



Migration
Multi-Partner
Trust Fund

GUIDANCE NOTE ON ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, MIGRANTS AND COMMUNITIES

This guidance forms an integral part of the Migration MPTF Operations Manual.¹ It was prepared in consultation with the Migration MPTF civil society Steering Committee members, and with support from the UN Network on Migration and the Migration MPTF Fund Management Unit. It has been reviewed by the Migration MPTF Steering Committee and endorsed on 6 February 2023.

1. INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, AND SCOPE

In December 2018, UN Member States came together in Marrakech to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Global Compact, or GCM), a “non-legally binding, cooperation framework that ... fosters international cooperation among all relevant actors on migration, acknowledging that no State can address migration alone, and upholds the sovereignty of States and their obligations under international law.”²

The Global Compact called for the establishment of the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (Migration MPTF, or the Fund), the first UN pooled funding instrument focusing on migration. The Fund aims at supporting Member States in their implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, while avoiding fragmentation in delivering on the GCM’s 23 objectives. The Migration MPTF is fully aligned with the 10 cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles of the GCM,³ including the people-centred and whole-of-society approach:



WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY
APPROACH



PEOPLE-CENTRED

- **People-centred:** The Global Compact carries a strong human dimension, inherent to the migration experience itself. It promotes the well-being of migrants and the members of communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. As a result, the Global Compact places individuals at its core.⁴ In this context, all Joint Programmes supported by the Migration MPTF must also do the same, promoting the rights and well-being of migrants and their communities in countries of origin, transit and destination and placing them at the centre of all projects. Particular attention is given to ensuring involvement and engagement of migrants and communities impacted by migration throughout the project cycle, as well as in programme management mechanisms.
- **Whole-of-society approach:** The Global Compact promotes broad multistakeholder partnerships to address migration in all its dimensions by including migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, parliamentarians, trade unions, national human rights institutions, the media and other relevant stakeholders in migration governance.⁵ In line with this principle, strong engagement of stakeholders throughout all the stages of the project cycle is required for all Joint Programmes funded by the Migration MPTF. Of note, implementation partnerships, financial or otherwise, with varied range of partners, from local civil society, academia to private sector, are strongly encouraged, including specifically with local grassroots organisations and migrant led organisations.

¹ Separate Notes have been developed on the gender marker, the human rights marker as well as the child sensitivity marker.

² A/RES/73/195: Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration / Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2018

³ (a) People-centred; (b) International cooperation; (c) National sovereignty; (d) Rule of law and due process; (e) Sustainable development / 2030 Agenda; (f) Human rights; (g) Gender-responsive; (h) Child-sensitive; (i) Whole-of-government approach; and (j) Whole-of-society approach.

⁴ Paragraph 15 of the GCM

⁵ Paragraph 15 of the GCM

The GCM, through its whole-of-society approach, outlines a broad array of stakeholders, including migrants, diasporas, local communities, migrant led organizations and civil society, on which this Guidance Note is focusing. Civil society is a broad category which encompasses a wide variety of organizations with diverse missions and ideas, that could be defined as private, voluntary associations that are distinct from the public and for-profit sector, and designed to advance common interests and ideas.⁶ The focus of this Guidance Note is civil society which includes, but is not limited to: local, national, regional and international non-governmental organization (NGOs) and networks; community-based and faith-based organisations; and migrant led and diaspora associations.

The Whole-of-society approach is closely related to other GCM Guiding Principles. This guidance note should be read and implemented in conjunction with existing Migration MPTF marker guidance notes on rights-based, gender responsive and child sensitive programming.

