

Outcome document

Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region Online, 24-25 February 2021

Summary

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the League of Arab States (LAS), in collaboration with the members of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration in the Arab Region, and with the support of the Secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration, coordinated the Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region, held online on 24 and 25 February 2021.

The Regional Review allowed Governments to make an inaugural preliminary assessment of progress in implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (hereafter the Global Compact for Migration) in the Arab region, and to identify challenges and opportunities. It also provided an opportunity to highlight gaps, discuss regional priorities, trends and approaches, and monitor resource needs to implement the Global Compact for Migration. The Conference provided a platform for all migration stakeholders to interact, to share lessons learned and good practices, and to assess the outcomes of the various regional reviews. It facilitated the formulation of key outcomes and recommendations aimed at ensuring the Arab region's contribution to the first International Migration Review Forum to be held in 2022.

The Conference comprised several sessions, round tables, presentations and discussions, spread over two days, and resulted in two main documents: a Member States' report synthesizing the results of the voluntary reviews submitted by countries on the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region; and an outcome document containing the key messages emanating from the regional review, which were presented by Member States and other stakeholders at the Conference and throughout the consultative process that preceded it.

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Introduction

1. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the League of Arab States, in collaboration with the members of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration in the Arab Region, and with the support of the Secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration, coordinated the Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region, held online on 24 and 25 February 2021.
2. The Conference was attended by around 600 participants via the Kudo electronic platform. In the spirit of the Global Compact for Migration and a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to the review, high-level representatives of relevant government institutions, members of the United Nations Network on Migration, and representatives of various relevant processes, platforms and subregional, regional and interregional organizations participated in the Conference. Representatives of stakeholders identified in the Global Compact for Migration, such as migrants, also participated; in addition to civil society organizations, migrant and expatriate organizations, including those working with women migrants, religious organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, and the media, among others.
3. The Conference was divided into five plenary sessions and four round tables. In the opening session, the preliminary findings of the regional report analyzed the governments' submission on the review of the Global Compact for Migration were presented. During the first and second plenary sessions, Member States discussed key achievements in implementing the Global Compact for Migration since its adoption in 2018, by reviewing their national experiences, and highlighting their challenges and success stories. They also reviewed existing and emerging priorities, and lessons learned.
4. During the third session, the outcomes of the multi-stakeholder consultation on the regional review of the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region, which was held the day before the start of the Conference, were presented. The rapporteur gave a brief overview of the consultation's main results, particularly highlighting messages related to the role of stakeholders in the regional review of the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region. He presented the status of implementing regional and national plans and strategies on migration and the need to enhance active engagement of stakeholders. He also stressed the need for close collaboration between them and authorities, highlighted the remaining gaps preventing the accelerated implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in Arab countries, and policy recommendations.
5. The fourth session covered cross-thematic issues in line with the Global Compact's guiding principles, including the principle of respect for human rights, and adopting a child sensitive and gender responsive approach, which could accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. The session also served to present the outcome of the Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the Arab States on Advancing GCM Implementation for Women Migrant Workers, Migrant Children and Youth in the Arab Region, convened by UN Women and UNICEF.
6. During the four round tables, extensive discussions took place on all 23 objectives of the Global Compact for Migration to review progress on its implementation at all levels. They also addressed challenges, best practices, lessons learned, and possible solutions to tackle obstacles to achieving these objectives.
7. During the fifth session, participants discussed ways to accelerate progress in implementing the Global Compact for Migration, and to build the capacity of Member States, the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders.

8. In the session devoted to key messages, the key messages and recommendations that emanated from the two-day discussions were briefly reviewed. These messages will facilitate the formulation of the main outcomes and recommendations to inform the 2022 International Migration Review Forum.
9. Conference documents, including the agenda and the report, are available on the regional review page of the United Nations Network on Migration website, IOM Regional Office for the MENA regional website and of the UNESCWA website.

I. Key messages

10. The Arab States Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Migration resulted in the following key messages on a number of priority issues. In accordance with the commitment of the majority Arab countries to implement the Global Compact for Migration as a comprehensive framework for migration governance, these priorities and messages can form a road map for accelerating the Global Compact for Migration's implementation. It also include issues in efforts to build back better in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, by highlighting the significant contributions of migrants, reducing their vulnerability, combating discrimination against them, and ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration for everyone.

1. Expanding regular migration pathways and reducing irregular migration

- Increase the availability and flexibility of regular migration pathways for men, women and children by adopting a variety of measures, including bilateral agreements, transparent entry procedures, and pre-departure programmes to guide migrants before leaving their country of origin, along the migration journeys while on the move in countries of transit, and after arriving in their country of destination.
- Accelerate the enactment of national and regional migration policies and bridge the gap between policy development and implementation.
- Strengthen national and regional action to address the negative drivers and structural factors that compel men, women, children and youth to leave their communities and countries and resort to unsafe and irregular migration.

2. Ensuring that migrants have the right to access basic services

- Ensure that all migrants have the right to access to basic services, including general and sexual and reproductive health care and education, regardless of migration status.
- Provide all migrants with vaccines, either free of charge or at low cost and without discrimination, including COVID-19 vaccines to tackle the pandemic.

3. Protecting and empowering migrant workers and operationalizing their role in the sustainable development process in countries of origin and destination

- Intensify efforts to align labour and other laws with international labour and human rights standards and include men and women migrant workers, including domestic workers, in these laws.
- Ensure the right of migrants to form associations and participate in trade unions, in line with country regulations.
- Abolish exploitative sponsorship systems, expand labour inspections, improve wage protection, and facilitate the regularization of migrant workers in an irregular situation; and apply these protections to migrant domestic workers, including by incorporating them in labour laws.

- Strengthen efforts to align education and training policies with migration policies, including through bilateral agreements, to reduce skills mismatch and unemployment in the Arab region, ensuring gender-responsiveness.
- Promote mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competencies in the Arab region, with a focus on young men and women migrants; and strengthen collaboration with the private sector and other stakeholders to improve skills, provide opportunities for migrant workers, especially those who have lost their jobs, or facilitate their reintegration into the labour market in countries of origin.
- Reduce the high costs of recruitment processes in the region, prohibit charging recruitment fees to migrant workers, and enhance transparency to fully reveal recruitment details.
- Promote labour and social protection systems for men and women migrant workers and maximize the contribution of returning migrants to sustainable development to reduce negative drivers for migration, in line with Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Establish an enabling environment for remittances as a lifeline for many families in various Arab countries and recognize and maximize the contribution of migrants to development in their countries of origin and destination.

4. *Respecting the human rights of all migrants, especially the most vulnerable*

- Guarantee the human rights of all migrants at all stages of migration, regardless of migration status, through the integrated implementation of the interrelated principles and objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.
- Ensure equality before the law and promote migrants' access to justice systems.
- Combat hate speech, discrimination, and xenophobia against migrants.
- Mainstream a gender equality perspective in migration policies, plans and programs and adopt measures to combat gender discrimination and gender-based violence at all stages of the migration process.
- Include all migrants, including migrant mothers and their children, regardless of whether with them or left behind, into national social protection systems, and strengthen bilateral cooperation to improve transnational social protection.
- Include children left behind by their migrant parents in social protection systems and with access to childcare services in their countries of origin.
- Strengthen national protection systems to include migrant and migrating children and promote child-sensitive cross border and cross regional collaboration, in line with the best interests of the child.
- Guarantee child-sensitive voluntary returns to countries of origin based on best interest assessments and ensure that children are not separated from one or both parents.
- Intensify efforts to avoid involuntary returns, end practices of migrants' detention and find alternatives, prohibit detention of migrant children in national legislation and in practice, and intensify policy-making efforts aimed at de-criminalize irregular migrants while still combating trafficking and smuggling.
- Provide appropriate care, reception and reintegration options for returning migrants, especially vulnerable migrants and children.
- Strengthen efforts aimed at protecting migrants, saving lives, combating the trafficking and smuggling of migrants, and managing borders; and emphasize the safe and dignified return of migrants and their reintegration in their home communities.

5. *Strengthening national, bilateral, regional and international cooperation*

- Stress the need to strengthen international, regional and bilateral cooperation on migration to find solutions to common challenges, protect migrants, and accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration.
- Emphasize the importance of stakeholders' participation in migration governance and the need to activate collaboration between them by strengthening consultation and collaboration mechanisms at the national and regional levels.
- Involve migrant men and women and youth in the decision-making process related to migration issues and enable them to establish or join associations and unions representing their interests.
- Strengthen the role of foreign ministries and migrant associations to ensure and facilitate migrant communication with countries and communities of origin and encourage investment in them while ensuring firewalls between protection and immigration authorities.
- Support the role of local administrations, especially in major cities with the largest number of migrants, to address the challenges resulting from migration, and to identify priorities and allocate resources to ensure that migrants have access to basic services, especially in view of the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic on national resources and priorities.

6. *Providing detailed, timely and available data*

- Conduct surveys and develop innovative data collection and analysis tools and methodologies to collect accurate data disaggregated by sex, age, migration status and skills with the ultimate aim to develop evidence-based policies that take into account the needs and priorities of all migrants, and to assess progress in implementing the Global Compact for Migration.

II. Conference sessions

Day 1, 24 February 2021

A. Opening session

11. Mr. Othman Belbeisi, IOM Senior Regional Adviser for the Middle East and North Africa, moderated the first day of the Conference. The opening session began with a short video presentation on the key trends of migration and the situation of migrants in the Arab region, and on the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region. The presentation emphasized that the effective implementation of the Global Compact for Migration promises to ensure the wellbeing of migrants and enables them to become active agents in the development process.
12. Ms. Rola Dashti, ESCWA Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary, made a statement in which she stressed that all responses to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 should include migration governance, the protection of migrants, and support for migrants to continue fulfilling their roles in sustainable development in their home and host countries, and their emerging roles in view of the pandemic. She stressed the need to identify ways to increase regular migration pathways and reduce irregular ones; to integrate migrants in social policies including social protection policies; to provide them with health services and vaccinations, regardless of their legal status; to improve their housing conditions; to reform labour systems to protect workers' rights; to reduce hatred and discrimination against them; and to combat trafficking in persons.
13. Mr. António Vitorino, IOM Director General and Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration, remarked that there were signs of progress in achieving the Global Compact for Migration's objectives as work had begun on developing national implementation plans; implementing promising measures inspired by the Global Compact for Migration; financing joint programmes by the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund; and establishing structures to coordinate migration at the national and

regional levels. He noted that the pandemic had undermined the ability of migrants to move, increased their vulnerability, harmed their human rights, and imposed sudden pressure on government policies everywhere. However, it had also accelerated solutions. He added that the Arab region had made progress in dealing with the issue of migration, but the region still faced challenges given that many migrants remained in vulnerable and poor conditions. He highlighted that it was essential to integrate migrants in the process of recovery and building back better, including by vaccinating them against the COVID-19 virus. He confirmed that the regional review demonstrated the adaptability of the Global Compact for Migration and its alignment with all contexts, and that countries should take advantage of positive developments and intensify efforts to fulfil collective commitments.

14. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, made a statement in which he said that migration had become strongly featured on the global agenda, which influenced the policies and domestic actions of many countries, given the political, social and cultural issues it raised within societies that could be challenging to handle, thus making migration a key political issue. The exceptional circumstances in the region over the past decade had increased irregular migration and raised the number of refugees and displaced persons in Arab countries or in neighbouring countries. He noted that the Global Compact for Migration took into account the disparate migration situations in Arab countries and their differing priorities, stressing the principle of national sovereignty and the sovereign right of countries to determine their national migration policy and their right to manage it in a manner commensurate with their priorities and conditions. He explained that the Secretariat of the League of Arab States was working to enhance regional cooperation, stressing the possibility of improving the performance of Arab countries in addressing migration by exchanging experiences and lessons learned. He highlighted the contribution of migrants to development, and to maximize the benefits of migration by striking a balance between all the economic, social and political considerations related to it.
15. His Excellency Mr. Nasser Bourita, the Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, confirmed his country's conviction that the success of the Global Compact for Migration lay in implementing its requirements according to context specificities, and that implementation could only be at the regional level. He stressed the ambition of Morocco to activate Arab regional cooperation on migration, and to enhance collaboration with all other stakeholders, especially civil society. He addressed the Global Compact for Migration response to the region's priorities, notably the relationship between migration and development, migrant rights, and the fight against trafficking in persons. In conclusion, he expressed the readiness of Morocco to assist in developing an Arab strategy to implement the Global Compact for Migration.
16. In a recorded statement, His Excellency Mr. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, said that the current Conference is an opportunity to identify Arab countries' challenges in implementing the Global Compact for Migration, to highlight successful experiences and benefit from them, and to identify priorities and resources required to follow up on implementation. He noted that recent approaches to migration had neglected its development effects, focusing more on security concerns and economic pressures. This had led to an uptick in illegal migration and trafficking in persons, as a result of increased restrictions on legal movement between countries, especially in view of the COVID-19 pandemic that tightened those restrictions and fuelled hate speech, under the pretext that migrants were a source of infection. He stressed the importance of reviewing migration policies, recognizing the positive contributions of migrants, and working to combat intolerance, xenophobia and the mistreatment of migrants. He noted the achievements of Egypt in linking migration and sustainable development, while taking into account border management and irregular migration; enforcing the rights of migrants, providing them with guarantees and preventing discrimination against them; recognizing their social, economic and cultural contributions; and acknowledging the need to establish coordination mechanisms between government institutions concerned with implementing the Global Compact for Migration and strengthening relevant legislative structures.

17. Ms. Sarah Badr, MENA Regional Focal Point of the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, gave a brief overview of the Group, its activities and the regional consultation with young people the Group had led in the MENA region, in the framework of the Global Compact for Migration review. She addressed the most prominent points raised by young people at these consultations, including that the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration was not happening as quickly as necessary, having faced particular challenges because of the pandemic. She said that young people were particularly interested in implementing Objective 2 of the Global Compact for Migration, owing to increased economic challenges and difficulties in accessing services; Objective 17 because discriminatory policies and linguistic and cultural differences had fuelled hatred towards migrants and had prevented their integration into host societies and children's entry to schools; Objective 18 because the lack of recognition of migrants' qualifications and difficulty in accessing continuing education impeded their entry into the labour market. Young people had also said that the language barrier prevented them from completing their higher education. She added that the matter was further complicated by the transition to the digital world owing to the pandemic, while not all young migrants had the skills or tools to keep pace. Migrant women, in particular, suffered from various constraints that prevented them from accessing employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. She outlined three key recommendations from young migrants that had emerged from the consultations and required immediate attention. Firstly, the need to update educational curriculums to meet the job market needs and ensure protection for children and young people in countries of origin. Secondly, the need for Governments to work in collaboration with civil society combat bullying and xenophobia, amend legislation to criminalize violence against migrants and promote inclusion of migrants. Thirdly, recognize the role of the civil society in ensuring access to learning and professional training services, and provide financial resources to ensure close the learning and skills gap for migrants. She concluded her speech by calling on Governments to intensify efforts and work in a participatory manner to implement the Global Compact for Migration.
18. Dr. Ayman Zohry, an expert in migration and population studies at the American University in Cairo and rapporteur of the multi-stakeholder consultation on the regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, focused on the importance of all relevant stakeholders in the Global Compact's framework, which stemmed from the "whole-of-society" approach. He said that stakeholders contributed to following up on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, especially by presenting reports related to the implementation of interventions, activities and events in which they had participated, providing data, and preparing studies and research that enhance implementation and shed light on strengths and weaknesses. They also represented migrants at consultative meetings and events and were the closest to them and the most knowledgeable of their situations. He added that the world was going through difficult times for all people, not only migrants, but they could be overcome by working together and adhering to the principles of the Global Compact for Migration and the whole-of-society approach.

B. Scene setting and regional synthesis of the voluntary review reports of the Global Compact for Migration by member States

19. Dr. Tamirace Fakhoury, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at the Lebanese American University, gave an overview of the Global Compact for Migration and the participation of Arab countries therein. She said that the regional review was of great importance, as it allowed Governments to make an initial assessment of progress and assess challenges and opportunities. The review also aimed to strengthen the interactive platform that allowed stakeholders to share lessons learned and compare countries performance. She discussed the methodology used in the report, the enabling environment, and related policies and reforms adopted by countries to support the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration.
20. Dr. Amira Abdelrahman Ahmed, Professor of Sociology at the American University in Cairo, said that most of the 14 countries that had submitted their voluntary GCM reviews had established special

platforms to follow up on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, and that the country reviews showed great progress in achieving the Compact's objectives, but to varying degrees depending on the relevance of specific objectives to national contexts. Her statement focused on the results of the regional review for Arab countries, which were divided into the following three categories: the objectives that had received the greatest attention; the objectives that had received some attention; and the objectives that were not reported in most country reviews. She cited examples from Arab countries of those results.

21. In conclusion, the need to promote regional cooperation was highlighted, including focusing bilateral cooperation efforts on the protection of migrant workers; forging bilateral partnerships with a comprehensive vision that took into account social and economic challenges; noting that some Arab countries were providing development and humanitarian aid to other Arab countries on a bilateral basis; establishing border management partnerships with neighbouring countries; strengthening efforts and initiatives to enhance multilateral cooperation; and encouraging member States to continue establishing regional partnerships with the League of Arab States.

C. Plenary session 1: Voluntary reporting by Arab countries

22. The session was chaired by Mr. Talal al Mutairi, Deputy Assistant of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait. Representatives of Arab countries discussed key achievements in implementing the Global Compact for Migration since its adoption in 2018, by reviewing national experiences and highlighting challenges, success stories, existing and emerging priorities, and lessons learned. The following is a summary of the interventions that took place during this session:

1. Iraq

23. Her Excellency Ms. Evan Faeq Jabro, the Minister of Migration and Displacement of Iraq, reviewed the progress made by her country since the signing of the Global Compact for Migration. She noted that efforts over the past two years had focused on building national capacity to achieve the Compact's desired outcomes. Her country's achievements included updating the database on Iraq to inform migration policy development; developing national strategies for long-term migration management, using a whole-of-government approach, involving most ministries; forming specialized and inter-ministerial task forces to operationalize and implement national plans for migration management; and establishing a higher committee to follow up on the situation of Iraqis abroad among others. She emphasized the commitment of Iraq to implementing the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration and welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Network on Migration in Iraq. She added that her country intended to further develop its national capacity in the area of migration management, which required a whole-of-government approach, the involvement of community stakeholders, and collaboration with international partners. She noted that Iraq was working to strengthen migration management and governance for the social and economic benefit of the country, while protecting the human rights of migrants inside and outside the country.

2. Kuwait

24. Mr. Talal Khaled Saad Al Mutairi, the representative of Kuwait, said that his country was keen to implement the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration to improve international cooperation on curbing illegal migration, address its causes, and strengthen collaboration among all actors to find ways to mitigate its effects. He added that Kuwait would adopt the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration within the limits of its constitution and national laws and in the context of implementing Kuwait Vision 2035, which was in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. He said that Kuwait had established the Public Authority for Manpower, a body specialized in implementing policies and laws related to foreign labour and had made many decisions to provide protection for foreign workers and regulate the labour relationship between employers and expatriate workers. He highlighted the

positive results achieved by the shelter for female foreign workers and the services provided to them, including protection, legal assistance and health care, and the implementation of a voluntary return programme. He noted that Kuwait had signed over 21 bilateral memorandums of understanding with countries on labour mobility and had recently adopted a national strategy to combat trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling. He focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and the efforts made by the State to provide protection and services to citizens and expatriates without any discrimination between them.

3. *Egypt*

25. Ambassador Neveen El Hussein, Deputy Assistant Minister for Migration, Refugees and Combatting Human Trafficking of Egypt, said that her country was working to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration from a comprehensive perspective that was not limited to the security dimension, but also included sustainable development dimensions. She listed a series of achievements that Egypt had made to implement the Global Compact for Migration and improve migration governance, notably forming a national coordinating committee to implement the Compact that would convene periodically to determine national priorities and ways to deal with challenges. Those priorities could be divided into six themes: respecting the rights of migrants abroad and in Egypt, combating discrimination and hate speech against them, securing primary health care for them, and securing free education for Arabic-speaking migrant children; addressing the root causes that drive migration, especially in the poorest communities, to ensure that the decision to migrate was not driven by necessity; strengthening the legal pathways for migration by concluding bilateral agreements that guaranteed the rights of Egyptian workers; optimizing the benefits of Egyptian expatriates' contributions to achieving sustainable development, and ensuring financial inclusion to guarantee the flow of remittances to the most remote and poorest places; combating irregular migration through better border management; combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, and ensuring protection for victims. In conclusion, she referred to the challenges imposed by COVID-19 on her country's ability to provide health care to foreigners in Egypt, and its ability to assimilate returning Egyptians as a result of the economic and social effects of the pandemic.

4. *Qatar*

26. Mr. Yousef Sultan Larem, Director of the International Organizations Department at the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, affirmed his country's commitment to achieving the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration. He reviewed a set of measures taken by Qatar to that end, including forming a national working group to keep pace with international efforts aimed at realizing the objectives, and aligning Qatar national vision 2030 and other policies with those objectives; formulating a comprehensive plan for labour market governance and improving the processes for collecting, analysing and disseminating data related to the employment of expatriate workers. He also focused on measures relating to developing the country's legislative system in line with international standards on migrant workers' rights, in a manner that promotes fair employment and ensures decent work conditions; adopting a non-discriminatory minimum wage for domestic workers and employees, establishing a minimum wage committee to review the minimum periodically, strengthening the workers' support fund, and adopting new legislation to protect them while they work in the summer; enacting legislation to abolish the sponsorship system, including by scrapping requirements for workers to obtain exit permits, and facilitating the movement of workers in the local market to achieve a more efficient and productive labour market; incorporating additional protection measures for domestic workers into the new standard employment contract model, and implementing awareness and education campaigns on their rights. Mr. Larem also presented measures regarding opening a shelter for victims of forced labour and trafficking in persons; strengthening the complaints mechanism by establishing electronic platforms for submitting complaints via mobile phone; facilitating the provision of basic services to migrant workers, such as providing free health care, adequate housing and education for their children, and facilitating the process of remittances,

especially during the COVID-19 crisis; increasing the transparency and efficiency of recruiting migrant workers and the opening of Qatar visa centres abroad; and adding new articles to the law on combating trafficking in persons and protecting victims, and ensuring the return of irregular migrants in line with human rights considerations. He concluded by reaffirming the commitment of Qatar to achieving the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration, in line with its national interest, international human rights law, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

5. *Lebanon*

27. Ambassador Caroline Ziadeh, Director of International Organizations at the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, stressed the need for collaboration to invest in and make better use of migration, for the benefit of countries of origin and of host countries. She noted that since the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration, Lebanon had accomplished a number of achievements, including controlling entry and exit at border posts; combating trafficking in persons; formulating an integrated border management strategy; and working to introduce amendments to the standard labour contract to establish a balance in the relationship between the employer and foreign workers, in an effort to end the sponsorship system. She added that Lebanon had received, despite its limited capacity, over a 1.5 million displaced Syrians and hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, whose conditions had recently deteriorated, like those of Lebanese citizens, as a result of the economic and social crises in the country. She noted the efforts made by the State to secure the return of Lebanese migrants stranded abroad, and the inclusion of migrants residing in Lebanon in the platform established to receive applications for COVID-19 vaccines. She confirmed that Lebanon was developing a national platform to follow up on the implementation of the Global Compact's objectives in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, and that the Presidency of the Council of Ministers had approved the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants to establish a national mechanism to follow up on their implementation.

