United Nations
Network on Migration
Working Better Together

Second Regional Review of the GCM for Africa

Key messages

At the first Africa review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in 2021, African governments reaffirmed their commitment to the GCM as a critical driver of sustainable development.

Strong political will and enhanced cooperation are necessary to support the effective implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM in Africa in the lead-up to the second International Migration Review Forum in 2026.

Acknowledging the importance of the second African review of the GCM, the Network calls on Member States and all stakeholders to consider the inclusion of the following key messages in their interventions to further align the GCM with the 2030 Agenda:

The realization of the African Union's Agenda 2063 depends in part on well-governed migration that aligns with international legal frameworks and protects migrants' rights.

Thematic Round Table 1: Ensuring that migration is voluntary, orderly and regular

- The adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin must be addressed in a comprehensive manner, including with efforts to create safe migration pathways.
- Labour mobility within Africa is characterized by significant migration in low-wage sectors to regional labour markets. Strengthening labour migration frameworks through bilateral agreements that protect migrant workers is crucial for safeguarding their rights.
- Regional and national qualifications frameworks must be harmonized to enable the portability of skills across Africa. Recognizing uncertified prior learning is essential for allowing migrants to contribute more effectively to host economies.
- Migrants often face discrimination and exploitation, such as recruitment fees and wage theft, which hinder their economic impact. Addressing these issues is critical for maximizing the benefits of migration.
- The AU Free Movement Protocol has, to date, been ratified by four countries. Further adoption of the Protocol is vital for safeguarding migrants' rights and creating secure and predictable migration pathways.
- GCM pledges could include specific commitments to eliminate all forms of discrimination and strengthen evidence-based discourse on migration to combat xenophobia and racism.

- Enhancing social protection and integration through regular migration pathways is essential for migrant workers, regardless of their migratory status, at both transit and destination countries.
- Effective border management is crucial for enhancing regional cooperation, enabling safe and regular cross-border movements of people and goods. This requires the implementation of human rights-based procedures at borders alongside improved information sharing to manage migration and combat transnational crime.
- Ensuring safe and dignified returns, readmission and sustainable reintegration, fully compliant with international human rights law, remains a complex challenge that must be addressed with a coordinated approach.

Thematic Round Table 2: Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance

- The protection of migrants' human rights is a fundamental responsibility that must be upheld at all stages of their journey, regardless of their status. This includes ensuring access to basic services, legal identity and protection against trafficking and exploitation.
- Inclusion and social cohesion are vital for successfully integrating migrants into their new communities. Migrants should have equal access to social services, employment, education and healthcare.
- Existing agreements on non-discriminatory national social security systems should be leveraged to facilitate the portability of migrants' benefits, which is crucial for their economic security.
- Policy frameworks must prioritize the needs of children and young people in vulnerable situations, who constitute a significant portion of both international migrants and internally displaced persons across Africa.
- Migrants' rights must be safeguarded against racist and xenophobic attacks, both within and outside Africa.
- A comprehensive, route-based response to managing migration is key to saving lives and improving the safety and dignity of migrants and all people on the move along dangerous and deadly routes.
- Member States should develop plans to implement the recommendations on missing migrants and humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress with support from the United Nations system through the Network on Migration, building on the mandate given to the Secretary-General in the 2022 IMRF.

Thematic Round Table 3: Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development

- Migration is a powerful catalyst for socio-economic growth, innovation and recovery, particularly in the context of global challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Reframing migration as a development driver is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063.
- Migration has significantly contributed to national development by facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills and innovative ideas. It has also promoted trade, investment and cultural exchange, which are essential for building resilient economies and cohesive societies, ultimately leading to enhanced national prosperity and stability.
- Remittances are a lifeline for many African countries, supporting economies and helping to address developmental challenges. Policies that facilitate and optimize remittance flows are vital for maintaining their positive impact.
- The African diaspora plays a critical role in promoting welfare, stability and job creation across the continent. Effective management of remittances and strategic engagement in development initiatives can harness the full potential of the diaspora.
- Active engagement of the private sector and international partners in investing in education and the development of transferable skills is essential for enhancing workforce capabilities and promoting labor exchange among countries, thereby advancing national and regional economic development priorities.

Thematic Round Table 4: Data, evidence-based policies and international cooperation

- The availability of accurate, reliable and timely data, disaggregated by factors such as sex, age, gender, migration status and disability, is critical for developing policies and programs that are evidence-based and responsive to the needs of diverse demographic groups.
- The proliferation of inaccurate information and negative stereotypes about migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Africa underscores the need for data-driven public discourse. Promoting accurate information can combat discrimination, xenophobia and racism and foster understanding and acceptance.
- More investments are needed to leverage existing resources or administrative statistics, by including migration modules in existing national surveys, thus enabling reporting against a common indicators framework that can speak not only to national plans but also to international commitments, like the SDGs and the GCM.
- Partnerships with non-state actors in research and data are essential for supporting evidence-based decision-making.

- Partnerships and capacity-building initiatives are essential for addressing the complex dynamics of migration. Collaboration across governments, international organizations and civil society will enhance the coherence and effectiveness of migration policies.
- GCM Champion countries should play an active role in exchanging good practices on migration governance to promote learning and innovation, leading to more harmonized migration policies across the continent.
- Multi-stakeholder collective reviews, peer learning and mutual accountability are critical for the successful implementation of the GCM. Establishing mechanisms at national and regional levels for tracking and discussing GCM and Agenda 2063 progress will strengthen accountability.
- Consistent periodic open dialogue and knowledge exchange on migration issues with civil society organizations, researchers, diaspora organizations, migrant populations, trafficking survivors and women's and youth organizations are crucial for fostering collaborative and informed migration governance.

Cross-cutting messages

- Accelerating the GCM implementation following guidance and resources developed by the UN Network on Migration and outlined in the IMRF Progress Declaration is essential for scaling up commitments to safe, orderly and regular migration across Africa.
- Safe, orderly and regular migration should be meaningfully included in SDG Voluntary National Reviews.
- Increasing financial support for GCM implementation through contributions to the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the broader Capacity Building Mechanism is critical for ensuring the Compact's positive impact and meeting growing demand.
- Further mainstreaming the GCM into national policy frameworks, including through dedicated GCM implementation plans, will help align migration governance with national development priorities.
- Meaningful engagement with stakeholders, as defined in paragraph 47 of the GCM, is crucial for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to migration governance.
- National and regional UN Networks on Migration, along with other stakeholders, are key partners in accelerating progress toward GCM objectives and Agenda 2063 targets. Their involvement is crucial for the success of migration-related policies and programs.