



Conferencia Regional sobre Migración
Regional Conference on Migration



FIRST REGIONAL FORUM OF CHAMPION COUNTRIES IN THE AMERICAS: GOOD PRACTICES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

27 and 28 September 2023

Panama City, Republic of Panama
- Concept Note and Agenda -
[Zoom meeting link](#)

BACKGROUND

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018¹, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) is the first inter-governmentally negotiated agreement at global level, with a holistic and comprehensive approach towards international migration governance and international cooperation in this regard.

The GCM represents a collective commitment to improving cooperation on international migration and is based on a common vision, shared responsibilities, and a common understanding that no government can effectively address migration on its own – either by harnessing the full potential of migration or by protecting people from the more pernicious aspects of migration – without bilateral, regional or global cooperation.

The GCM provides countries with a comprehensive roadmap of policy options that address some of the most pressing issues surrounding international migration and gives them the space and flexibility to implement them according to their own context and capacities. With the creation of this framework for cooperation on international migration, countries have developed a common language to address key migration issues and a model for developing comprehensive and rights-based migration policies.

In May 2022, the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) evaluated the GCM's implementation, culminating in the adoption of an intergovernmental Declaration of Progress². IMRF deliberations reaffirmed the GCM's goals and objectives, as well as the importance of international cooperation to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, which contributes to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

In line with the Secretary-General's decision and the GCM's adoption, the [United Nations Network on Migration](#) (Network) was established to ensure effective and coherent system-wide support for the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, in response to the needs of Member States.

The Network has established the [Champion Countries Initiative](#), a voluntary collective of countries from different regions committed to promoting the GCM's guiding principles and objectives at national, regional and global levels. This initiative also provides a space for countries, in collaboration with the Network, to

¹ [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/195](#)

² [Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum, United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/76/266](#)

exchange ideas, lessons learned and good practices, as well as to foster a productive process of GCM regional reviews.

Since its adoption in 2018, the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) has played an active and significant role in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM.

Towards the end of 2019, the RCM adopted a new [Charter](#), in which Member Countries committed to seek ways to **support the commitments of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Migration**. In one of its objectives, the Charter also establishes to provide support to the regional process of implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM.

In mid-2021, the RCM organised its first virtual workshop on the GCM, in which Member Countries reaffirmed the key support that the GCM provides to the RCM's work and initiatives, as well as the importance of the United Nations Regional Network on Migration for Latin America and the Caribbean³'s support to further strengthen the RCM⁴.

In a second workshop held in Mexico City in April 2022, Member Countries adopted the "[Extraordinary Declaration of the RCM before the International Migration Review Forum](#)", in which they identified regional priorities that would become the main elements of a Regional Action Plan for a comprehensive approach to migration in the region. In addition to the Member Countries, both workshops were attended by the Regional Network for Civil Society Organisations on Migration (RNCOM) as observer organizations.

Panama, as the Pro-Tempore Presidency of the RCM 2023, seeks to provide a space for the exchange of lessons learned, good practices, policies, tools and innovative approaches to strengthen cooperation on migration governance and contribute to the GCM's second regional review to be held in 2024.

As of July 2023, the Americas count nine (9) champion countries. Six (6) champion countries are Member Countries of the RCM: Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama. Three (3) are Member Countries of the South American Conference on Migration (SACM): Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. This initiative offers Member Countries the opportunity to share perspectives, lessons learned and promising practices to contribute to the achievement of the GCM's objectives, in line with the vision and guiding principles set out in the GCM.

Within the framework's initiative, the Network provides technical support and capacity-building tools to beneficiary Member States, depending on each country's context and priorities. It also aims to showcase concrete examples of good practices for the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM. The Network also aims to raise awareness of the GCM and strengthen related expertise, in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

³ The United Nations Regional Network on Migration for Latin America and the Caribbean (Regional Network) is composed of 19 agencies, funds and programmes: **ECLAC** (co-chair), FAO, **ILO**, **IOM** (co-chair), OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, **UNDP**, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Habitat, **UNHCR**, **UNICEF**, UNIDO, **UNODC**, UNOPS, UN Women, WFP, and WHO/PAHO. RCM observer agencies are **in bold**.

⁴ This first workshop took place during the process of the Regional Review of the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, which was attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including the RCM and its observer agencies, as well as other regional processes, platforms and organisations. Among its main outcomes were the recognition of the comprehensiveness of the Compact and its suitability as a relevant framework, the important advances in terms of the migration architecture of the UN System, the need to double efforts towards the implementation of the GCM in face of the impacts of COVID-19, cooperation as a fundamental aspect to move forward, and the need to strengthen the involvement of civil society in a substantive manner in all processes related to the Compact.

