

GFMD Report to the IMRF

Mai 2022

Objective

This GFMD Report has been prepared for the first IMRF (International Migration Review Forum) of the GCM (Global Compact for Migration) scheduled to take place in May 2022. The Report responds to General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/326 from July 2019, which invited “the Global Forum on Migration and Development, including its civil society, business and mayoral mechanisms, to provide a space for informal exchanges on the implementation of the Global Compact, and report the findings, best practices and innovative approaches to” the IMRF. The Report consists of two parts. Firstly, a descriptive summary referring to the sources of the recommendations. Secondly, a list of GFMD recommendations according to the four Roundtable themes suggested for the IMRF including the GCM objectives.

The main objective of the Report is to convey the message that the GFMD brings added value to the global migration governance architecture. The GFMD has successfully brought together a wide range of state and non-state stakeholders thanks to its informal and inclusive approach. It has shaped an ongoing process with direct, collaborative interaction. It has managed to bring together governments from different levels of economic development and contrasting perspectives. This has traditionally been more difficult to achieve within the UN framework. The GFMD also goes beyond the UN scope as some governments that are not party to GCM take an active part in the GFMD. The GFMD is thus a crucial complement to GCM. They are both needed since they have different constituencies, working methods, objectives, and potential outcomes. The two frameworks can strengthen their cooperation, avoid duplication of work and seek synergies by continuing with regular meetings between the GFMD Troika and the Secretariat of the UN Network on Migration.

Main sources of the Report

This Report has been prepared on the basis of several years of cumulative experiences shared within the GFMD process. A dedicated GFMD Friends of the Forum meeting was held in November 2021 to allow for all stakeholders to give up-to-date inputs to the Report. A total of 180 delegates from 81 GFMD Member States, three GFMD Mechanism, Youth and 25 organizations attended the meeting either in-person or online. A GFMD Committee focusing on GFMD-GCM relations provided a draft discussion paper for the meeting, which is also the basis of this Report.

The GFMD Committee’s draft has been compiled on the basis of the reports from the two most recent GFMD summits under UAE and Ecuador Chairs respectively, which included specific sessions on GCM implementation; the GFMD summit under Morocco-Germany which coincided with the adoption of the GCM in 2018; the most recent GFMD report to the HLPF; the 2019 GFMD Workshop on GCM implementation; and practices shared within the [GFMD Platform for Partnerships](#). The final Report has been approved by the [GFMD Steering Group](#).

GFMD Recommendations to the IMRF

The 23 GCM objectives are planned to be covered at the IMRF in the following indicative way: (i) Round table one: objectives 2, 5, 6, 12 and 18; (ii) Round table two: objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 21; (iii) Round table three: objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22; (iv) Round table four: objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23. The GFMD contributes to all these objectives but foremost to those points around which GFMD stakeholders have had the most deliberations. The Report is focusing its recommendations on how the GFMD governance model contributes to achieving GCM objectives and principles (mainly GCM objective 23).

Roundtable one: objectives 2, 5, 6, 12 and 18

2. Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin

Root causes can be confronted by tackling conflicts and human rights abuse, promoting job creation and economic development in countries of origin, especially for youth. International migration may grow due to income gaps, lack of socio-economic development, demographic imbalances, food insecurity, and climate change. Targeted ODA and FDI should be stepped up in this regard also taking into account the people most in need from a poverty reduction perspective. It is important to use accurate data to understand the causes and mechanisms of irregular migration in order to identify and implement solutions. Partnerships are key to addressing migration challenges and harnessing its many benefits.

Adaptation strategies to climate change are needed, and migrants could be included in national and local disaster risk reduction and climate change strategies. The expertise of international bodies such as the Platform for Disaster Displacement (PDD) should be used when responding to the differences between the context of sudden-onset disasters and long-term effects of climate change. It is important to arrive at balanced narratives around climate change and migration and to support local and regional governments, who are often the first ones to respond to climate related displacement. When discussing root causes, there should also be a focus on the positive aspects of migration. The adverse drivers of migration could be addressed by creating alternatives to emigration in rural areas and leverage food systems.

5. Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration

Although there are regular pathways for migration in most countries, there are also barriers that prevent migrants from using them to meet labour market needs. Diversifying regular pathways, including through positive recruitment schemes and some regularization of undocumented migrants, may reduce migrant vulnerabilities provided that they uphold the human rights principles. Regularization processes should not be as lengthy as they may be currently, especially for vulnerable groups. The prevalence of the informal labour market and the inaccessibility of public service systems often represent a significant barrier to integration, even for regular migrants, who therefore cannot be protected.

Governments can develop regional agreements on regularization based on the principle of shared responsibility. This should also include cases of public health emergencies and where there are protection needs. The Talent Beyond Boundaries initiative including work by

Fragomen is a good example of attempts to lift refugees and displaced persons out of displacement by leveraging their skills, and offering pathways to skilled migration programs.

6. Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work

Migration policies need to be adapted to business realities (skills needs, training, certifications, global skills gaps) as well as the capacities of receiving societies. The private sector has a role regarding the recruitment of migrants and engaging in public campaigns to explain how migration makes economic sense and brings competitive advantage. Facilitated skills mobility for employment can be adopted and implemented to ensure responsible recruitment policies and practices. Recruitment fees should not be borne by workers and no worker should pay to access a job.

Lack of regular recruitment processes for labour migrants, unscrupulous practices and the exploitation of labour in systems with working visa sponsorships have been identified as specific concerns. Recruitment processes could limit the number of intermediaries to prevent vulnerabilities. Bilateral agreements are effective means to reducing abuse and meeting needs. Mandatory training for sponsored workers in countries of origin could be useful. KNOMAD and ILO have developed useful recruitment cost indicators. There are bilateral labour agreements e.g. between Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Relevant legal frameworks and international labour standards need to be implemented, which can be assisted by ILO.

12. Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral

Irregular migration is often triggered by undeveloped migration systems and procedures (visa applications, possibilities for regularization, or family unification) that are complex, slow, unclear and expensive. Migration policies should therefore be integral and inclusive in nature, addressing solutions to irregular migration challenges in a coherent and comprehensive manner, thus also broadening the narrative. Reducing the cost of immigration, visa and permit procedures should be regarded as a way to empower migrants. Other issues include access to services and access to work/residence permits and citizenship which face challenges such as lack of information on regular immigration procedures and excessive costs. Vaccination status has emerged as a barrier to mobility in the wake of the Covid19 pandemic.

18. Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences

Regional systems for mutual recognition of skills and qualifications, and validation of professional certifications and formal education degrees could be set up. Public-private partnerships are useful at the regional level in order to facilitate access to skills and skills recognition processes to meet labour shortages in specific fields. Skills and qualification recognition for migrant workers returning to countries of origin should be enhanced. States should reduce administrative burdens, while keeping the process competitive.

More advanced use of data and efficient management can improve cross border migration, contact tracing, intra-company migration procedures and improved legal pathways for labour migration. Language skills and cultural skills coupled with training and lifelong learning where

relevant for migrant workers are also necessary as key focus areas. Digitizing procedures can help manage work permit applications, visa extensions and recruitment processes, in order to create more accessible, transparent and less bureaucratic systems. All these measures could help to fill much-needed skills shortages to support economic recovery during and after the Covid pandemic.

Roundtable two: objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 21

4. Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation

There are three major types of challenges: the lack of documentation and limitations to regular routes, migrants who deliberately move without documentation, and the difficulties of effectively advising migrants on their rights, obligations and methods of seeking support. Source countries should ensure broader delivery of birth certificates, ID-cards and travel documents. More effective use could be made of migrant networks and organizations, as well as local and regional governments for the purpose of information sharing. Challenges regarding access to services include lack of information on normal immigration procedures, the informal nature of the jobs market in many countries, language barriers, and negative attitudes towards migrants. There is also an issue of high costs and tedious administrative requirements involved in processing visa applications and issuing relevant documents.

If some service provision is considered as protection of human rights, it could enable access to core services such as health and education especially for people with health problems or disabilities. National and local Governments could develop platforms for migrants which contain all relevant information for them regarding procedures and requirements that are, e.g. gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, youth friendly, in appropriate languages. The issuance of ID-cards and access to health care and education regardless of immigration status in the form of e.g. driver's licenses or municipal identification cards are considered by some.

8. Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants

An important achievement of the GFMD over the years has been its input to the development of the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative (MICIC) and its guidelines and practices. MICIC is a multi-stakeholder process led by the Philippines and the United States, with the support of the European Union, Costa Rica, Ethiopia and other governments as well as civil society and other actors. The process was initiated under the Swedish GFMD Chair in 2013-2014 and its guidelines are cited in the GCM. Governments are encouraged to work together with the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights of Migrants who is mandated to engage with stakeholders on issues related to saving life.

9. Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants

Governments and other stakeholders can support UN bodies such as UNODC in collective work towards implementation of the 2020 protocol against the smuggling of migrants, adopted as part of the the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. This work

includes prevention, prosecution of the perpetrators, and assistance to the victims. It also entails support to transnational investigations into smuggling rings.

10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration

Countering trafficking in persons and other forms of exploitation of migrants is part of broader policies against irregular migration. Quality research based on accurate data is increasingly needed for policymaking, e.g. regarding victims of trafficking. It is important to ensure effective understanding of the causes, risks and solutions governments might offer to prevent further abuse. There are pressing priorities preventing the trafficking especially of young women - 98% of victims of trafficking in persons for sexual purposes are women. There are valuable initiatives where national and local governments work with networks of civil society against trafficking and violence against women migrants. An example of a bilateral agreement is the one between the UAE and Indonesia.

11. Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner

Migration control is based on state sovereignty, which must be respected. Effective border management, including saving lives, remains vital for safe and regular international migration. Border closures, mobility restrictions and expiration of legal residence were consequences of the Covid pandemic. Economic recovery requires reopening closed borders while preserving state security. Since long, negative public perceptions or misperceptions about migrants and migration, notably in terms of the impact of increased migration and the vulnerabilities faced by migrants, often lead to policies that tend to focus more on security and control than on identification of needs and protection of rights. Border management policies should be in line with the states' obligations under international law and the human rights of migrants. Special attention should be paid to women, children and other individuals with vulnerabilities.

13. Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives

There should be alternatives to detention. Thailand as an example has adopted a whole of society approach in alternatives to detention for children by working closely with civil society and international organizations to ensure the best interest of the child, including access to education. With the Covid pandemic, some alternatives to detention through community-based partnerships were introduced in Spain, Belgium, the United Kingdom and other countries.

21. Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration

There is often insufficient support for migrants returning to their country of origin. The role of civil society is of key importance in regard of safe and dignified return. Skills and qualification recognition for returnees is regularly missing, as well as measures against the social stigma of domestic workers. Measures should be integrated with social protection system reforms in developing countries. The private sector also plays an important role here. Governments could consider visa or residence permit extensions for migrants unable to return to countries of origin until the situation changes. Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers have had to return home

with neither full compensation for their previous work, nor secure employment back home during the Covid pandemic. There have been many examples of reduced wages, random dismissals and breach of contracts. Lessons should be learnt for the future. Effective and dignified return policies and readmission for those not allowed to stay, after an individual assessment in accordance with due process and fair trial guarantees, should be ensured in a fair, humane, and predictable way, including reintegration assistance.

Roundtable three: objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22

14. Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle

The role of Embassies could be strengthened with a view to support emigrants and diaspora communities. Sri Lanka is a good example of having provided assistance to its migrant workers during the Covid pandemic. A nation-wide network is being used to assist returning migrant workers. Through its consulates overseas the government supports repatriations and sponsors quarantine and health facilities for returning migrant workers. Another example is Egypt which has launched a national expatriates database to guide decisions on migration governance and enhance the integration of Egyptians abroad into national development efforts.

15. Provide access to basic services for migrants

There are existing gaps between actual services and the requirements and needs of migrants, especially in rural areas. There is a need to improve access to justice for many migrant workers. Better access to education and health services can lead to improved inclusion, employment, and livelihood. Both formal and informal barriers prevent access to services from the perspective of respecting the dignity and humanity of all migrants (e.g. access dependent on migration status; lack of information; high costs; administrative hurdles; cultural issues such as prejudices against women...). Local and regional governments play a key role in this regard, including through inclusive policy-making, enabling non-discriminatory access to services, and improved urban planning in partnership with civil society and the private sector. Migrant associations and civil society play an important role as well when it comes to providing services for free, including education, health and counseling.

16. Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion

Fostering the social and economic inclusion of migrants in host communities is a requirement for cohesive and prosperous societies, also to leverage migration for sustainable development. Local, regional and national governments and nongovernmental partners, including youth organizations, can play important roles in facilitating inclusion. However, they often need better access to funding and or appropriate legal mandates to fully take up this role. Media is another important actor and can influence tendencies towards xenophobia. Immigrant integration is both about economic, social and political dimensions and there may be discrimination in all three. Restrictions on political participation is a significant barrier to inclusion. Early interventions are often useful, e.g. providing language and culture skills to immigrants. Barriers to accessing family reunification can encourage irregular movement and discourage integration

in new communities. The prevalence of the informal labour market and the inaccessibility of public service systems often represent a significant barrier to integration.

19. Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable

development in all countries

Diaspora can contribute to development of their countries of origin through the transfer of remittances, skills and knowledge. Diaspora bonds, trust funds, and SME funds can be used to leverage diaspora savings for investment. AFFORD and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) pursue an emerging partnership on labour mobility schemes and on diaspora contribution for up-skilling in countries of origin, capitalizing on the respective organization's existing programs. The EU Diaspora Facility (EUDiF) is an EU-funded project implemented by ICMPD, including the mapping of diaspora engagement, capacity building, mobilizing dialogue expertise, and exchanging ideas. Another example is partnership between France and Senegal on a Support Program for Solidarity Initiatives for Development (PAISD). It is a mechanism for mobilizing and supporting solidarity actions and economic initiatives by the Senegalese diaspora for the benefit of the country of origin. It targets Senegalese living in France, Belgium, Spain and Italy; it supports and subsidizes up to 80% of the local development initiatives by the diaspora associations in the country of origin.

20. Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion

of migrants

Digital financial services can establish digital wage payment solutions, modernize the remittances transfer market and drive the development of remittance-linked financial products. In the context of reduced global remittances caused by the Covid pandemic, there is a need for reforming the global remittances system to maximize its development benefits. Many migrants and their families cannot access remittance-linked financial products. Support to fintech start-ups could generate business interest of possible investments and partnerships in the remittances market. National and local authorities, cities and rural areas can work together within and across borders to maximize migrant's contributions through remittances to urban and rural development. The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated the vital role remittances play for the wellbeing of hundreds of millions of families in developing countries who otherwise would have struggled to survive the health and economic crises. Migrants increased the use of regulated and digital channels along many corridors and the use of digital channels in many cases brought down the costs of transactions. However, the use of digital channels is heavily dependent on sound infrastructure, still lacking in many regions.

22. Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned

benefits

The Covid pandemic has demonstrated how the portability of social security is a key issue for migrant workers. This will also facilitate return and reintegration. Technology could play a larger role in this regard. Stakeholders should identify sectors in which bilateral negotiations between institutions of home and host countries are most relevant to enhance the development potential of diaspora and returning migrants, such as for the portability of social rights. The UN could collect data and examples of how portability is promoted and how it impacts migrants and communities around the world.

Roundtable four: objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23

1. Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based

policies

There is a need for improved interagency coordination on data and for advances in data access and timely data sharing to formulate evidence-based policies at all policy levels. Accuracy, consistency and reliability are all important aspects of data in policymaking. Partnerships are needed in terms of data collection and principles for data sharing, including improved skills and training programmes, e.g. across African countries. Statistics Sweden cooperates with StatAfric of the African Union and four chosen regional economic communities. Such projects could help remedy that data quality remains low in many places, e.g. in rural areas. Improvements could also be achieved e.g. through artificial intelligence (AI), while respecting data privacy.

3. Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration

Accessible information on public services could be provided in various languages through increased digitalization. During the Covid pandemic, especially timely and correct information on visa processing and extension, emergency assistance, disaster relief, social protection and vaccination programs were important. More generally, also information for migrant worker documentation, verification and skills recognition are needed. Recruitment platforms can enhance transparency of recruitment processes and enable informed decisions by migrant workers. Many migrant workers are not fully aware of where to go for information when they need it. Investment in communication campaigns in close cooperation with all relevant actors could help migrants understand their obligations and rights and avoid irregular and unsafe channels and routes.

7. Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

Protecting and supporting undocumented and vulnerable migrants should be regarded as a way to empower migrants. Due to the Covid pandemic, it has been clear that death and infection rates are higher in immigrant communities and undocumented workers were more likely to suffer job losses. Women comprise the majority of the vulnerable, and violence against women has been exacerbated during the pandemic. There have been concerns that migrants' access to

health care is irregular and inadequate, employment opportunities are fewer, and social security is often unavailable or difficult to access. More in general, low skilled, domestic and undocumented workers have often fared worse as they lack protection from the outset. Governments could invest in multi-sectorial centers for attention at borders, where migrants might be particularly vulnerable to experience violence and exploitation. As an example, the government of Portugal granted temporary extension of permits to stay to allow immigrants access to health, housing, social security and employment stability; and provided universal access to the COVID-19 vaccination plan, including for irregular migrants and refugees.

17. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration

The promotion of evidence-based narratives on migration can help foster a more balanced public discourse on migrants and migration. This work involves a diverse range of stakeholders, including but not limited to national governments. At the local level, building trust between immigrants and public institutions is important to guarantee immigrants' inclusion. Media organizations additionally have a role to play in accurately and responsibly reporting on migration in a manner that recognizes both its challenges and opportunities. Challenges associated with sensationalized and "fake news" must be addressed, including by paying specific attention to language that stokes discrimination or portrays migrants in a dehumanizing manner. One potential method of addressing this challenge is supporting education on how to identify xenophobia in the media or in public debate, when migrants can be subjected to suspicion, discrimination and xenophobia due to inaccurate narratives.

Another example of efforts to address discrimination and promote balanced discourse can be found in the global "It Takes a Community" campaign, which is a collaborative initiative of the GFMD's Working Group on Public Narratives on Migration (co-chaired by Canada, Ecuador and the GFMD Mayors Mechanism) and IOM. By sharing inclusive stories on social media that highlight how migrants are having a positive impact in communities around the world, the campaign aims to counter discrimination and foster more welcoming and inclusive communities for all. Recognizing the need for diverse stakeholders to speak up and help shape a more balanced public discourse on migration, the campaign additionally leverages the GFMD's unique structure by bringing together national and local governments, businesses, civil society and youth to share their unique perspectives and stories. This multi-stakeholder approach is a useful strategy that can be used to help reach a broader audience and increase the effectiveness of efforts to promote evidence-based public discourse.

23. Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

The GCM and GCR are both important milestones towards strengthened global cooperation and their impacts will be reinforced if their respective implementation is more harmonized. The GFMD can contribute with important lessons learnt in this regard. Without the initial space

provided by the GFMD, the GCM may not have been realized. At the same time, while the IMRF is to take place every four years, the GFMD is an annual process, active throughout each year, providing an informal space for dialogue to help create an environment conducive to progress. The GFMD has also gained relevant experiences to share with Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) and has taken recent steps to interact with them.

The GFMD is a key global process for government and stakeholder dialogue to promote partnerships among all relevant actors. Multilateral trust-building since 2007 has brought strength and accumulated wide-ranging experiences among participating states and other stakeholders. Most relevant migration and development issues have been dealt with, including the 23 GCM objectives. The GFMD has bridged South-North perspectives and the now inadequate division into source, transit and receiving countries. Exchange within the GFMD has increasingly aimed at contributing to a constructive climate where stakeholders could come together around shared interests and objectives, e.g. resulting in concrete cooperation.

The GFMD works through Government Teams to prepare its Summit meetings. This is a unique working method that brings together governments and other stakeholders from all parts of the world that oftentimes do not have any other shared platform to meet. Interaction is comparatively more frequent and more interactive in the GFMD than in the GCM process. This work could increasingly complement the UN Network by focusing more on how governments and other stakeholders cooperate internationally, rather than focusing on national (GCM) implementation or national legal frameworks. A main added value of the GFMD is its clear, unique and well-developed working structure with non-state stakeholders. The mechanisms for Civil Society, Business and Mayors have gradually become more important and integral to the process, along with the representatives for youth.

States and Mechanisms within the GFMD process have demonstrated partnerships that work and can be implemented on the ground. Stakeholders are also able to discuss difficult and controversial issues in a frank and transparent way. The GFMD Migration Lab is a space to allow the identification and fertilization of initiatives and partnerships. Tech start up competitions have showcased concrete examples of innovative solutions in migration management. The GFMD Platform for Partnerships (PfP) was established as a mechanism for fostering the exchange of practices, policies and lessons learned between and among Member States. To date, the PfP includes more than 1,300 migration and development initiatives. In sum, the GFMD offers a space like no other to overcome institutional barriers, discuss solutions and create successful partnerships that have an impact on communities worldwide.