
- The operationalisation of technical services in charge of migration management,
- Conducting migration studies,
- The organisation of voluntary repatriation,
- Support in data collection and processing,
- Psychosocial and health care,
- Support for social and professional reintegration for returning migrants, etc.

Despite these resources, many challenges remain in the diversity of actors and the lack of coordination between initiatives as well as the lack of resources from the State.

V. The next steps

For the next steps, Mali will continue its efforts to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact on Migration. The country will pursue its efforts by prioritising the following aspects: protection of migrants; Production and sharing of migration data; Engaging with the diaspora for development; Tackling smuggling networks; Reintegration of returnees; Capacity building of stakeholders.

To support this work, efforts will be made to improve communication on the objectives of the Global Compact on Migration in order to popularise it. Emphasis will be placed on inter-ministerial communication/coordination with a view to involving the highest authorities and external communication to inform, raise awareness and get communities and civil society organisations involved in achieving the objectives of the Compact, while using the media, social networks and organising conferences and information workshops with stakeholders.

These series of activities will facilitate the preparation of the International Migration Review Forum scheduled for 2022 in which Mali will actively participate and make recommendations for better management of migration issues in support of the implementation of the GCM.