Panama, like other RCM Member Countries, has developed a series of good practices in migration matters, including comprehensive humanitarian assistance to migrants by providing shelters, medical care, food, clothing, housing and protection against organised crime, including during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the efforts to make its progress visible, the RCM, with support from the Regional Network, compiled and published in the Global Network's Practice Repository six good practices on the GCM implementation⁵.

As a GCM champion country and Pro-Témpore Presidency of the RCM, the Republic of Panama reiterates its high-level commitment to continue exercising a leadership role on migration issues in the Americas, based on the respect and promotion of the human rights of migrants and in accordance with the principles of cooperation and shared responsibility.

As outlined in the [RCM strategic plan 2023-2026](#), RCM Member Countries have reaffirmed their full commitment to advance concrete actions that promote safe, orderly and regular migration, in line with the [GCM](#), the [Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection](#), the [Progress Declaration of the IMRE](#), the [Extraordinary Declaration of the RCM before the International Migration Review Forum](#), and the [RCM Darien Declaration](#)⁶.

JUSTIFICATION

Link of the activity with the specific objectives of the RCM Strategic Plan 2023-2026.

a. Specific objective⁷:

1. Promote improving the design and management of policies, procedures, and activities for safe, orderly, and regular migration and mobility.
2. Strengthen coordination among the Member Countries for assistance, care, and protection of migrants in vulnerable situations, as well as the prevention of irregular migration.
3. Enhance the economic, social, and cultural benefits of migration, the integration of migrants and the link between their development and that of the communities of origin, transit, and destination.

Link of the activity with the following objectives and statements present in the Strategic Plan

RCM Pillar and Topic	<p>Migration Governance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Generation and use of migration data 2) Integrated border management 4) Promoting safe, orderly, and regular migration 5) Preventing and countering the smuggling of migrants 6) Preventing and combating trafficking in persons 7) Regularization, visas and legal identity
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⁵ Good practices include: 1) [Dialogue spaces on assistance needs for migrant women](#); 2) [Operational Guide for applying the Best Interests of the Child and Adolescents in Contexts of Human Mobility](#); 3) [Diploma in Labor Migration from the Regional Conference on Migration](#); 4) [Increasing participation of stakeholders from the labor world in the RCM](#); 5) [Guide: Protection for people moving across borders in the context of disasters](#); y 6) [Migration Information Portal](#).

⁶ [Strategic Plan of the Regional Conference on Migration \(RCM\), 2023-2026](#).

⁷ RCM Strategic Plan 2023-2026.

	<p>8) Return Management and Policies 9) Effective systems of response to emergencies or migratory crises 10) Search of missing migrants 11) Addressing irregular migration</p> <p>Integration, Migration, and its Links to Development</p> <p>3) Economic development and availability of opportunities in countries of origin 4) Integration and sustainable reintegration of migrants 6) Remittances 7) Diasporas 8) Economic benefits of migration 9) Portability of rights</p> <p>Protection, Preparedness, Assistance, and Irregular Migration</p> <p>2) Consular assistance and protection 3) Return and sustainable reintegration 4) Prevention of irregular migration 11) Attention of people in mass migration flows 14) Assistance for persons subject of smuggling of migrants 15) Comprehensive assistance for victims of human trafficking</p>
GCM Objectives	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23.
RCM Declaration before the IMRF	<p>Thematic pillar 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #8 Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants. • #7 Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration. • # 4 Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation. • #14 Enhance consular protection, assistance, and cooperation throughout the migration cycle. • # 15 Provide access to basic services for migrants. <p>Thematic pillar 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # 5 Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration. • # 12 Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures. • # 9 Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants. • #10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration. • #11. Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner.