6. *Tunisia*

28. Ms. Hamida Rais, Director-General of International Cooperation on Migration at the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs, highlighted her country's interest in migration, as reflected in its involvement in key international and regional processes related to migration. She said that Tunisia had prepared its voluntary national review to follow up on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration through a participatory approach that had included various ministries and structures concerned with migration. When drafting the report, focus had been placed on 13 of the Global Compact's objectives, grouped into five main themes, namely strengthening evidence-based policies and planning in the field of migration; promoting orderly migration and protecting the rights of migrant workers; reducing irregular migration; enhancing the contribution of migrants to development; and strengthening international cooperation in the field of migration. She reviewed a wide range of achievements by Tunisia under each of those themes, including strengthening migration-related policies; improving knowledge of migration issues; formulating a migration communication strategy; developing online migration platforms; concluding bilateral international agreements in the areas of migration and labour migration. She also highlighted efforts regarding developing international cooperation programmes to promote orderly migration; ratifying International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions; enacting a 2020 law on the social and solidarity economy; ratifying international agreements related to combating migrant smuggling; preparing a joint Tunisia-United Nations emergency plan in the event of a mass influx of refugees and migrants into Tunisia from Libya; building capacity and providing technical and logistical support in the field of border management; raising awareness about the dangers of migrant smuggling. She also discussed efforts to support the participation of Tunisians abroad in political life; and mobilizing Tunisians residing abroad and encouraging them to invest in Tunisia.

7. *Yemen*

29. Mr. Mohammed al-Adil, Deputy Minister of Expatriates Affairs of Yemen, highlighted the difficult conditions that Yemen was experiencing, which had affected migrants and displaced persons. He said that displacement camps were being bombed, which had exhausted the Yemeni Government and local authorities in terms of meeting basic needs such as shelter, medicine, education and food, calling on the international community and humanitarian organizations to protect the displaced. He added that Yemen was also witnessing an influx of hundreds of irregular migrants daily from a number of countries in the Horn of Africa, constituting an additional burden and a difficult challenge for the Yemeni government, which was continually working to absorb irregular migrants and protect them from exploitation and conscription. He reviewed the achievements of his country, including providing care when possible to Yemeni migrants and expatriates, through the following: supporting the institutional performance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, and building communication between the Ministry and expatriate and migrant communities; providing technical attachés to handle expatriate affairs and regulate migration within the diplomatic missions of Yemen abroad, and exempting repatriated migrants and expatriates from all customs duties on movable property; supervising the education of expatriate children in diaspora countries to teach Arabic and preserve the Yemeni identity. He also highlighted efforts regarding allocating scholarships for postgraduate studies to the children of migrants in universities abroad; and implementing programmes to train workers wishing to migrate. He added that Yemen was working to establish an information system on migrants' data, and to organize awareness campaigns about regular migration.

8. *Jordan*

30. Ms. Ghadeer Attia, Head of the Agreements and Contracts Department at the Jordanian Ministry of Labour, outlined the efforts of the Jordanian Government to secure a decent life, health, work and education for migrants. She reviewed laws that protect migrant workers, and the provisions of the labour law stipulating non-discrimination between the Jordanian worker and migrant worker in all rights and duties. She highlighted recent amendments to the labour law, which gave non-Jordanian children of Jordanian mothers the right to work without obtaining a work permit. She referred to decisions and policies granting facilitations to Jordanian wives of other nationalities to obtain work permits; and to the many regulations protecting migrant workers, especially those related to domestic workers affirming their rights to move, leave and not have their passport withheld. She added that the Jordanian Government was working to amend the law on trafficking in persons to curb the phenomenon, and that several decisions had been issued to assist migrant workers in obtaining work permits. Several measures had also been taken to respond to the Syrian crisis, including exempting Syrians from all work permit fees and medical examination certificates; and allowing Syrians inside camps to obtain work permits enabling them to work outside the camps, in the agricultural and construction fields, and in other work projects for a wage. Moreover, she reviewed the mechanisms developed to protect migrant workers, such as an inspection apparatus at the Ministry of Labour, and mechanisms for submitting complaints.

D. Plenary session 2: Voluntary reporting by Arab countries (continued)

31. Ms. Enas El Fergany Director of the Refugees, Expatriates and Migration Affairs Department at the League of Arab States, moderated the second session. State representatives continued to present key achievements in implementing the Global Compact for Migration.

1. *Morocco*

32. Mr. Ahmed Skim, Director of Migration Affairs at the Ministry Delegated to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, noted the successes of Morocco in migration governance, notably formulating new migration strategies and policies in line with the Global Compact for Migration and implementing them in a participatory manner with all stakeholders; and establishing the African Migration Observatory. He presented a series of measures and initiatives aimed at

promoting inclusion, particularly in the areas of education, health, housing, vocational training, employment, social and legal assistance, and regularizing the status of migrants and asylum seekers; facilitating access to services on an equal basis with citizens; adopting new initiatives and legislation regarding specific categories of migrants, such as female migrant workers, migrant children, and migrants without identity documents. He highlighted the most prominent challenge facing the implementation of these strategies and policies, which was the prevalence of migrant smuggling networks and trafficking in persons in the region, which threatened national security, and impeded safe and orderly migration and the improvement of migrants' conditions.

2. *Somalia*

33. Ms. Mariam Yassin, Special Envoy for Migrants and Children's Rights of Somalia, stressed that her country had recently witnessed a large influx of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and that the Somali Government treated them like Somali citizens. The Government had established a platform to communicate with the Somali diaspora, and two units to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. Improvements had also been made to migration governance in Somalia and to coordination between various departments for the repatriation of displaced Somalis, and there are discussions on how to reintegrate them into society. Border management systems and data analysis systems had been put in place at all border crossings, and migration policies had been modified in favour of migrants. She reviewed the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of implementing awareness and response measures, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies. She reiterated her country's commitment to the Global Compact for Migration, its collaboration with all concerned authorities and the importance of strengthening bilateral relationships between Arab countries to peacefully return migrants to their homeland.

3. *Algeria*

34. Mr. Cherif Oualid, Director of Consular Affairs at the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, noted the achievements of Algeria in relation to some of the Global Compact's objectives, notably establishing operational mechanisms for exchanging information between various parties concerned with migration issues, especially data; registering the newborns of migrants on Algerian territories, regardless of their legal status; providing support for regular migration, including granting entry visas to migrants, especially those coming from countries with no Algerian diplomatic representation, and those coming for humanitarian reasons, as well as extending visas and residencies in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. He also focused on efforts related to ; ensuring fair and ethical recruitment of all workers, regardless of nationality; providing free health and social care services to irregular migrants, and vaccinating their children; implementing sea and desert rescue campaigns for irregular migrants; coordinating with neighbouring countries to combat cross-border crime, establishing the National Office for Migration, and supporting migrant voluntary return programmes; forming a ministerial committee to combat trafficking in persons; and other achievements in terms of bilateral agreements, combating discrimination against migrants, and addressing the root causes of irregular migration. He stressed that Algeria attached great importance to the Algerian diaspora, given its important role in the country's economic development, and that the Government had enacted laws to preserve diaspora rights. He also addressed the challenges facing his country, most notably mixed migration flows towards Algeria and their exploitation by smuggling networks linked to transnational organized crime networks.

4. *Libya*

35. Mr. Issam Al Qaffa, Deputy Director of International Organizations at the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that although Libya had not signed the Global Compact for Migration, it had been actively participating since last year in all the workshops organized to build capacity in the areas it covered. Libya aimed to continue following up on related activities, monitoring developments in the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, and strengths, weaknesses and lessons learned, so as to re-evaluate its position regarding signing the Compact. He stressed that the Libyan Government had shown commitment in dealing with the issue by establishing the National Committee to Monitor Migration Strategies and Policies, which comprised technicians and experts from several fields, legislators, and officials from all government sectors. The Libyan Ministry of Labour was also considering developing a system that included data on workers, including migrant workers. The Ministry of Justice was interested in combatting trafficking in persons and smuggling crimes and was working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), IOM and UNICEF to develop its capacity and knowledge on relevant issues. Despite the difficult conditions resulting from the security situation and the COVID-19 pandemic, and the presence of more than 800,000 irregular migrants on Libyan soil, the Libyan Government had no objection to assimilating most of them in the labour market and regularizing their status. He added that Libya was working to develop migration policies in line with its sovereignty, national priorities and international obligations.

5. *Sudan*

36. Mr. Al-Siddiq Al Fadil Hilal, from the General Directorate of Passports and Immigration at the Sudanese Ministry of Interior, noted the commitment of the transitional government to all international conventions ratified by the Sudan, including the Global Compact for Migration. The Sudan had witnessed large flows of migrants from the Horn of Africa owing to poor economic conditions and wars, and its territory had become a transit point towards the Arab Gulf States and North Africa. He stressed that his country had made great efforts, despite its modest capacity and long borders, to curb irregular migration and related phenomena, such as migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. He explained that this required the Sudan to collaborate with partners in neighbouring countries to regulate migration processes and limit its negative effects, without compromising the dignity and rights of migrants. The Sudan considered regular migration as a means of achieving development, so the State was facilitating procedures for regular migrants and guaranteeing their rights. It had established an agency specialized in the affairs of Sudanese working abroad, and was working on developing plans to benefit from their knowledge and remittances. He reviewed the achievements of the Sudan, including establishing a centre in Khartoum to collect data aimed at combating trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, in collaboration with the European Union and the African Union; establishing the Higher Council for Migration; developing a national mechanism to implement the Global Compact for Migration that included all agencies working in migration management in the Sudan; participating in capacity-building programmes in several areas related to migration; and enacting a new law on trafficking in persons.

6. *Comoros*

37. Mr. Ali Abdou, responsible for Migration Affairs at the Ministry of Interior, Information and Decentralization of the Comoros, reviewed the efforts made by his country to implement the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration and improve migration management, such as appointing a migration focal point to follow up on the directives and recommendations issued by various partners to ensure coordination. Efforts also included establishing a multi-sectoral committee to follow up on implementing the Global Compact for Migration; revising the draft law on the conditions of entry and stay of foreigners in the Comoros; revising the Penal Code to include penal provisions aimed at suppressing and holding accountable perpetrators of trafficking in persons and other crimes. He also reviewed the challenges his country faced in implementing the Global Compact for Migration,

including a lack of logistical and financial resources; and the need to strengthen the skills and capacity of those responsible for dealing with migration issues, and to secure long-term support for them to become national experts. He reviewed recommendations, including the need to develop a three-year action plan to define the objectives that should be achieved during that period, and to implement them in neighbouring countries; the need to formulate a support plan to build the capacity of member States; and the necessity of establishing a support fund for member States most in need.

E. Plenary session 3: Multi-stakeholder inputs to the regional review of the Global Compact for Migration

38. At the session, the Rapporteur of the Multi-stakeholder Consultation on the Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Dr. Ayman Zohry, gave a brief overview of the outcome of the consultation, held on 23 February 2021 (set out in the annex to the present report). The inputs focused on the importance of following a whole-of-society approach and activating the role of all stakeholders in the implementation and follow-up of the Global Compact for Migration. He also focused on the situation of implementing regional and national migration plans and strategies, and addressing the gaps faced by Arab countries; and on the need to accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration by adopting a number of priority interventions, including amending and developing laws and policies, providing disaggregated data, promoting the social inclusion of migrants, and rejecting discrimination against them.