The Fund recognizes the unique and important contributions of civil society in terms of specialized expertise, operational capacity, geographical access and presence, high level of trust with migrants and communities on the ground, cost effectiveness, agency and leadership as well as technical knowledge. It also acknowledges the capacity of civil society in programme design and implementation at local, national, regional, and global levels. The Migration MPTF actively encourages all its Joint Programmes to meaningfully engage with civil society, migrants, and communities, and to ensure they have a voice and can exercise their agency and leadership, in order to strengthen implementation and sustainability, while enabling advocacy on specific issues. Engagement with civil society and migrant communities should be based on the four UN Network stakeholder engagement principles of: 1) Transparency, 2) Inclusivity, 3) Diversity and 4) Meaningful Participation.⁷ Alignment with this Guidance Note will be part of the criteria used for evaluating the Joint Programmes applications.

Support to civil society

Financial transfers made to Implementing Partners are critical and actively encouraged. Likewise, it is crucial to provide them with capacity building and meaningfully involve civil society, migrants and communities in management structure, processes and implementation of the Joint Programmes.

The Fund acknowledges that civil society is often effective but could be underfunded. It is important to recognize and compensate their time and participation in the Joint Programmes.

The Migration MPTF also encourages PUNOs to play an active role in the promotion of civic space, through inclusive, safe and meaningful civil society participation in decision-making and open civic space at the country level, including legal and policy frameworks that facilitate debate online and offline and allow civil society to organize freely.

(See: United Nations Guidance Note on Protection and Promotion of Civic Space,
https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/CivicSpace/UN_Guidance_Note.pdf)

Joint Programmes funded by the Migration MPTF must involve and meaningfully engage with a broad range of stakeholders including civil society, migrants and communities (including migrant led organisations):

- Across all steps of the **programme cycle** i.e. conceptualization, development, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation; and
- In its **management structures and processes** i.e. coordination/reference, management and decision-making mechanisms.

⁶ <https://www.icvanetwork.org/uploads/2021/12/Guidance-for-Civil-Society-Organizations-on-Partnership-with-UNICEF.pdf>

⁷ https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd1416/files/docs/note_for_stakeholder_engagement_in_regional_reviews_23.07.20.pdf

2. OBJECTIVES

This Guidance Note serves as reference for the UN system to (i) strengthen and support civil society engagement in all stages of GCM implementation, in accordance with a Whole-of-society approach and (ii) to ensure relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, ownership and accountability in the Joint Programmes supported by the Fund. It is intended to provide guidance for all Participating UN Organisations (PUNOs) and other stakeholders developing or implementing Migration MPTF Joint Programmes.

Civil society in all its dimensions plays multiple key roles in the implementation of the GCM:⁸ it is a crucial source of expertise, information, data collection, access, service provision and advocacy, partnering with migrants, host communities, government and other stakeholders. The Fund believes migrant communities and civil society need to have a seat at the table in order to be effective, for instance by engaging governments in policy dialogue, initiating awareness campaigns on GCM related topics, implementing programmes as well providing services, while maintaining their key role as advocates for migrant's rights.

