



Briefing by the Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration

Remarks

Tuesday, 14 March 2023, 15:00 -17:00 CET

Palais des Nations, Room XXVI

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues,

It is my pleasure to convene today's meeting to discuss the next phase in implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

In particular, I would like to take this opportunity to:

- Provide an update on the Network's efforts to bring the system together to support collective efforts to strengthen principled international migration governance, in line with the Global Compact; and,
- Outline how best the Network can facilitate the 2024 Regional Review of the Global Compact.

Following my presentation, I would be pleased to open the floor to hear from you as to how we can further our work together.

When we last convened, at the Network's annual meeting in October, we took stock of the success of the IMRF and its consensus [Progress Declaration](#), both of which signaled the continued significance of, and our collective commitment to, the Global Compact as I believe can be considered the principal framework of international cooperation on migration.

Critically, Member States also highlighted the need for us to focus more strongly on implementation.

And in fact, the Compact is, after all, only as good as its impact: improving the lives and well-being of those many millions who are the focus of the GCM.

Since the Annual Meeting – through discussions with Member States including Champion countries, stakeholders, or through regional and country Networks – we have continued to hear this call: implementation, implementation, implementation.

Crucial to the Compact is its spirit of cooperation, bringing meaning to its whole-of-government and whole-of-society guiding principles. Please consider then that the UN Network on Migration is seeking to fulfill a whole-of-UN approach to the Global Compact, providing not only its support to you the Member States, as contexts and priorities change, but also the platform for a growing and dedicated Global Compact community.



This platform has grown exponentially:

- We now have country-level Networks embedded into 77 United Nations country teams, fully aligned with the overall reform agenda of the UN, in addition to six regional Networks.
- There are 21 different partners from the Network and stakeholders co-leading on 14 different workstreams ranging from preparing for future health emergencies; to strengthening safe, dignified returns and sustainable reintegration; to climate change and migration; to combatting discrimination.
- Through these partnerships, the Network has developed tools and guidance to support partners at the country level, including support to [UN country teams to integrate migration into planning at country-level](#) and [Guidance to Member States in developing GCM National Implementation Plans](#).
- Additionally, several thematic tools have been developed including on alternatives to detention; access to services; regular pathways; bilateral labour migration agreements; return and reintegration; the inclusion of migrants in COVID-19 responses; and anti-discrimination.

Taken altogether, these materials cover at least 18 of the GCM's 23 Objectives.

Another significant element of this GCM community is the mandated Capacity Building Mechanism, encompassing both the [Migration Network Hub](#) and the [Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#).

The Hub is central to the Network's approach to support GCM implementation through its knowledge platform, repository of practices, discussion spaces and the guidance and training section. The Hub brings together an online community, hosting a wealth of resources and capturing feedback and lessons in GCM implementation.

More than 220 practices have already been submitted to the repository making it possible for Member States and stakeholders to learn directly from each other – on a large variety of issues such as migration protection measures during COVID-19, migration governance, youth engagement, and migrants' skills development.

Furthermore, the Hub's discussion spaces last year registered more than 400 inputs reaffirming the need for direct interaction and knowledge-sharing among Member States and other stakeholders. Topics covered related to processes such as the IMRF, but also substantive issues such as labour migration, regular pathways, and climate change.

Similarly, the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund continues to exemplify coordination and partnership, supporting a total of 15 joint programmes, covering all regions and thematic areas

and involving 13 different UN entities and many more governmental and non-governmental national partners, showing the comparative advantage of pooled funding.

These joint programmes include regional approaches to climate and migration in IGAD and the Pacific; countering trafficking in persons in Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago; addressing social cohesion in Morocco and Western Africa; and combatting xenophobia in South Africa.



Prioritizing partnership and the GCM's guiding principles, the Migration MPTF recently added guidance on engaging meaningfully with civil society, as well as a child sensitivity marker – the first of its kind – developed in close partnership with UNICEF.

Confirmed by both a [recent independent evaluation](#) and the Progress Declaration of the IMRF, and with new funding targets [adopted by the Steering Committee](#) for the period leading to the 2026 IMRF, the Fund is poised to continue growing with your support. I want to thank all contributors to the Fund: a community now making it among the most diversely supported of all UN pooled funds.

I am also grateful to the 27 Member States who have made pledges to implement the Global Compact, as well as the growing community of Champion countries. The engagement of you all is vital to the success of this endeavour.

Similarly, it is an honour to work with many others, including stakeholders, NGOs, civil society organizations, communities and migrants themselves, alongside partners in the UN system.

Building on this, we want to continue providing a platform for all to come together to discuss and learn from each other on how best to implement the Global Compact.

Similar to the Migration Dialogues convened by the Network in preparation of the last Secretary-General's report and in the run-up to the IMRF last year, the Network has recently launched the [GCM Talks](#) as a consultative platform to provide a space to continue discussions about how to implement the Global Compact.

The initial GCM Talks are focused on those mandated activities from the Progress Declaration, namely on [proposing a limited set of indicators to track GCM implementation](#) and on [developing actionable recommendations on strengthening cooperation on missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress](#), a critical issue if you have been attentive to the press in the last couple of weeks.

The GCM Talk on indicators was held last month at which 53 Member States participated. The discussion provided an overview of the process of development and solicited ideas and inputs towards those indicators, ensuring that Member States and stakeholders have a platform for steering this important work in selecting the limited set of indicators, against which the progress of the GCM will be assessed.

Additional GCM Talks will be developed on different thematic issues and can be organized both globally and regionally. We anticipate these talks feeding into the preparation for the forthcoming regional reviews, and the next biennial report of the Secretary-General, due in 2024.