F. Plenary session 4: Cross-thematic issues in line with the guiding principles of the Global Compact for Migration

39. Ms. Maysa Ayoub, Associate Director Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies at the American University of Cairo, moderated the session, which provided an opportunity for participants to discuss issues in line with the Global Compact's guiding principles, especially from a gender sensitive and child sensitive lens, with the aim of identifying ways to accelerate its implementation.
40. Mr. Filipe Gonzales Morales, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, emphasized that the human rights of migrants were an essential component of the Global Compact for Migration, and the importance of taking into account a gender equality perspective. He noted that Arab countries faced a variety of issues related to migration, including the sponsorship system, which exacerbated the vulnerability of migrants and exposed them to human rights violations; and freedom of association of migrants, including domestic workers, and their participation in trade unions. He called for strengthening multilateral cooperation between Arab and European countries to promote the rights of Arab migrants and asylum seekers in Europe. He also stressed the need for migrants to have access to health and medical care without discrimination, and to be vaccinated against COVID-19.
41. Ms. Nourhan Abdel Aziz, Rapporteur for Migrant Children and Youth, representing the Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the Arab States on Advancing GCM Implementation for Women Migrant Workers, Migrant Children and Youth in the Arab Region (held on 15 February 2021) and Advocacy Advisor for North Africa at Save the Children. She presented five key migrant children and youth recommendations: First, strengthening national child protection systems and promoting child-sensitive cross-border and regional cooperation – including the strengthening of the social services workforce capacity. Second, to end child immigration detention where it is still practiced, prohibiting it in national legislation and establishing appropriate care and reception options in collaboration with CSOs and NGOs. Third, to ensure availability and access to services for migrants including health and education irrespective of their migration status as well as recognizing their previous education qualifications and to facilitate access to employment via joint initiatives among Arab States. Fourth, to ensure when returns to countries of origin are necessary and take place, that procedures are child sensitive and protect family unity. Fifth, address issues that concern migrant mothers and their children including ensuring that sex and age disaggregated data is collected to understand issues and

programme appropriately, as well as enabling women to register their children and avoid statelessness. She concluded by stressing the importance of combating discrimination against migrants at all levels, and to promote migrant inclusion in a way that benefits migrant children and enables them to positively contribute to the communities hosting them.

42. Ms. Sara Al-Khatib, Rapporteur for Women Migrant Workers, representing the UN Women-UNICEF convened Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the Arab States on Advancing GCM Implementation for Women Migrant Workers, Migrant Children and Youth in the Arab Region and Programme Officer at the Solidarity Centre in the Middle East. She presented the recommendations on women migrant workers, emanating from the regional consultations, notably: preserving migrant women's jobs, strengthening the labour protection measures and social safety nets available to them, and compensating them for lost wages during the pandemic; producing sex-disaggregated data and ensuring labour law coverage in line with international standards and conventions, and strengthening relevant accountability mechanisms; strengthening gender-responsive policies and programs on pre-post arrival information on rights and obligations, employability, fair and ethical recruitment, and portable social security. The recommendations also focused on ensuring the representation of migrant women and their groups that support them in policy and programme development processes; guaranteeing the right to representation and collective bargaining; empowering women to save money and control remittances; providing coverage for migrant workers in laws on violence against women, and comprehensive access to services, regardless of status. The recommendations also included abolishing discriminatory laws and social norms; providing alternatives to detention and deportation; ensuring that dialogues and action on migration address children abandoned by migrant parents and those born to migrant mothers; and promoting the use of consultative processes and civil society participation in addressing political concerns over migration.
43. The two interventions were followed by an open discussion. Mr. Nidal Maqlabh, Director of the Legislation Department at the National Centre for Human Rights in Jordan, discussed the centre's role in contributing to the protection and promotion of workers' rights in general, and the rights of migrant workers in particular. He outlined some recommendations, including working to transform the challenges of refugees displacement into development opportunities in host countries; calling on the international community to support host communities and migrants; shifting from an emergency approach to assistance to a sustainable approach; empowering and activating the role of municipalities and involving them in projects related to migrants; and calling for the creation of a national legal framework regulating all issues related to refugees.
44. Ms. Susanne Mikhail, Regional Director of UN Women, emphasized the importance of cooperation at the national and regional levels to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration, and the importance of following its guiding principles. She stressed the need to involve civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academics in that work. She noted that some Governments were spearheading efforts to adopt various legislation, policies and programmes related to wage protection, and strengthening complaint mechanisms, among other initiatives. She stressed the need to complete work on legislation and policies dealing with the issues of migrant women and girls and domestic workers, in particular.
45. Ms. Karina Nersesyan, Deputy Regional Director at the United Nations Population Fund, highlighted the importance of complementarity between the Global Compact for Migration and the International Conference on Population and Development, in terms of focusing on the relationship between migration, displacement and human rights. She stressed the need to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to develop research, strengthen data on migration dynamics, and build capacity in that area, and called for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all migrants, regardless of their legal status. She also noted the importance of developing approaches that reduced the vulnerability of migrant women, including the need to support and strengthen efforts to provide health care to all migrants, especially women. She addressed the importance of accessing

family planning services and pre- and post-natal care, and ensuring that responses to large waves of migration took into account equality between women and men, not only in terms of ensuring gender equality and empowering women, but also to combat gender-based violence, especially since the phenomenon was increasing owing to the pandemic and its economic repercussions. She called on participants to condemn all practices harmful to women and girls, especially female genital mutilation and early and forced marriage, including among migrant children.

46. As a representative of young migrants in the Arab region, Ms. Marj Ahmed, a Sudanese migrant in Egypt, spoke of her personal experience. She indicated many positives in Egypt, notably her experience of being able to access education. Despite her immigrant status, she was able to attend school and then university, which is critical for all migrant children and young people. She also identified the difficulties that graduate migrants faced in finding employment and called on Governments to provide greater opportunities for migrants to participate in the labour market, especially for recent graduates, so as to contribute to the development of their societies.

G. Roundtables

47. The four roundtable discussions covered all 23 objectives of the Global Compact for Migration and included a review of progress in its implementation at all levels. The interventions addressed challenges, good practices, lessons learned, and potential solutions to obstacles impeding the achievement of the objectives.

1. *Roundtable 1: Review of objectives 2, 5, 6, 12 and 18 of the Global Compact for Migration*

48. The session was moderated by Mr. Khalil Buhazaa, Director of Labour Affairs at the GCC Executive Bureau in Bahrain. Ms. Shaikha Mohammed Al-Khater, Director of the International Labour Relations Department at the Qatari Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs, reviewed efforts to strengthen formal channels for recruiting migrant workers and attracting skilled workers, including signing bilateral agreements with workers' countries of origin to regulate their recruitment and work, and to clearly present their rights and obligations; communicating continually with embassies in Qatar and the heads of labour communities to resolve difficulties encountered by workers and to support and assist them; and ensuring the recruitment of workers from licenced recruitment agencies. She also reviewed the experience of Qatar in the field of technological development, including the opening of visa centres abroad that enabled users to finalize recruiting procedures electronically while workers were still outside Qatar, and to complete medical examinations, fingerprinting and biometric data, which enabled workers to read the labour contract in their mother tongue, thus familiarizing them with their rights and duties before leaving. She also noted some good practices, including adopting a non-discriminatory minimum wage for all workers; strengthening wage protection systems; enacting legislation to abolish the sponsorship system; and providing additional protection for domestic workers through a new employment contract template.
49. The private sector representative, Mr. Sayed Torki, Senior Counsel at the Federation of Egyptian Industries, noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed staff shortages in the medical sector, and imbalances between countries in terms of health-care workers. He added that regular immigration might contribute to solving the problem and filling gaps in the labour market if it were handled appropriately, as would the exchange of highly skilled labour, and facilitating the movement of innovators and entrepreneurs. He stressed the importance of enacting national legislation to mainstream responsible employment, which was in the interest of employees and contributed to limiting the exploitation of vulnerable migrant worker; making it possible for everyone to find legal employment and decent work; reducing informal work; and enhancing transparency and productivity, which would ultimately serve the economic development of host countries. He also highlighted the importance of developing skills through training; improving curriculums; adopting agreements on the

mutual recognition of skills; and working to align labour market needs with qualifications, skills and experiences.

50. These two interventions were followed by an open discussion. Mr. Frank Hagemann, Deputy Regional Director of ILO, said that the Arab region was still witnessing significant labour migration, and migrant workers constituted the largest share of the total number of workers. He noted that the COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges to implementing international conventions and frameworks, and had repercussions on migrant workers, especially those with low incomes. Nonetheless, the contributions of migrant workers had helped address those challenges. Moreover, opportunities had arisen to improve labour migration management, create decent work opportunities in host countries, and improve repatriation and labour market integration in countries of origin. He stressed the need to strengthen the protection and rights of migrant workers in the event of losing their jobs; and the necessity of providing them with adequate shelter, and ensuring their access to basic services, such as health and education. He also called for fair use and optimization of migrant workers' skills and abilities, the abolition of sponsorship systems, and the establishment of social protection systems for all workers and their families, including migrant workers.
51. Ms. Monica Goracci, IOM Director of the Department on Migration Management, stressed the need to find ways to develop regular migration pathways, facilitate the movement of migrants between countries, ensure decent work for them, and facilitate mutual recognition of their skills, qualifications and competencies. She added that the region had made progress in expanding regular migration pathways, strengthening labour migration governance systems, recognizing migrants' skills and qualifications, managing migration information, and other initiatives. She commended the efforts of Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) countries aimed at improving policies on migrant workers by developing the skills of migrant workers, exploring new programmes to reassess migrant workers who had lost their jobs during the pandemic, assessing the training needs of both workers and employers, and announcing reform measures in reforming the sponsorship system in Lebanon, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. She stressed the need to build on those promising efforts in the context of responding to the repercussions of the pandemic.
52. Mr. Wassim Rifi, Regional Coordinator of the Builders and Wood Workers' International in the Arab region, said that all the activities of the Federation were in line with the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration. The Federation had adopted a strategy that included several priorities, including ensuring the rights of all, safe work, and other priorities supporting national and migrant workers without discrimination. He stressed that the Federation had expressed on several occasions its disagreement with the political and economic approaches to the treatment of migrant workers, especially at the level of multinational companies, which meant that migrant workers could be dismissed at any time, as had repeatedly happened since the outbreak of the pandemic. He reviewed many achievements, including establishing migrant workers committees in several countries, including Lebanon and Qatar, concerned with migrant workers' affairs and enhancing their skills in many fields. He also called for building alliances between trade unions and civil society organizations to involve all stakeholders in the migration process, stressing the need for embassies in countries of origin to fulfil their responsibilities towards migrants.
53. Mr. Hamada Abu Nijmeh, Director of the Workers House Centre in Jordan, emphasized the need to support the achievement of decent work conditions in countries of origin, so as to reduce forced migration driven by economic hardships, and to ensure migration based on the free choice of workers. He noted that efforts must be made to promote regular migration pathways that support all workers' rights. Workers should have the right to control choices related to their residence, work, rights and transfer from one employer to another. They should also enjoy a guarantee of family reunification, and the right to choose their place of residence. He stressed that it was not permissible to continue exploiting migrant workers as a source of cheap labour, and that Governments should develop programmes and procedures related to migrant labour in a participatory manner, and hold talks with

trade unions, employers and stakeholders. Furthermore, countries' practices and policies on achieving decent work conditions for all workers equally, whether citizens or migrants, must be evaluated by assessing the extent to which they complied with international labour standards and agreements on workers' rights.