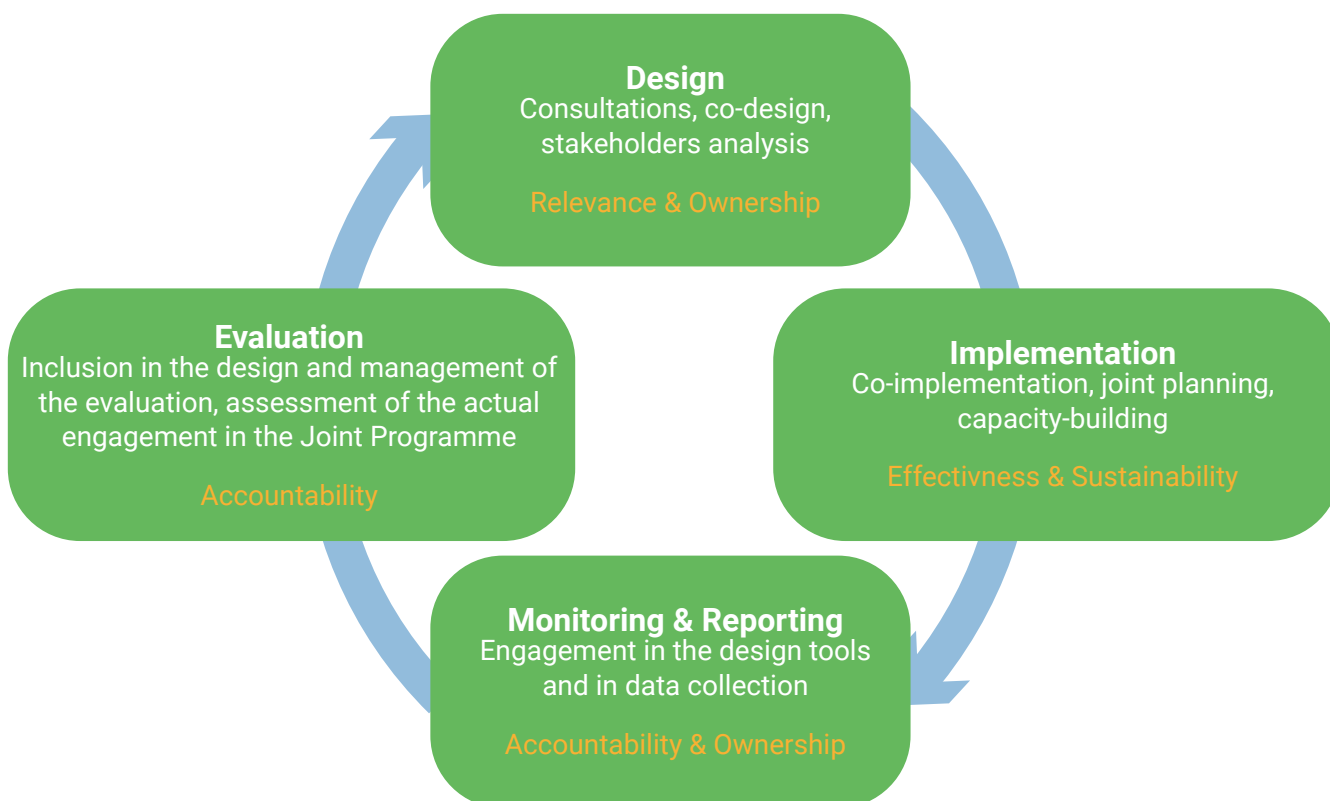
Partnerships are also critical to deliver results and ensure:

- **Relevance:** Civil society often has strong ties to the communities, allowing them to have grassroots information and deep understanding of the local context and the interests, needs and challenges of migrants. Civil society often encompass migrant led organisations and migrants themselves and are the closest actors to the ground. By engaging with civil society, the Joint Programmes will be able to benefit from their unique expertise and perspective, enabling them to develop innovative, grounded, localised and relevant solutions.
- **Effectiveness:** Civil society has strong technical knowledge and expertise on a wide range of issues. They may also have access to hard-to-reach locations and people, and benefit from strong relationships with migrant communities. Thus, they may provide up-to-date, evidence-based input and suggest concrete areas where progress is needed and where it is likely to have an impact, in specific locations and/or with communities. Partnerships with civil society will extend the reach effectiveness and impact of Joint Programmes, across sectors and geographic areas.
- **Sustainability:** Meaningful collaboration with migrant communities and civil society will strengthen capacities of local actors and communities. By working together, PUNOs, governments and civil society can jointly help to ensure the long-term sustainability and the actual impact on the ground of the Joint Programme interventions within countries and communities.
- **Ownership:** The Fund believes ownership is necessary to guarantee quality and sustainability of the Joint Programmes. Consultation, active participation and close engagement - starting at the design stage - with civil society, migrants and communities, is an effective way of ensuring interventions are community-driven and strengthen ownership. Involving migrant communities in all aspects of decision-making, promoting their agency and communicating and meaningfully engaging with them is an investment in the long-term success of the Joint Programmes and ultimately in its impact in the lives of migrants.
- **Accountability:** Civil society can hold governments and PUNOs accountable to their commitments and ensure the effective implementation of the Joint Programmes. By engaging with civil society, the Joint Programmes will strengthen their accountability mechanisms.