It is important, if I may, that you – Member States - take ownership of these Talks. We can provide the setting and ensure you receive technical support from the UN system; equally, we need to know from you how best they can further our collective agenda with regards to the GCM. What issues would you like to see discussed? Please view this platform as a blank canvas for you to fill.

The next GCM Talks, on 23 March, will kick start work on the second of the Progress Declaration's mandated activities: on missing migrants and humanitarian assistance.



We must pause here as this focus of our work, called for by the General Assembly, provides eloquent, if tragic, illustration of the urgency that lies behind the Global Compact.

Over 22,000 migrants' lives have been lost or reported missing since the adoption of the GCM¹ including far too many children. In some regions, the number of missing is the highest it has ever been, while for thousands more the journey remains fraught with risk. These are abhorrent figures which profoundly impact an incalculable number of families, friends and communities.

There is, I would suggest, no more graphic illustration of why the GCM was created and why our partnership is needed. There is also no more graphic illustration as to why our current failure to save lives must be seen as a shame on us all, and must drive us with a burning urgency to address these grievous deficits.

Excellencies, colleagues,

As we have completed the first four-year cycle of the GCM and approach the second round of Regional Reviews, we can be certain that the Compact is now an established part of our international migration governance firmament.

In this regard, I am further encouraged by the participation in today's meeting of a number of regional consultative processes.

You have received the Network's proposal on the preparations and organization of the Regional Reviews of the GCM. This framework is the result of a series of consultations with our partners including the Regional Networks; it relies on the mandate given by the Progress Declaration; and it builds on lessons learned from the first round of Regional Reviews.

As was the case in 2020, the Regional Reviews provide Member States, and relevant sub-regional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations with the opportunity to consider ways to enhance cooperation on GCM implementation within and across regions and sub-regions.

The Regional Reviews offer a critical platform for exchange within regions and sub-regions of good practices to advance GCM implementation, including through pledges made in the framework of the IMRF, and the mainstreaming of the GCM guiding principles into migration policy and governance.

The Regional Reviews further offer an opportunity to discuss the progress made on the priorities that were identified during the 2020 Regional Reviews and in the IMRF Progress Declaration.

More so than during the last round of Regional Reviews, this framework proposes an emphasis on regional cooperation and trends, which I believe better reflects the reality – as noted in the GCM itself – that most international migration takes place within regions.

The proposed process of meetings, open to all regional platforms and migration fora, interstate consultative mechanisms, regional consultative processes, will facilitate dynamic, inclusive, and

¹ <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/data>, calculation since 2019.



focused discussions to help shine a brighter light on regional dynamics, both challenges and successes.

As outlined in the framework the Network stands ready to offer to you a number of tools to support your work in the Regional Reviews:

- Provision of technical support to Member States, relevant sub-regional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations in their preparations for Regional Reviews;
- Facilitating focused discussions, including on key mandates emanating from the Progress Declaration;
- Supporting dedicated multi-stakeholder consultations for each region;
- Support each United Nations Regional Economic Commission in organizing a dedicated review meeting.
- Lastly, the Network is calling on donors to fund the participation in the Regional Reviews of representatives of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, and other relevant stakeholders.

The IMRF Progress Declaration requests the President of the General Assembly to hold a plenary meeting of the General Assembly in the second half of 2024. This General Assembly meeting will allow for Member States to consider the next biennial report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Compact, for Member States and stakeholders to present progress in implementing the pledges they have made in the context of the Forum, and for the Coordinator of the Network to present the outcomes of the Regional Reviews.

Cognizant of Member States ongoing reporting obligations, the Network proposes that detailed voluntary GCM reports on national progress are prepared once every four years, ahead of each IMRF. The preparations for the voluntary GCM reports would thus start in 2025. At that point, Member States who wish to, will be able to build on the Secretary-General's proposed indicators as they conduct reviews of progress related to the implementation of the GCM.

Excellencies and colleagues,

Our way of working is well established, and our community is broad, and thriving. But we must now deliver.

While progress has been made on GCM implementation – and on integrating migrants into our communities – there is much more to overcome.

Over the past four years, we have seen how migrants in many parts of the world have fallen further behind due to the COVID-19 pandemic, excluded from critical health and social protections. They face a challenging socio-economic outlook, as the global recovery continues to stutter.

Migrants are a bellwether of the economic insecurities faced by communities at large, but also very often, scapegoats for those most fearful of the future. We must double-down on our efforts to protect those who have shown the courage to seek new horizons, combat xenophobia and racism, and ensure migrants can share the opportunities to which, by the way, they so robustly contribute. As we look towards the SDG Summit in September, we must ask ourselves, are we



really doing all we can to ensure migrants are part of the major transformative change that is needed?

The moment to do so is now. Governments around the world are rethinking their immigration policies, designing policies to attract the next generation of workers at all skill levels, and build more diverse societies.

How can we make sure that new regular migration policies can address multiple global concerns?

How can labour migration ameliorate the looming challenges posed by climate change, and become an integral part of adaptation strategies including the strengthening the resilience of the communities most impacted by environmental degradation and climate change?

How might the experiences and skills of migrants overseas offer insight for communities and economies at home? Mobilizing the diaspora for the development of their countries of origin.

We can no longer afford to work objective by objective but rather must seek innovative and energetic solutions that allow all countries, and all migrants, to really benefit from migration. And we must do so together – as I have so often repeated – because we are more than the sum of our individual efforts and, more than ever, no country can manage migration effectively alone.

Together, let us move forward to ensure that migration works really for all.

With my thanks for your patience, and thanks to your commitment, the floor is now open for our conversation.