	<p>Thematic pillar 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #19 Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development. <p>Cross-cutting areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1 Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies. • #23 Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration.
L.A. Declaration	<p>1. Promoting Stability and Assistance for Communities of Destination, Origin, Transit, and Return 1.1; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6;1.8; 1.9; 1.10; 1.11</p> <p>2. Promoting Regular Pathways for Migration and International Protection 2.1; 2.5</p> <p>3. Promoting Humane Migration Management 3.3; 3.4; 3.5</p> <p>5. A Shared Approach to Reduce and Manage Irregular Migration 5.1; 5.3</p>
RCM-SACM	<p>1. Establish regular meetings with the countries participating in the IMRF to follow up on the Global Compact for Migration (GCM).</p> <p>4. Plan for the new regional review process (2024): Need to learn lessons from the 2020/2021 regional reviews,</p> <p>5. Need to strengthen national capacities (was recognized by Member States) for the implementation of the GCM.</p> <p>6. Consolidate the role of the UN Migration Network in the countries of the region.</p>
Darién Declaration	<p>3. Increasing international cooperation for development to create sustainable economic opportunities in the communities of origin, with short-term effects, in order to address the root causes of migration.</p> <p>8. Maximizing the visibility of and access to lawful immigration pathways throughout the region for protection, employment and family reunification.</p> <p>9. Strengthening information sharing and coordination on joint operations, investigations, and prosecutions to monitor and combat the crimes of trafficking in persons and human smuggling.</p>

The First Forum of Champion Countries in the Americas is part of the 2023 Work Plan of the Republic of Panama, as Pro-Tempore Presidency of the RCM. The work plan aims to replicate good practices in migration matters through the exchange of strategies, best practices, tools, initiatives and public policies

that contribute to successfully addressing migration and strengthening regional cooperation with other Champion Countries and Member Countries of the RCM.

OBJECTIVES

Panama, as Pro-Tempore Presidency of the RCM, aims to bring together and promote greater collaboration among Champion Countries of the region and other Member Countries with a view to advancing GCM implementation and contributing to the 2030 Agenda.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND INDICATORS

Based on key topics of the RCM, and with the support of the UN Migration Network, expected results include:

- Knowledge and understanding of government officials in the region regarding migration trends, policies, practices, tools and experiences in migration governance increased.
- A joint communiqué elaborated and disseminated.

In addition, the Forum is expected to

- Enhance mechanisms of RCM Member Countries for sharing information and best practices in migration governance improved.
- Improve cooperation on migration governance among RCM Member Countries in line with regional and global frameworks.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the expected results, the Forum

- Will apply discussion techniques such as a panel and knowledge café, among others.
- Will include different roles such as moderator, presenter, facilitator, and rapporteur.
- Each session will have a brief introduction by an expert to provide an overview of the main challenges and opportunities around the topic.
- Each session will include a brief background to be provided in advance.
- Participants are expected to answer guiding questions from the facilitators. Questions will be shared in advance.

PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

The event provides a unique opportunity for government officials and other relevant stakeholders to share knowledge and enhance their understanding of migration trends, policies, practices, tools and experiences on key migration issues. To achieve this, the forum will use interactive discussion techniques such as panels and knowledge café. The Forum will also provide a space to informally discuss cooperation among participants on these matters.

To ensure the success of the event, we encourage the participation of senior technical experts with substantial knowledge and experience on the topics of this event.

AGENDA⁸

27 September 2023

[Zoom meeting link](#)

Day 1	
08:30 - 9:00	Registration
09:00 - 9:30	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">– H.E. Vladimir Franco, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Panama– Michele Klein Solomon, IOM Regional Director for Central America, North America and the Caribbean– Jonathan Prentice, Head, United Nations Network on Migration Secretariat
09:30 - 9:45	Agenda Presentation - PPT, IOM
09:45 - 10:45	Introduction: Current global migration landscape and global migration challenges and opportunities Methodology: Presentation Moderator⁹: RCM Executive Secretariat Presenter: Discussion
10:45 - 11:00	BREAK
	Session I: Protection of migrants in vulnerable situations

⁸ See annex with brief description of activities and roles.

⁹ See annex with brief description of activities and roles.

11:00 – 12:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #7. Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration. • #8 Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants. • #14. Enhance consular protection, assistance, and cooperation throughout the migration cycle. • #15. Provide access to basic services for migrants. <p>Methodology: Panel</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / Civil Society (CS)</p> <p>Presenter: of the main topic (expert)</p> <p>Experts: Gov. (4) / CS (1)</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Conclusions: Rapporteur</p>
12:45 – 14:00	LUNCH
	Addressing irregular migration

14:00 – 16:00	<p>Session 2a: Smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons and border management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #9. Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants. • #10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration. • #11. Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner. <p>Methodology: Knowledge Café</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p> <p>Rapporteur: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p>	<p>Session 2b: Regular pathways for the admission and stay of migrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #4. Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation. • #5. Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration. • #12. Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures. <p>Methodology: Knowledge Café</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p> <p>Rapporteur: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p>
<p>Presenting conclusions to the plenary</p> <p>Rapporteur: Conclusions of topic 2a Rapporteur: Conclusions of topic 2b</p> <p>Discussion</p>		
16:00 – 16:15	BREAK	