⁸ Implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration Guidance for governments and all relevant stakeholders, April 2022: https://migrationnetwork.un.org/system/files/docs/Guide_Implementing%20the%20GCM.pdf

3. THE PROGRAMMING CYCLE

The Fund specifically seeks Joint Programmes which ensure that (i) civil society, migrants and communities are meaningfully included in all phases of the programme cycle - from design to implementation and evaluation; and (ii) their needs, agency and concerns are explicitly reflected throughout.



Design

The Joint Programmes shall incorporate a multi-stakeholder partnerships approach throughout the design of the intervention, taking into consideration the transfer of funds to civil society and other stakeholders. At the conceptualization stage, while developing the concept note, it is required that civil society, migrants and communities are consulted so that their needs and concerns are reflected, and encouraged to co-design Joint Programmes. At the development stage, while establishing the Joint Programme document, all relevant stakeholders, including migrants and communities, need to be taken into consideration in the stakeholder mapping and analysis.

This exercise will be an opportunity to detail relevant expertise and engagement in the area addressed by the Joint Programme. It will also allow elaboration of how civil society and migrant communities can strategically contribute to the intervention, while exploring ways in which migrants and communities will be meaningfully involved with implementation efforts. The stakeholder analysis will help the Joint Programmes to:

- Understand the interests, problems, expectations, and capacities of those that are affected by the project and those who are important to the project's success and its ultimate impact;
- Identify potential risks, conflicts, and constraints that could affect the Joint Programme or activities being planned;
- Explore and develop opportunities for meaningful partnerships;
- Identify and involve groups in vulnerable, disadvantaged, or marginalized situations in order to ensure their participation and mitigate or avoid negative impacts.⁹

⁹ IOM Project Handbook Module 1, Section 1.3a Performing a Stakeholder Analysis

Joint Programme in the Gambia | Addressing the drivers and causes of migration-related vulnerabilities among border communities along the Trans-Gambia transport corridor | ITC, IOM, UNDP, UNICEF

Launched in December 2021, the intervention aims to increasing safety and prosperity among women and youth in districts along the Trans-Gambia transport corridor.

This Joint Programme was developed via broad consultations, including with those directly affected by the Trans-Gambia bridge and transport corridor, such as communities and community leaders, youth- and women-focused civil society organizations, migrants and regular users of the borders, and victims of trafficking. Joint stakeholder consultation, site visits, and a rapid assessment through focus group discussions with youth and women in the two target regions, and 457 face-to-face interviews with small-scale cross-border traders were conducted.

These consultations allowed the Joint Programme to reflect the needs of migrants and migrant communities. Furthermore, the close engagement of community members will ensure interventions are community-driven, which will facilitate ownership and contribute to the initiative's sustainability.

Once the stakeholders are identified, it is important to assess the likely level of their involvement in the Joint Programmes, which could be categorized as in the following diagram:



The Fund expects all Joint Programmes to involve the stakeholders at the collaboration level. They should carefully justify if they only engage at the consultation level. Consultation should also be the minimum level of participation for migrants and communities, otherwise the Joint Programmes may not be responsive to their needs and will not be in line with a Whole-of-society approach.

Additionally, PUNOs should not mention civil society organisations as implementing partners in Joint Programme applications unless they are aware of the programme and have explicitly agreed to be part of the submission.

Implementation

During the implementation phase, the Joint Programmes will establish formal agreements with non-governmental stakeholder, which may or may not entail financial transfers. If co-implementation of components/activities with implementing partners are envisaged, it will be necessary to adequately reflect this in the budget allocation under the UNDG category "6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts" whenever applicable. Although this is not the only way to meaningfully engage civil society, the Migration MPTF strongly encourages such transfers whenever possible.

The Migration MPTF tracks the nature and extent of Joint Programme partnerships with non-governmental stakeholders, including civil society. All Joint Programmes are required to report on implementation agreements (financial or other) entered into with non-governmental stakeholders; then this information is consolidated into the overall results framework of the Fund, and included in the Fund annual reports.