54. Ms. Rima Kalush, Director of Migrant-Rights.org, noted the challenges facing domestic workers in most GCC countries, as reflected in their continued exclusion from labour migration policy reforms, such as protection systems, recent improvements to sponsorship systems, and flexible working arrangements, stipulated in labour laws. She indicated the weakness of systems that guaranteed migrant workers' access to justice, and their inability to prevent rights violations despite the measures taken to reform labour courts and complaints mechanisms. She said that the sponsorship system encouraged the expansion of employers' control over working conditions and all quality of life indicators, such as health and adequate housing, a phenomenon that was also revealed by the COVID-19 crisis.
55. Ms. Joanna Yu, Programme Assistant at the Migrant Forum in Asia, highlighted that Arab countries were among the main destinations for Filipino workers but were among the top countries where complaints were raised. She commended some positive developments in the region, including improvements in sponsorship systems and the protection of domestic workers. She stressed that migrant workers' loss of their legal status put them at risk. Migrant detention should not be a primary procedure; instead, efforts should be made to establish appropriate procedures for investigating their cases, providing them with legal advice, and facilitating their stay in the country of destination, in coordination with the relevant embassies, so as to regulate their status. She noted the high recruitment fees charged by local and foreign recruitment agencies, which contributed to the consolidation of harmful practices, such as exploitation and abuse, calling for the development of mechanisms to regulate the process so as to ensure transparency and accountability. She concluded her speech with a number of recommendations, including strengthening the implementation of the labour laws with regard to the collection of recruitment fees from workers; regulating the work of recruitment agencies; working to abolish sponsorship systems to ensure respect for all the rights of migrant workers; allowing migrant workers to join and establish workers' committees; promoting social dialogue; and ratifying the 2011 ILO Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
56. Mr. Zied Charfi, representative of the Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts, reviewed the role of employers in implementing the Global Compact for Migration, specifically in terms of regulating migrant workers and ensuring respect for their rights. He stressed the need to set a precise timetable, with a clear programme, in coordination between Arab countries, to follow up on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration's objectives. He stressed the importance of forging joint agreements between labour organizations and unions and taking into account the decline of certain professions and the emergence of new professions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Day 2: 25 February 2021

57. The second day of the conference was facilitated by Ms. Sara Salman, ESCWA Population Affairs Officer. At the opening, Ms. Kristina Mejo, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Officer and Deputy Regional Director at the IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, made a statement in which she reviewed the highlights of the discussions of the first day, which represented the views of Governments and stakeholders, as stipulated in the Global Compact for Migration. She noted progress in mechanisms and action plans related to migration at the national level. Nine national United Nations Networks on Migration had been established, along with the Regional United Nations Network on Migration. The goal of the UN Networks on Migration was to support the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in Bahrain, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania, Morocco, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

2. *Roundtable 2: Review of objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 21 of the Global Compact for Migration*

58. The session was facilitated by Ms. Zeina Mhanna, board member at Amel Association International and Professor at the American University of Beirut. Mr. Ali Abdulraman Hadi, Assistant Director of the Department of International Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding at the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, stressed the importance of identity verification as a key step for repatriation. He said that the Iraqi Ministry of Interior had launched a campaign to verify identities by verifying the residency of people on its territory. Such efforts were of great importance for returnees to Iraq, since they guaranteed their access to basic services such as health, education and shelter, and their reintegration into society. He emphasized that identity verification was an essential component of success under the objective 21, and that it was a key method to support repatriation. With regard to border management, action was being taken in various areas, including trade and public health. He said that border management required border controls and monitoring entry points of irregular migrant flows. He stressed that effective border management and re-establishing sustainable security was a shared responsibility, both civil and military, and must involve the various relevant ministries. An integrated border management model must be developed based on local community participation in monitoring criminal activity. Effective and integrated coordination between various stakeholders must also be ensured, as it enhanced the chances of achieving integrated border management and identity verification. He indicated the establishment of a specialized technical working group, which contributed to good practices in border management.
59. Ms. Rania Ahmed, Deputy Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, focused on the need to link policies and social realities in discussions on migration, and work to provide services based on a holistic approach targeting all levels of society. She added that most migrants in the region did not have access to basic services. Migrants faced several problems, notably the absence of birth registration, in countries of origin, transit and destination. Therefore, a bottom-up holistic approach must be adopted that ensured access to basic services.
60. These interventions were followed by an open discussion. Mr. Al-Askari Mohamed Al-Tayeb, a member of the Algerian National Assembly, said that verifying the legal identity of migrants was a vital step, as it guaranteed a decent life for them. He explained that his country had an issue with the Global Compact for Migration not differentiating between legal and illegal migrants. He stressed the need to take into account the following priorities: protecting the dignity and life of those who begin the journey of illegal migration, especially women and children; combating transnational organized crime; and taking into account the priorities and interests of countries of origin, transit and destination in a balanced manner. He emphasized the need to adopt legal and practical arrangements to confront illegal migration, and the importance of coordination with illegal migrants' countries of origin to secure their voluntary return.
61. Major Fadi Sharbaji, the representative of the Internal Security Forces in Lebanon, highlighted a series of steps taken by the Internal Security Forces to combat trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, including establishing an electronic complaints platform; organizing lectures, seminars and workshops; establishing partnerships with authorities, public administrations and non-governmental organizations; training frontline personnel in the fight against trafficking in persons; establishing a specialized office against trafficking in persons and juveniles; and issuing an internal memo on how to deal with victims of trafficking in persons. He added that the Internal Security Forces had established a committee to combat torture in prisons, which oversaw all relevant institutions, and had forged partnerships with civil society and non-governmental organizations to improve the conditions of prisoners.

62. Ms. Hessen Sayah, Head of the Migrants Department at Caritas Lebanon, addressed In her speech on behalf of faith-based organizations, the issue of migrant workers in Lebanon. She said that the first step towards improving their conditions lay in tackling the problem of racism against them, by introducing amendments to the sponsorship system, reforming school curriculums, and amending existing laws. The situation of migrant workers, who were considered vulnerable groups, had been exacerbated by the economic crisis in the country, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the devastating explosion at the Port of Beirut. She addressed the issue of migrant workers' children, noting that most of them were not registered, meaning that they were deprived of all their rights, including health and education. She also discussed the issue of domestic workers who were still excluded from labour laws and denied the right to form or join unions. Great efforts were being made to improve the situation of those workers, and some of them had been successful, such as government institutions' efforts to provide shelter for homeless workers and closely monitor their conditions; organizing training courses in countries of origin to familiarize workers coming to Lebanon with the country; strengthening collaboration between local and international non-governmental organizations to secure protection for migrant workers; and developing voluntary return programmes for those wishing to return to their country.
63. Ms. Hamida Rais, Director General of International Cooperation on migration at the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs, described the achievements of Tunisia in implementing the objectives of the current round table. She reviewed the initiatives undertaken by the Tunisian Government to combat trafficking in persons, including issuing the 2016 organic law on preventing trafficking in persons, and preparing a guide on that law. The National Authority to Combat Trafficking in Persons had also prepared a national strategy. Other activities had also been carried out, such as establishing a national mechanism for the orientation and referral of victims of trafficking in persons; providing free medical treatment to victims; organizing awareness campaigns on the danger of trafficking in persons; and strengthening collaboration and forging national, regional and international partnerships. She noted the efforts of Tunisia to facilitate the return of migrants and the reintegration of Tunisians wishing to return from abroad. A national mechanism for the integration and repatriation of Tunisians abroad had also been established, and coordination was underway with host countries, in partnership with civil society.
64. Ms. Cristina Albertin, Regional Director at UNODC, explained the role of UNODC in supporting Member States in achieving the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration. She stressed that the current Conference was very useful, as it provided accurate information on progress made by each country, and on their needs. She addressed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the reality of migration, especially migrant flows. In view of the pandemic, trafficking in persons and people smuggling had increased, and the percentage of children and women victims of those acts had risen significantly. She stressed the importance of collaboration and teamwork in achieving the desired outcomes, and the main role of international organizations in supporting the achievement of the Global Compact for Migration's objectives.
65. Ms. Ana Belén Anguita, Senior Community Protection Officer and Focal Point for Mixed Movements in the MENA Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), emphasized the need to address negative drivers of migration that forced individuals to resort to irregular migration, and that supporting birth registration for migrants and providing documentation for their children were essential to preventing trafficking. She stressed the importance of supporting the national dialogue on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and devising appropriate responses, and the importance of international organizations' role in providing assistance, so as to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.
66. Mr. Hamdi Abdulbaqi Barwary, from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, set out the steps that should be taken to achieve the objectives of the current round table, including enacting a law or signing an international agreement to protect all types of migrants and their family members, not just workers; strengthening international coordination on deporting detainees and migrants given their large number,

especially in the Aegean Sea and at European borders; and strengthening the role of concerned authorities in combating migrant smuggling. He stressed the need to fully implement the Global Compact for Migration to prevent the detention of migrants, and to ensure coordination at border crossings between countries. He said that a national mechanism should be established for the repatriation of refugees and their reintegration in society, and to provide them with international protection, so as to encourage them to return to their countries.

67. Judge Ayman Ahmed, Immigration Focal Point at the Lebanese Ministry of Justice, approached the objectives of the current round table from both a legal and procedural perspectives. At the legal level, he said that Lebanese laws allowed all residents in Lebanon the right to sue, whether Lebanese or non-Lebanese. The same applied to the right to claim, as there was no provision in the law on judicial fees that distinguished between Lebanese and foreigners in terms of expenses and fees.

3. Roundtable 3: Review of objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22 of the Global Compact for Migration

68. Mr. Paul Tabar, Director of the Institute for Migration Studies and Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the Lebanese American University in Beirut, moderated the session. Mr. Salim Korkmaz, General Coordinator at the Middle East and West Asia Section of United Cities and Local Governments, focused on the tendency of many Arab countries to prioritize their national population over migrants, an issue which required great efforts to address.
69. Ms. Vian Ahmed, a relief activist, discussed the experience as the Regional Manager of the Lotus Flower, a non-governmental organization working in Iraqi Kurdistan, in enhancing protection and assistance for migrants and displaced persons, especially women and children who were the most vulnerable. She said that a lack of rights, exploitation and an inability to access basic services were chronic problems that migrants in the Middle East and North Africa had long suffered from, and which had been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially among irregular migrants. Intensified efforts and stronger collaboration were therefore needed to protect migrants.
70. The interventions were followed by an open discussion. Dr. Ahmed Al-Mandhari, Director of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, stated that universal health coverage continues to be WHO's entry point in ensuring that migrants have access to health services and that their health needs are met at a cost they can afford. He continued to stress that this cannot be achieved without strengthening access to essential health services at the primary health care level as well as finding feasible and sustainable ways to cover costs. Reducing health inequities among migrants is crucial because health is a fundamental human right and its progressive realization provides the opportunity to enjoy life and pursue one's life plans. Article 15 of the Global Compact for Migration calls on every Member State to incorporate the health needs of migrants into national and local health care policies and plans. This commitment is reinforced by the WHO Framework of Priorities and Guiding Principles to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants. It is therefore crucial that migrants are included in all measures taken to control and manage the COVID-19 pandemic. Failing to do so will jeopardize efforts to curtail the spread of the outbreak. Furthermore, the COVID-19 vaccine should be treated as global public good; it must be made available free of charge or at an affordable price, and administered in a non-discriminatory manner, equitably across all populations – including migrants. He added that we must all come together to ensure that no one is left behind, to meet the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and realize our vision of Health for All by All in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.
71. Ms. Hamida Rais, Director General of International Cooperation on migration at the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs, reviewed the achievements of Tunisia in implementing the objectives of the current round table. She noted that Tunisia had worked to include migration among its development priorities, and had supported the participation of Tunisians abroad in the development process by encouraging

them to invest, granting them a number of investment privileges, and promoting their participation in political life. Tunisia had also worked to strengthen the role of Tunisian women living in the diaspora, and had provided them with facilitations for administrative procedures.