16:15 – 17:30	<p>Dialogue on cooperation:</p> <p>Round table 1 - Protection of migrants in vulnerable situations (Session 1) Round table 2 - Smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons and border management (Session 2a) Round table 3 - Regular pathways for the admission and stay of migrants (Session 2b) Round table 4 - Contributions of migrants to sustainable development (Session 3) Round table 5 - Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies (Session 4a) Round table 6 - Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration (Session 4b)</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p> <p>Round tables to discuss concrete ideas for collaboration among countries. Topics will be defined according to the interest of the countries.</p>
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28 September 2023

Day 2	
09:00 – 10:30	<p>Session 3: Contributions of migrants to sustainable development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #6. Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work. • #16. Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion. • #19. Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable Development. • #20. Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants. <p>Methodology: Panel</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p> <p>Presenter: of the main topic (expert)</p> <p>Experts: Gov. (4) / CS (1)</p>

	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Conclusions: Rapporteur</p>	
10:30 – 10:45	BREAK	
	Complementary topics	
10:45 – 12:30	<p>Session 4a: Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1. Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies. <p>Methodology: Knowledge Café</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p> <p>Rapporteur: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p>	<p>Session 4b: Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #21. Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration <p>Methodology: Knowledge Café</p> <p>Facilitator: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p> <p>Rapporteur: Gov. / Observer Agency / CS</p>
	<p>Presenting conclusions to the plenary</p> <p>Rapporteur: Conclusions of topic 4a Rapporteur: Conclusions of topic 4b</p> <p>Discussion</p>	
12:30 - 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 14:45	<p>Session 5: Preparing for the 2024 GCM review in Latin America and the Caribbean</p> <p>Presenter: Jonathan Prentice, Head of the UN Network on Migration Secretariat</p> <p>Moderator: Observer Organization</p>	

	Discussion
14:45 – 15:30	Presentation of cooperation ideas among Champion Countries Rapporteur: Observer Organization
15:30 – 16:30	Draft Joint Communiqué
16:00 – 16:30	Conclusions and closing remarks RCM Executive Secretariat and PPT

Annex 1. Methodologies

Technique	Dynamic	Person in charge
Presentation	Presentation of contents with the support of a PowerPoint presentation. The space is open for discussion and questions.	Presenter
Knowledge Café	The facilitator briefly introduces the topic. Participants will then work in three groups with each one focusing on one of the three guiding questions. Each group will nominate a person to report the findings of the round table to the other two groups. After all three roundtables have presented their findings, participants will be able to comment on the findings of the other round tables. The rapporteur will then present key findings from all three roundtables to the plenary.	Facilitator Rapporteur
Panel	The presenter briefly introduces the topic. The facilitator is in charge of the session's development. The panel consists of a series of 3-minute talks/presentations (4 or 5 maximum) by experts, each of whom presents an aspect of the topic. The facilitator or rapporteur presents the main ideas at the end.	Presenter Facilitator Experts Rapporteur
Dialogue on Cooperation	An optional space is offered to participants. It is divided into thematic groups/round tables where they discuss ideas for cooperation based on the good practices, lessons learned, and challenges discussed in previous sessions. The discussion takes place freely among participants. The observer writes down the main collaboration ideas/initiatives discussed and presents them to the plenary the next day.	Observer Rapporteur

Annex 2. Role descriptions

Role	Functions
Moderator	They are the master of ceremonies throughout the two days of the forum. Introduces the session and gives the floor according to the programme.
Presenter	Presents the contents in a lecture format in accordance with the stipulated time. Introduces a topic.
Facilitator	Briefly introduces the topic. Facilitates the session's development. Moderates and stimulates discussion. Responsible for managing the process and keeping track of time. May be responsible for presenting key ideas and conclusions.
Rapporteur	Takes notes on the main aspects that are discussed and presented. Prepares a brief report. May be responsible for presenting key ideas and conclusions.
Experts	They are panelists with expertise in specific topics. They present content based on guiding questions or without them (subject to the format of the activity). They dive deeper into specific aspects of the main topic.
Observer	Can provide technical assistance and recommendations, if requested by the participants. Does not participate in the debate. Takes note of the main initiatives discussed and is responsible for presenting them to the plenary.

*This project is funded in part by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.