Selection of Implementing Partners

The Fund expects the PUNOs to undertake adequate and robust due diligence processes, according to their own internal procedures, and to conduct the process of selection of Implementing Partners in an objective and transparent manner.

The due diligence exercise will provide the PUNOs with a better understanding of the risks and opportunities of engaging with a potential partner.

Furthermore, PUNOs will use their own relevant rules and regulations related to entering into agreements with Implementing Partners (with or without financial transfers), which would guide, among others, the type of agreements, responsibilities of each parties, monitoring and reporting.

Implementing a Joint Programme with civil society, will allow to have a community-based intervention and to benefit from the privileged access and trust that some local organisations have. This approach will ensure effectiveness of the action.

Joint Programmes must also pay particular attention to building capacity of stakeholders, which is key for guaranteeing the sustainability and long-term impact of the Joint Programmes. Civil society can benefit from PUNOs' technical expertise and knowledge and vice versa, allowing partners for instance to have a better understanding of specific issues and how to identify and respond to the needs of migrants. Furthermore, capacity-building on financial and administrative related issues could allow implementing partners to strengthen their organizational and management systems. Providing civil society partners with access to new technologies is also an excellent way for PUNOS to amplify the impact of the work of CSOs and communities.

Joint Programme in Trinidad and Tobago | Access, Support, Cooperation (ASC) Programme: A Collaborative Approach to Support Survivors of Human Trafficking | IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA

This Joint Programme aims at enhancing the wellbeing, resilience and protection of migrants, including those who are vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse (particularly women, children and victims of trafficking), through strengthened, modernized and integrated national and community-based systems.

The intervention includes **capacity building** among non-government and government stakeholders who are active in the fields of Trafficking in Persons, protection and empowerment, as well as health promotion and education. These stakeholders, along with the feedback of a training needs assessment, will support the development of tools and the organization of trainings for CSOs and local government stakeholders as well as frontline workers to adequately treat victims of trafficking and unaccompanied or separated children.

By strengthening the capacity of local NGOs, the Joint Programme enhances the impact of their action and ensures sustainability.

Monitoring and Reporting

It is essential to include civil society, migrants and communities in the design and implementation of monitoring activities. They should for instance be involved, in the data collection but also in the design, of the baseline and endline studies, assessments, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, lessons-learned meetings, etc. that would be conducted in the Joint Programmes. This inclusive approach will allow for better tracking of achieved results and ensure that the defined goals and targets are realistic and are met.

Regular monitoring should include the collection of feedback from project partners, civil society, migrants and communities including migrant led grassroots organisations, to be able to identify and adequately manage challenges, while ensuring smooth and proper activity implementation. Their views will be crucial when monitoring risks and contexts and adapt the interventions accordingly.

In order to ensure that activities are reaching the target population and beneficiaries, the definition and update of the workplan and M&E plan should be done in a participatory and inclusive manner. The Migration MPTF also stresses the importance of collecting inputs of partners, civil society, migrants and communities at the reporting stage, to collectively identify lessons learned, changes needed and best practices.

Joint Programme in Guinea-Liberia-Sierra Leone | Strengthening border management, social cohesion, and cross-border security in the Parrot's Beak area | IOM, UNDP, WHO, ITC

The Joint Programme aims to strengthen integrated border management, social cohesion, and border security in the Parrot's Beak Region, and is implemented in three countries: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Several stakeholders including Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) and border communities are **contributing to identification of targets, objectives, strategies, and actions, and engage for implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation.**

A baseline study was conducted to establish data and indicators, in line with the monitoring and evaluation plan so that the activities can be efficiently monitored and evaluated. Stakeholders were invited to provide input into the design of the baseline study. Furthermore, the annual joint work plan, M&E plan, and budget are commonly established, through a participatory process.

Involving stakeholders, including civil society, migrants and communities, can ensure ownership and thus the quality and sustainability of the Joint Programme.