72. Mr. Javier Aguilar, Regional Adviser for Child Protection at the MENA Regional Office of UNICEF. He reflected that the integration of migrant children was still a challenge in the Arab region and suggested solutions based on good practices seen in the region and globally. While evidence from the region showed that migrant children, especially unaccompanied and separated children, were vulnerable to various forms of exploitation. He recommended to explore bilateral coordination between neighbouring countries, as well as the regional leadership among the Arab States to establish cross-border collaboration, including collaboration between consulates, with a specific focus to end the detention of migrant children, ensure the care and protection of unaccompanied children, to expedite family tracing and reunification measures and find solutions for undocumented migrants who may be at risk of statelessness. He added that operational measures were important for children: Hiring and training social workers and making sure migrant children have access to appropriate reception and care, healthcare, and education and that access to basic services for migrant children should be achieved using whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches and leave no child behind. National governments are the primary duty bearers to adopt inclusive laws and policies, and that this should be complemented by increased budgets to finance services. He emphasized that migrant children and youth repeatedly tell us is that we must also invest in countering anti-discrimination and xenophobia and that we should not forget the potential of engaging children from migrant and hosting communities themselves. In conclusion, he reiterated UNICEF's continued commitment to collaborating with partners to advance the rights of migrant children and young people.
73. Mr. Pedro De Vasconcelos, Manager of the Financing Facility of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), addressed the objective 20 on 'migrant's remittances, highlighting the paramount importance of such remittances to migrant families, their role in ensuring access to social services, and their implications for development in countries of origin, as a vital source of income for millions of individuals and families across the world. In particular, for the Arab region, remittances flows are extremely relevant. In 2019 migrants sent over \$ 60 billion to their families in North of Africa and the Middle east. Despite the initial predictions, remittances were basically the only economic index which didn't drastically collapse. In 2020, officially recorded remittance flows were only 1.6 per cent below compared to 2019 and are projected to increase this year. This demonstrates once more the incredible resilience of migrants, especially in times of crisis. In conclusion, he noted a series of activities undertaken by IFAD, among which the Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID) and the campaign for the International Day of Family Remittances, both promoted in the objective 20 as important platforms to build and strengthen partnerships for innovative solutions on cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances with all relevant stakeholders.
74. Mr. Mamadou Bhoie Diallo, human rights activist and expert on migration issues in Morocco, described the implementation status of some of the objectives under discussion. He noted that providing protection to migrants required mobilizing the efforts of various non-governmental bodies and local, regional and international civil society organizations. With regard to education, his country had made great progress after the issuance of a circular allowing all children to have access to education. With regard to health services and justice, Morocco still faced many difficulties. Numerous challenges also prevented the implementation of the objective 22 on social security benefits and earned benefits, owing to widespread informal work. He added that despite all those difficulties, Morocco was making great efforts to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.
75. Ms. Ola Sidani, responsible for the SDG portfolio at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Lebanon, discussed the relationship between migration issues and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She said that the economic crisis in Lebanon had increased the number of poor people and the unemployment rate, which had required changes to the means of achieving development and

led to further challenges related to funding sources. She added that Lebanese expatriates had greatly helped citizens, especially through remote job search platforms.

76. Ms. Najwa Hanna, of the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers and Sub Regional secretary for Arab countries of the Public Services International, noted the pivotal role of public sector workers in implementing human rights. She said that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many migrant workers had lost their jobs, and were left without money to return to their countries. Since most of them worked in the informal sector, the risk of being arbitrarily expelled without any compensation had increased. Migrant workers also struggled to access health-care services, although they had at times been on the frontlines of the pandemic, endangering their lives by carrying out hygiene and sterilization work. She made two key recommendations to the Conference, namely ensuring universal access to health care and vaccines against the COVID-19 virus and providing comprehensive social protection in response to the pandemic and other crises.
77. The representative of the Sudanese delegation, Mr. Seddik El Fadl Hilal, described the burden that irregular migration imposed on his country. He noted that the Sudan sought to ensure the integration of Sudanese migrants abroad, by taking a set of economic decisions aimed at reviving the economy and facilitating financial transfers from abroad through the banking system, given past difficulties caused by sanctions. He added that the Sudan had participated in many programmes for the return of Sudanese migrants to their country to participate in its reconstruction. He stressed the importance of rehabilitating infrastructure in cities and at border points to better control borders, which required the cooperation of Arab countries and concerted efforts from relevant stakeholders.
78. Mr. Mohamed Wajdi El Aydi, from the municipality of Sfax in Tunisia, stressed the pivotal role of municipalities in implementing the Global Compact for Migration. He highlighted that most problems associated with migration occurred at the local level, so solutions should also be devised locally. He stressed that municipalities should be given the role they deserved, and a programme should be developed to achieve local governance.
79. Ms. Ola Boutros, of the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, said that there were 214 centres affiliated with the Ministry that provided development services. Those centres were spread across the Lebanese territory, provided health and medical services to all without discrimination between citizens and migrants, and provided capacity-building. However, migrants constitute 35 per cent of the population of Lebanon, which had greatly increased the burden on those centres and led to a decline in the services they provided. She therefore highlighted the need to provide international support and cooperation to continue offering basic services.

4. *Roundtable 4: Review of objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23 of the Global Compact for Migration*

80. Dr. Amani El Jack, Associate Professor at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, moderated the session. Ms. Siham Mourabit, Head of the Human Rights, Humanitarian and Social Affairs Division of the African Union Directorate at the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stressed the importance of the African Migration Observatory established by the African Union to address data shortages in African countries. It collected, analysed and exchanged data between those countries, provided an exchange platform for African experts and researchers, and served as a capacity-building tool. She added that the observatory had so far accomplished two tangible achievements, namely providing the first African databases, and creating a portal for Africa on migrant movements.
81. The representative of national human rights institutions, Mr. Issam Younis, President of the Arab Network for National Human Right Institutions in the State of Palestine, said that the Arab region was witnessing exceptional circumstances that required collaboration between various stakeholders. He added that Arab countries were countries of transit, destination and origin for migrants, and that the

region faced major challenges in the field of migration that required strengthening collaboration, developing plans that took into account human rights and equality issues between women and men, ensuring implementation of legislation, encouraging adherence to all international agreements on migration, and creating an environment conducive to respecting laws. He stressed the importance of the role of national institutions in Arab countries in that regard. He explained that the reality of the Arab region imposed a distinction between migration and asylum, noting that Jordan was hosting the largest proportion of refugees in the region.

82. The representative of the media, Ms. Khadija El Bab, of Radio Nationale Maroc, said that migration had become a phenomenon of varying dimensions, and that the main problem was information scarcity, as it was not fully up-to-date and accurate. She noted the need to encourage research and evidence-based data collection, such as the initiative to establish the African Migration Observatory. She added that regarding the objective 7, the health security of individuals in view of the COVID-19 pandemic had become linked to collective health security, and vice versa. Migrants should therefore benefit from free vaccination services. She said that the media did not provide balanced information on migration and migrants, but rather focused on irregular migration only, which led to fears surrounding migration and migrants, and increased xenophobia and racial discrimination. She stressed the importance of organizing training courses for media professionals on migration issues.
83. An open discussion followed. Ms. Hamida Rais, Director General of International Cooperation on migration at the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs, said that Tunisia was working to strengthen strategic planning, improve migration-related information, collect statistical data, conduct field surveys, and prepare migration studies. Tunisia was also working to strengthen online migration platforms and had signed many bilateral agreements with other States and enhanced collaboration with international organizations.
84. Ms. Denise Dahrouj, from the Lebanese Ministry of Labour, said that successive crises had struck Lebanon during the past year, affecting all sectors of the economy and employment. Despite those difficulties, Lebanon had made some progress in providing protection for migrant workers, including reviewing the standard labour contract for domestic work until the completion of a draft law to introduce amendments that would include domestic workers in the Code of Labour. The Ministry of Labour was also working to activate its hotline to receive complaints from domestic workers and to organize an awareness campaign in English. As part of protection measures against the COVID-19 pandemic, coordination had been achieved with embassies and migrants' consulates and with the Internal Security Forces and General Security to ensure the voluntary return of migrants; secure adequate housing for workers left without shelter; conduct free PCR tests; and prepare brochures on pandemic prevention guidelines. She added that the Ministry of Labour was negotiating with a number of relevant embassies to sign bilateral agreements to protect domestic workers, and was working on developing an integrated plan for them to receive the vaccine to achieve herd immunity.
85. Ms. Roueida El Hage, Regional Representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), said that the pandemic had shed a spotlight on the human rights challenges faced by migrants in vulnerable situations, including migrant workers living in overcrowded accommodation where infections were high. It had also caused many migrants, including migrant domestic workers, to lose their jobs and end up in irregular situations, and in some cases detention centres lacking effective access to justice. In some cases, States had provided facilitations to migrant workers to help them cope with the pandemic, such as extending the validity of visas and residence permits, ensuring access to health care services, establishing alternatives to immigration detention and avoiding forced returns. She stressed the need to combat xenophobia and give due attention to immigration policies, because the vulnerabilities experienced by migrant workers were often the result of, or exacerbated by, those policies.

86. Ms. Rebecca Lamade, Regional Head of Programmes for the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe at the World Food Programme (WFP), stressed that investing in the generation of good quality data and analysis is now more important than ever to support evidence-based policy formulation and implementation. Evidence-based analysis should be prioritized to support governments in the formulation of policies and strategies as well as in the direct delivery of critical services and assistance to those who most need them. Ms. Lamade also highlighted the importance of adopting innovative programmatic solutions, such as digital platforms, to contribute to addressing migration-related issues in close collaboration with host governments and specialized actors (including academic institutions, private sector, UN agencies). In particular, she mentioned more inclusive and vulnerability-sensitive assessments, registration and targeting modalities as well as two-way communication with communities mechanisms. WFP's efforts in setting up and implementing cash transfer modalities and inter-operable data management systems, existing collaborations with governments on national social protection systems and community feedback mechanisms were briefly mentioned as examples.
87. Mr. Leon Isaacs, Joint Chief Executive Officer at DMA Global Ltd, said that people viewed the contribution of migrants in their home countries as being limited to remittances. However, the actual value of expatriate communities was greater than that, and affected various other aspects, such as investment, trade and tourism.
88. Mr. Mohamed Saeb Mozet, from Algeria, said that his country had established a scientific committee to improve data collection and information dissemination, and to organize training courses for key civil society actors. It had also succeeded in providing protection to all refugees living in vulnerable conditions.
89. Mr. Al-Sadiq Abu Fadel, representative of the Sudanese Ministry of the Interior, stressed that the biggest problem facing the Sudan in migration was related to refugees and illegal migrants. His country had received many refugees who had been registered through UNHCR and non-governmental organizations to avoid being exploited by smuggling and trafficking gangs. He discussed the efforts made by the Sudan in data collection, notably establishing the Khartoum Centre for improving information exchange, which provided significant data, stressing the importance of coordination between countries on information and data exchange.

5. Plenary session 5: Means of implementation and capacity-building

90. The session was moderated by Mr. William Gois, Regional Coordinator at the Migrant Forum in Asia. Mr. Jonathan Prentice, Head of the Secretariat of the United Nations Network on Migration, set out the following three main points: increased political commitment to migration issues since the signing of the Global Compact for Migration; the importance of cooperation, whether inter-State, with the United Nations system, within a country, or between Governments, local authorities and relevant stakeholders, based on a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach; and the importance of interaction between the United Nations and its Member States, given that the initiative is a tool that benefits Member States so necessary resources must be provided for it.
91. A representative of the academia, Dr. Ibrahim Awad, Professor of Global Affairs and Director of the Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies at the University of Cairo, noted that academia was actively contributing to the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, and sought to provide the best conditions for migrants to and from the Arab region. He added that the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration's 23 objectives required strong academic institutions that produced capable academics to participate in research and data production.