Regular consultations with civil society, migrants and communities – including through Complaints and feedback mechanism (CFM) - will help ensure collective accountability of the Joint Programmes to communities impacted by migration.

All Joint Programmes are expected to provide information on key partnerships established. The Joint Programmes must report on strategic contributions from civil society and the ways in which migrants and communities were involved, including methods for participatory dialogue, co-design and co-delivery. They are also required to give details about the implementation agreements (financial or other) established with non-governmental stakeholders, keeping in mind that agreements are interpreted broadly to include collaboration partnerships.

Evaluation

In order to ensure the relevance, impartiality, credibility and transparency of the evaluation, the Joint Programmes must ensure that civil society, migrants and communities are part of the management and included in the process.

A multi-stakeholders Evaluation Reference Group can be established with the objective to oversee and assist the process. Receiving feedback from stakeholders (on inception and final reports for instance) is key for making sure the evaluation is of adequate quality and addresses the right issues.

Furthermore, it is essential that the evaluation assesses the extent to which the whole-of-society and people-centered guiding principles were effectively integrated and civil society, migrants and communities meaningfully engaged throughout the Joint Programmes.

4. JOINT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

It is critical to ensure that civil society, migrants and communities are included in coordination/reference, management and decision-making mechanisms (e.g. Management Team; Steering Committee; Technical Working Groups and other governance and management structures of the Joint Programmes.) of the Joint Programmes.

The Migration MPTF fully adheres to the Global Compact's key principle of national sovereignty and requires that all country-based Joint Programme get formal endorsement of the national government. By doing so, the Fund intends to ensure national ownership. However, the latter would be incomplete without ownership of civil society. In other words, Joint Programmes should not only be managed by PUNOs and Governments, but should open up to a broader range of stakeholders and partners.

Governance and structure of the Fund

The governance and structure of the Migration MPTF is a good example of an inclusive management mechanism. This can be reflected in the composition of the Steering Committee with various constituency representatives, and the commitment to an annual Consultative Forum.

To ensure that the Steering Committee is truly representative of the stakeholders identified by the Global Compact, it consists of three members each from the following constituents: UN Network on Migration; donors; countries of origin, transit and destination; and stakeholders. Moreover, in order to ensure wide representation, membership is rotational on a staggered basis (half the members rotate every year). The identification of stakeholders for the seats is key and aims at covering across all sectors cited in GCM.

Joint Programme in Tajikistan | Empowerment of 'Families left behind' for improved Migration Outcomes in Khatlon, Tajikistan | FAO, IOM, UNICEF, UN Women

This Joint Programme, launched in October 2020, aims at reducing the vulnerability of families adversely affected by migration. It focuses on protecting human rights, safety and wellbeing of migrants, including through addressing drivers and mitigating situations of vulnerability in migration, with specific focus on support to families left behind.

Engagement with national and local Civil Society representatives has been prioritized during the design of the Joint Programme.

In addition, the Joint Programme has set up a **Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG)** with representatives of leading national NGOs working in relevant project areas, to provide advice on beneficiary perspectives and field implementation via regular meetings. The objective of this group is to:

- Act as an institutional mechanism to promote civil society participation and expertise during project design;
- Play an advisory role to the project team during the project implementation.

Including civil society in such a way, strengthens relevance, ownership and effectiveness of the Joint Programme, and allows the creation of an interactive and open space for dialogue/learning with Civil Society and project beneficiaries.

5. CONCLUSION

Civil society and migrant communities are vital to not only the effectiveness of joint programs, but to achieving a whole-of-society sense of ownership and support for the GCM and to holding the PUNOs and programmes accountable to their ambitions. Civil society actors are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They form an indispensable part of the landscape of collective action.

The Fund stresses the importance of strengthening and supporting civil society in GCM implementation. The engagement with civil society, migrants and communities in the Joint Programmes, at all stages of the programming cycle as well as in the management, coordination and decision-making mechanisms, is critical to ensure relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, ownership and accountability of the Joint Programmes supported by the Migration MPTF.