92. Ms. Hamida Rais, Director General of International Cooperation on migration at the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs, highlighted that Tunisia was forming a working group to follow up on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration and to develop an action plan to speed it up. She stressed the importance of relevant United Nations entities organizing training courses for focal points concerned with migration, and the importance of holding joint meetings between world regions to enable Arab countries to review the achievements of other regions.
93. The statements were followed by an open discussion. Ms. Lala Arabian, representing the Cross Regional Centre for Refugees and Migrants, gave an overview of the Centre's work. She said that during its periodic review consultations, organized virtually, there had been an exchange of experiences and expertise between non-governmental organizations and trade unions regarding the implications of the Global Compact for Migration on the status of migration and migrants, and an assessment of the effects of the pandemic. She stressed the need to strengthen collaboration between stakeholders and Governments in the region, ensure concerted efforts between government and civil sectors, and gather expertise for the service of humankind. The goal was to establish the first real partnership between Governments and civil society, because migration was an issue that concerned both society and Governments.
94. Mr. Khaled Abdel Shafi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Director of the Regional Hub in Amman, addressed the commitment of UNDP to assisting in the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration, translating it into practice through a regional initiative for resource development, facilitating coordination, and developing programmes on migration and forced displacement. He highlighted those countries that suffered from conflict, many of which were in the Arab region, faced challenges of forced migration or displacement. He stressed the importance of supporting policies on migration and emphasized the aspiration of UNDP to work with all non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions and other governmental and non-governmental agencies to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.
95. Mr. Bassi Mohamed, representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, emphasized that no country could face migration challenges alone. The situation required intensified international cooperation, especially in view of the difficult global conditions and the COVID-19 pandemic. Such cooperation could be regional, continental or international, and should be characterized by data and information sharing. The establishment of the African Migration Observatory was a key step on that path for African countries. He also stressed the importance of continuing developing programmes to enhance the capacity and competencies of stakeholders.

H. Key Messages of the Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region

96. At the session, Mr. Karim Al-Nouri, Deputy Minister of Migration and Displacement of Iraq, presented the key messages of the Regional Review Conference of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region, which is already listed under the Chapter I of this document and will be submitted to the International Migration Review Forum to be held in 2022.

Closing session

97. The Regional Review Conference on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region concluded with statements by representatives of coordinating entities, who affirmed the commitment of their organizations to continue supporting Arab countries in implementing the Global Compact for Migration, achieving its objectives, and ensuring that the benefits of migration were gained by all in the Arab region.

98. Ms. Carmela Godeau, IOM Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, stressed the importance of the Conference in advancing the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in the Arab region, and in enhancing understanding of progress, challenges and gaps, as well as opportunities and best practices in implementation. She invited participants to continue reviewing the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration; strengthening the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and improving regional cooperation and dialogue on migration issues.
99. Ms. Enas Al Fergany, Director of the Department of Refugees, Emigrants and Migration Affairs at the League of Arab States, on behalf of Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General for the Social Affairs Sector, expressed her gratitude to Member States that had made presentations, despite the exceptional circumstances in the region. She thanked the various stakeholders for their role in achieving an inclusive social approach, and all those who had contributed to organizing the Conference; and called for maintaining dialogue, learning from peers, and unifying the Arab vision on migration.
100. Ms. Mehrinaz Elawady, Leader of the ESCWA Population, Gender Justice and Inclusive Development Cluster, thanked all participants for their commitment and attendance. She identified six basic priorities that would frame joint action in the coming period, namely reforming employment systems; combating trafficking in persons; strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation on migration governance; guaranteeing the rights of migrant children and women; ensuring that migrants have access to services without discrimination; and reducing irregular migration.

Annex I

Outcome document of the multi-stakeholder consultation on the regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab region 23 February 2021

The International Organization for Migration and ESCWA, in collaboration with members of the United Nations Network on Migration in the Arab region, held the multi-stakeholder consultation on the regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab region on 23 February 2021. Participants agreed on a number of key messages presented by the meeting's rapporteur, Mr. Ayman Zohry, an expert in immigration studies at the American University in Cairo.

I. Role of stakeholders

- Participants emphasized the importance of a whole-of-society approach, one of the main guiding principles of the Global Compact for Migration, which ensured the involvement of all stakeholders of different affiliations in various follow-up activities of the implementation and review of the Global Compact for Migration.
- The need for stakeholders to encourage the United Nations system to exert more effort in supporting the implementation of the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration through all means.
- The specific expertise of different stakeholders and the unique perspectives of their groups help address the complex nature of migration, bridge gaps and integrate countries' efforts in line with the guiding principles of the Global Compact for Migration.
- Adopting a whole-of-society approach that includes all stakeholders, who represent the voice of migrants owing to their interaction and knowledge of their reality, in the various stages of follow-up to the implementation and review of the Global Compact for Migration.
- Emphasizing the importance of the role of stakeholders, including migrant communities, in supporting and providing support to migrants, especially in times of crisis.
- The support provided by stakeholders to implement the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration is ultimately in the interest of a country as a whole.

II. Reality of implementing regional and national plans and strategies on migration

- Many countries in the region have adopted plans and strategies regarding migration, but there is a gap between policies and their implementation in practice, which must be bridged.
- There is still a need to do more to assess the impact of public policies on migrants.
- It is necessary to work on making data available to stakeholders and facilitating the conduct of studies and field surveys that monitor progress in implementing the recommendations of the Global Compact for Migration, producing detailed data on migrants, and contributing to the development of evidence-based policies.
- Regional consultations with various stakeholders on migration issues are encouraging and expanding experiences at the local level is required to ensure broader participation in the Global Compact's review process at the national level.

III. Policy gaps and recommendations

Regarding existing gaps, especially in the areas of support most needed to accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in Arab region, participants identified the following items:

- The need for consistency between national laws and international frameworks to protect migrants and ensure the rule of law and equality before the law for all, including migrants.
- The need to provide data disaggregated by sex and age to ensure that policies take into account gender equality and the needs of children and young people.
- The need to promote the social inclusion of migrants and their involvement in relevant policymaking processes, and to raise awareness of migration issues at various local and national levels.
- The limited recognition of skills within the Arab region and the need to recognize skills and activate bilateral and regional cooperation in that field.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of migrants' situations, and highlighted the need to strengthen collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure that the rights of all migrants are protected and to build on the benefits of migration for development.
- The need to facilitate family reunification procedures and find an alternative to the detention of migrant children, establish policies to protect them, ensure their access to basic services, and provide information on services available to migrant children.
- Developing gender-sensitive protection policies for migrants, including wage protection and protection from violence, facilitating remittances, and combating discrimination.
- Emphasizing the role of cities, which constitute large migration hubs in all countries, in the governance of migration, and stressing the need to involve local authorities in the development and implementation of migration policies.
- The structural factors behind the negative drivers of migration in the Arab Region, including armed conflicts, natural disasters, poverty, hunger, social inequalities and weak governance, must be addressed, to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration.
- Emphasizing the rejection of discriminatory transactions against migrants and supporting the role of consular assistance (with consent), especially for migrant women and irregular migrants, especially in times of crisis.
- The need for migrants to have access to COVID-19 vaccines without discrimination.

Annex II:

Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the Arab States on Advancing GCM Implementation for Women Migrant Workers, Migrant Children and Youth in the Arab Region: Reviewing Progress and Addressing Continuing Challenges

Co-organized by UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States and UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
15th February 2021
OUTCOME REPORT ¹



I. Background

On the 15th February 2021, the UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States and the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office co-organized a virtual Regional Stakeholder Consultation, *Advancing GCM Implementation for Women Migrant Workers, Migrant Children and Youth in the Arab Region: Reviewing Progress and Addressing Continuing Challenges*. The consultation brought together about 100 participants working on migration covering all Arab States from national, cross-regional and global perspectives. Stakeholders included migrants themselves and their support groups, regional/national networks, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, academia, private sector, media, UN agency representatives and others.

The consultation was aligned with the GCM's robust provisions on gender equality and the rights of migrant women workers, children and youth, and its whole of government and society approach. It provided a platform for the fore-mentioned migrants and their support groups to highlight their often peripheralized distinct and separate realities, as well as their interconnected concerns, to assess progress on their priorities, and to provide tailored recommendations to address continuing challenges affecting them. The outcomes of this consultation will inform the discussions, key messages and Outcome Document of the GCM Regional Review Conference for the Arab States on the 24-25 February 2021.

II. Progress and continuing challenges

Migrant women workers

Progress: Women migrants from Asia, Africa and from within the region constitute 32 percent of the 38 million migrants and refugees in the Arab region, and make a significant contribution to countries of origin, destination, families and communities. The Arab governments should be commended for endorsing the GCM and introducing a range of varied policies and programs to protect the rights of women migrant workers before and after its adoption. They include diverse legal measures for domestic workers, reforms to the sponsorship system,² programs on comprehensive information provision, public-private partnerships for ethical e-recruitment, competency standards for domestic workers, wage protection systems,³ varied forms of monitoring, complaints and redress mechanisms, and accountability measures. Governments have also provided social safety nets, free COVID-19 testing and treatment for all residents, and amnesty programs for workers in irregular situations in the COVID-19 crisis. Further, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue - a regional

¹ The contents of this document reflect the views of the participants in the consultation, not necessarily the views of UN Women and UNICEF.

² Not always inclusive of domestic workers

³ Not launched for domestic workers on Wage Protection Systems platforms

consultative process that draws together countries of origin and destination, particularly along the Asia-GCC corridor - is advancing the gender agenda through coordinated action such as on comprehensive information provision and the future of work agenda for migrant workers in this corridor. Migrant advocacy has been seminal to the above, and migrant communities have played a critical role in providing social assistance to migrants during COVID-19 with help from NGOs, trade unions, private sector, and youth.

Continuing challenges: As elsewhere, policy-practice gaps and accountability deficits remain and a whole of government and whole of society approach that also includes migrant women's organizations, trade unions, and embassies of countries of origin needs to be enhanced. Migrant women workers face policy and legal restrictions on mobility out of countries of origin and are more marginalized from access to information on safe migration, increasing vulnerability to irregular situations and trafficking. They have fewer regular migration pathways, and the sponsorship system in various Arab countries binds a worker to a particular employer, restricts labor market mobility, and can generate situations of debt bondage, forced labor, and irregular status if the worker flees an abusive work situation thus risking arrest, detention and deportation. There are fewer decent jobs for women. Domestic work is often not socially or legally deemed work,⁴ leaving the bulk of low skilled women migrant workers concentrated in this sector, unprotected. Contract substitution, gender-wage gaps, non-payment or cuts in wages, sexual abuse/violence, poor access to services, restrictions on freedom of movement and association, discrimination as a result of pregnancy, including in some cases deportation - and lack of maternity protection, problems in registering births and transferring nationality to children, lack of services and childcare provisions for children in countries of origin and destination, inadequate provisions for family reunification and for strong reintegration measures on return are continuing concerns. Moreover, migrant women workers are often marginalized from decision-making processes. COVID-19 has amplified these concerns, especially job/wage losses, stranding due to border closures, debt, exclusion from social safety nets, adequate health services, and representation on COVID-19 response mechanisms.

Migrant children and young people

Progress: Over two-thirds of participants in the consultation session on children had identified some new promising practices in the region since the GCM adoption, and one-third had seen new legal and policy changes by governments. For example, the governments of Egypt and Sudan, together with UNICEF, are initiating discussions on the cross-border case management mechanisms for migrant children. In Egypt, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been adopted and launched concerning the protection and assistance of children on the move. More than three-quarters of participants in the session on children saw improvement in services delivered by NGOs, CSOs, FBOs. For example, in Iraq, the Lotus Flower NGO is women and youth-focused, leading business incubator projects and migrant capacity training for business development. In Jordan, A Global Voice for Autism supports migrant children with disabilities and autism, where migrant youth lead the community training programs.

Continuing challenges: The majority of laws affecting children in the region focus on the rights of national children and not on all children in their territories. When assistance is provided to non-national children, frequently it is linked to legal status, nationality or documentation. Some States in the region still detain children for reasons of their or their parents' migration status. Both legislative provisions and the lack of adequate alternatives to detention have been identified as gaps. The majority of services for migrant children in many States in the region are provided by civil society, rather than by governments including migrant children in national systems or financing such services. Recent UNICEF Innocenti research in the Horn of Africa, Sudan and Egypt found that children and youth on the move are distrustful of services and institutions that are designed to provide care, protection and basic services – resulting in them putting their trust in smugglers and traffickers or avoiding seeking assistance when needed, thus, potentially exposing them to harm. Lack of recognition of previous qualifications, language barriers, and lack of access to continuing education

⁴ ILO Convention 189

because of legal status affects many migrant children and young people. Access to employment opportunities is a particular issue affecting young migrants, especially young women. A recent complexity has been added by the COVID-19 pandemic, where most education platforms moved online. Technological illiteracy and limited access to computers and smartphones further widened the education and skills gap for migrant children and youth. There are concerns that stateless, undocumented or unregistered children may not be included in COVID-19 vaccination campaigns in some States. Discrimination and xenophobia are major issues facing migrant children. Stigma against survivors of gender-based violence and against children suffering from mental health problems can also impact access to services. In most cases, unaccompanied and separated migrant children “age out” of all protections and support provided them as they turn 18, with no transition period and no solutions for their future.

A large group of children affected by migration who tend to be invisible are those who are left behind in countries of origin by migrating parent(s). They are usually left with extended family members, with an arrangement that their parent(s) will send back remittances to care for them. However, remittances are not always spent on these children, and they may suffer neglect. This problem is exacerbated when employers do not enable migrant women to retain contacts with children who have been left behind, to monitor their welfare. Many of these problems are caused by the lack of family reunification rights for migrant women and children in the region.

III. Recommendations

Migrant women workers

Through investments in COVID-19 response and long-term recovery:

- ✓ Ensure job preservation, including increased labor mobility and labor protections, full compensation for wage loss, social safety nets, vaccinations, amnesty programs;
- ✓ Generate sex-disaggregated data and undertake gender analysis on the social-economic, labor market situation of women migrant workers;
- ✓ Ensure labor law coverage in line with ILO and CEDAW standards including for domestic workers with robust capacity-building, enforcement and accountability, especially for law enforcement officials, recruiters and employers;
- ✓ Strengthen gender-responsive policies and programs on pre-post arrival information on rights/obligations, employability, fair and ethical recruitment, portable social security, wage protection, savings-mobilization and efficient remittance transfer;
- ✓ Dismantle sponsorship systems and ensure employment-based visas in migrants’ names; onus for visa, work/residence permit renewals on the worker in enabling environments that protect workers’ rights; worker ability to contract new jobs with adequate notice to the employer; “grace periods” for workers to remain in the country without a loss of residence status and contract new jobs and access justice if needed while being allowed to work;
- ✓ Ensure representation of migrant women, and their support groups at all stages of policy and programming processes;
- ✓ Ensure the right to organize and collective bargaining;
- ✓ Provide coverage under violence against women laws and access to services to all women migrant workers, regardless of migration status;
- ✓ Eliminate discriminatory laws and social norms based on gender, race/ethnicity, maternity, economic, nationality and migration status;
- ✓ Provide alternatives to detention and deportation;
- ✓ Enhance the use of Regional Consultative Processes including with CSO engagement to address fundamental concerns, with sustained follow up.

Migrant children and young people

- ✓ Better consider the agency of migrating children and young people, listen to their needs and aspirations, and ensure that services are designed and perceived to be safe;
- ✓ Reform laws to include and protect migrant children based on need, not on status, and ensure the inclusion of migrant children within national child protection systems and other national services, including education and healthcare, with firewalls from immigration authorities;
- ✓ Strengthen the capacities of the social services workforce and police and border authorities on migrating children's rights and protection;
- ✓ Establish child-sensitive cross border coordination and case management. Increase the presence of trained child protection professionals, such as social workers, in border areas;
- ✓ Ensure that adequate and timely best interests procedures are in place for children;
- ✓ Prohibit immigration detention of children in national legislation and ensure that appropriate care and reception options are available for migrant children and families. Support NGOs and CBOs in offering community-based alternative care and reception;
- ✓ Where immigration detention is still used, facilitate access by NGOs and CBOs and other relevant organizations to monitor;
- ✓ Ensure provision of information on services for migrating children in a child-sensitive manner, along migration routes;
- ✓ Establish joint initiatives among the Arab States that allow for recognition of previous education qualifications of migrants and facilitate access of migrant youth to employment opportunities;
- ✓ Encourage private sector involvement in providing programs that bridge education and skills gaps for migrant youth – focusing on reducing barriers for girls and young women and helping address technological literacy and access gaps;
- ✓ Promote migrant inclusion and build strategies that expand on young migrants' contribution to national economies;
- ✓ Shape public narratives through anti-discrimination and anti-bullying campaigns, and invest in work with young people of migrant and host communities to counter xenophobia;
- ✓ Increase legal pathways for children and families to migrate in a safe and regular manner and make them more accessible in practice;
- ✓ Establish longer-term post-return monitoring for children.

Interdependent recommendations relevant for migrant women workers and children

- ✓ Ensure that sex and age disaggregated data is collected, to better program with gender-responsive and child-sensitive approaches as central considerations;
- ✓ Include in the discourse about migration - and generate evidence about - the issues of children left behind by their migrant parents, as well as children born to migrant mothers;
- ✓ Introduce gender-sensitive labour migration policies – nationally and cross-border – and ensure that these policies address the intersecting realities and rights of women and children;
- ✓ Provide comprehensive social protection, including child care/guardianship and protection measures, to children left behind in countries of origin and to those born to migrant mothers in countries of destination; Review and reform family reunification laws and regulations to make family reunification more accessible to migrant women and children in the region;
- ✓ Ensure that migrant women workers' rights to remain in contact with children back home are protected and that they are provided with the means to retain communications;
- ✓ When returns to countries of origin take place, put policies in place to protect family unity, ensuring that children are not separated from their parent(s) through deportation processes or detention, and that families are not detained;

- ✓ Undertake gender- and child-sensitive reviews and reforms of birth registration and nationality laws and regulations, with a focus on advancing migrant women's and children's rights, including enabling women to register their children and pass on nationality to their children;
- ✓ Enhance cross-border collaboration, including through consular services, in order to ensure the nationality rights and birth registration of children born to migrant workers and avoid statelessness.

Annex III
GCM Stakeholders Regional Review in the Arab Region:
Findings of the Online Survey
Key Findings

In line with the GCM guiding principles that call for a whole-of-society approach in the GCM implementation, follow-up and review, IOM, in cooperation with the members of the Regional UN Network on Migration in the Arab Region, collected and consolidated voluntary written inputs from all relevant stakeholders with regards to the implementation of the GCM. The main findings of this survey can be summarized in the following points.

First: Overview on the implementation status of the GCM

1. Respondents' opinions on the change in situation of migrants in their countries since the adoption of the GCM in December 2018 is positive with about 50.0 percent of respondents reported an improvement in the situation of migrants.
2. Despite the satisfaction with the change in situation of migrants since the adoption of the GCM, respondents reported that the progress in the GCM implementation needs further improvement as 73.3 percent of respondents reported that the progress in the GCM implementation needs improvement or significant improvement.
3. Top three GCM Objectives that respondents' countries have made the most progress are Objective 01 (on collecting disaggregated data), Objective 04 (on legal identity and documentation), and Objective 15 (on access to basic services).
4. Top three GCM Objectives that respondents' countries need to make more efforts on are Objective 01 (on collecting disaggregated data), Objective 02 (on drivers of migration), and Objective 06 (on fair and ethical recruitment).
5. Top three GCM Objectives that respondents' countries need support are the same as top objectives that countries need to make more efforts on under 4.
6. As for respondents' reporting of their country's development of a national response plan/plan of action or strategy to implement the GCM, 38.8 percent of respondents reported that they do not know of the existence of such instruments.
7. With respect to the implementation of the GCM objectives since December 2018, responses reported that countries made progress in all GCM objectives with varying degrees. Respondents' top three ranked implemented objectives are as follows: Objective 01 (on collecting disaggregated data), Objective 07 (on reducing vulnerabilities), and Objective 15 (on access to basic services).
8. Regarding the stakeholders' better contribution to the implementation of the GCM, respondents regard "providing direct assistance to migrants" as the best way for contribution to the implementation of the GCM, followed by "providing capacity building," and "producing data and research" as well as "providing funding support."

Second: Gaps, Challenges, Promising practices and Lessons learned

9. As for gaps, and in their response to a question on their top areas of support that is most needed in their countries to accelerate the implementation of the GCM, respondents identified "finance" as the priority, followed by "capacity building," and "data gathering and analysis."
10. As for promising practices and lessons learned, the main examples, stated by respondents, include integrating migrants through making available socio-economic integration programs, capacity building for local actors, the adoption of national migration strategies, better access to basic rights, collecting disaggregated data, the development of national migration strategies, and including migrants in the COVID-19 awareness campaigns and services.
11. With respect to the involvement of the study population in the follow-up and review process of the GCM, respondents who have been involved in the follow-up and review at the national level amounted for about 20.0 percent of total respondents, while those who participated at the regional level only

amounted for 13.8 percent. The survey successfully captured the voices of nearly half of the respondents who have not been part of neither the national nor regional level consultations.

Third: The cross-cutting and interdependent GCM guiding principles

12. As for the GCM guiding principles, and despite the examples provided by respondents on how the GCM guiding principles were applied/integrated in the GCM implementation in their countries, the results of the survey indicate that respondents are not satisfied with the degree of application/integration of such principles in the implementation of the GCM. The respondents who indicate the needs for further improvement ranged between 60 percent for the child-sensitive approach to more than 70 percent for the whole-of-society approach.

The Way Ahead

This report is meant to highlight the main findings of the stakeholders' opinions and reflections regarding the follow up and review of the implementation of the GCM in the Arab region through the analysis of an online survey designed specifically for that purpose. Despite the progress made towards the implementation of the GCM in the Arab region, it is evident that the progress of the GCM implementation needs further improvement. The following areas may need to be considered in the near future:

- Improving the adoption and the integration of the guiding principles of the GCM, especially the whole-of-government principle and the whole-of-society principle.
- While it's expected that some countries may focus on the implementation of a specific set of GCM objectives according to their national situations, it's important to pay attention to the implementation of other GCM objectives since the 23 GCM objectives are interlinked in a way or another.
- Governments and stakeholders need to learn from each other and strengthen intra-national and international knowledge and practice experience exchange.
- Stakeholders should be more included in the development and implementation of national strategies and plans.
- More focus should be devoted to securing resources to ensure successful implementation of the GCM goals. Capacity building of all stakeholders is an important element of successful implementation.

To view the full report, please access from:

https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/g/files/tmzbdl416/files/docs/gcm_stakeholders_regional_review_in_the_arab_region_findings_of_the_online_survey_-_en.pdf