

Informal Dialogue of Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) Champion countries in the Middle East, Africa and Europe regions: Peer-exchanges on GCM implementation and way forward

January 26-27, 2023

Meeting Report



Meeting Background and Opening Session:

The Informal Dialogue of GCM Champion countries in the Middle East, Africa and the Europe region brought together technical level representatives of Champion countries from the three regions to take stock of good practices, progress in the implementation of pledges and share plans towards the implementation of the GCM, notably following the International Migration Review Forum which took place in May 2022. This opportunity allowed for an open discussion among representatives of the Champion countries to encourage peer-learning initiatives and find synergies to strengthen inter-regional cooperation, including as Champion countries, and prepare for the next round of GCM Regional Reviews. This informal dialogue further contributed to informing the Champion Countries Initiative global workplan as well as populate the “[The Migration Network Hub](#)”, by sharing existing practices and experiences while contributing to the development of potential joint programs and joint pledges.

The Informal Dialogue aimed to encourage sharing of concrete actions and potential new opportunities towards accelerating GCM implementation. It also provided an opportunity for GCM Champion countries to share priorities for GCM implementation with relation to specific thematic highlighted in the IMRF Progress Declaration. Through this initiative, Champion countries shared their good practices and encouraged peer-to-peer learning. Furthermore, the dialogue gave Member States the chance to explore the cross regional linkages for GCM implementation and strengthen existing regional frameworks and collaboration with UN Networks on Migration. This event contributed to advocacy efforts towards strengthening cooperation of involved countries in collecting, managing and sharing in a systematic way Migration Statistics.

The Opening remarks for the Informal Dialogue were provided by the following speakers representing respectively the host government, Government of Morocco, IOM Mission in Morocco, IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa Region, and the Global Secretariat of the UN Migration Network.

- Ismail Chekkori Director, Director of Global Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Living Abroad, Government of the Kingdom Morocco
- Laura Palatini, Chief of Mission, IOM Morocco
- Kristina Mejo, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Advisor, IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa
- Amy Muedin, Migration Network Policy Officer, UN Migration Network Secretariat

In his opening remarks, Mr. Ismail Chekkori Director, Director of Global Questions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the Government of the Kingdom Morocco, highlighted that this inter-regional meeting allowed the mobilization of the Global Compact's Champion Countries to ensure its implementation and to plan its next review at the regional level. He went on to highlight that this event is a testimony to the leading role of the Kingdom of Morocco, is conducting a humanistic, comprehensive, pragmatic and active migration policy that places migrants at the center of its actions and initiatives. Following this, Ms. Laura Palatini, IOM Morocco Chief of Mission, noted that the meeting consolidates the important efforts Champion countries are making to ensure better governance of migration. She further clarified that this essential dialogue provided an opportunity to expand the number of Champion countries through the sharing of lessons learned and best practices to leave no one behind and in view of the next regional reviews of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) scheduled for 2024.

In her opening speech, Ms. Kristina Mejo, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Advisor, represented the IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa. She noted that the event presented a great opportunity to increase cooperation, take stock of existing initiatives and exchange good practices on migration governance amongst Champion governments from countries of origin, transit and destination. She explained that the success of the next regional reviews will lie in the ability to demonstrate a transformational shift to implementation of the Global Compact and its 23 objectives and as Champion countries, to lead by example, by putting negotiations into concrete actions. Ms. Amy Muedin, speaking on behalf of the Global UN Migration Network Secretariat, stressed the importance of the continued leadership and engagement of the Champion countries in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM. She thanked the representatives of the Champion countries forming a progressively powerful voice in the growing community of actors committed to bringing the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) to life.

Session I: Data collection: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM

The first session underlined the importance of data for evidence-based decision making, as well as for monitoring and evaluation considerations in development and migration plans. The session

highlighted the essential role of data for Research and Development. Session I included the following expert interventions:

- Aziz Jilali, Deputy Director in Charge of the Migration Management Division, National Observatory of Morocco.
- Karima Belhaj, High Commissioner for Planning, National Statistical Office, Government of the Kingdom of Morocco
- Sara Salman, Population Affairs Officer, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), and Duncan Breen, Senior Protection Officer, Mixed Movements, UNHCR MENA, on behalf of the Regional UN Network on Migration for the Arab States
- Professor Ayman Zohry, Expert on Population and Migration Studies.

Mr. Jilali, Deputy Director in Charge of the Migration Management Division, National Observatory of Morocco, commenced by highlighting the role of national migration observatories as well as the African Observatory on Migration in accomplishing Objective 1 of the GCM¹ in Morocco. He noted that a key priority is to help enhance the availability and use of migration data in the harmonization of data and data sharing within national institutions, and regionally as well. It is also essential to align the different objectives of national data entities.

In her intervention, Ms. Salman, Population Affairs Officer, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), presented key trends on migration into and from the Arab world and noted that there has been an increase in policies on labor migration and countertrafficking between 2019 and 2021. She further highlighted that priorities for migration data in the region are availability, accessibility, comparability, fragmentation, and reliability. It is highly important for data to be regularly updated, with the aim of having data that is less than 10 years old. Data collection standards and methods should be available with the aim of making the data available to researchers, as it is not always the case.

In line with Ms. Salman intervention, Mr. Breen, Senior Protection Officer, Mixed Movements, UNHCR MENA, also referred to UNHCR's work with IOM and ESCWA on the Situation Report on International Migration (SRIM report) that is produced every two years. The SRIM report examines the significant volume and complexity of migration in the Arab region, and the often protracted forced-displacement dynamics. It underlines the importance of policies, measures and response frameworks that reduce the vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees and that build an environment which mitigates inherent challenges and harnesses benefits. The latest version of the SRIM report focuses on the plight of migrants and refugees in the COVID-19 crisis. It delves into how pre-existing structural barriers and historical challenges exacerbate their vulnerabilities. It presents actionable recommendations to policymakers and practitioners on protecting and empowering migrants and refugees and strengthening their resilience to adversities.

¹ Objective 1 of the GCM is to “collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies”.

He noted that in the context of movements in the Arab region, there continues to be insufficient data, and that in context of sea movements from north Africa, there is limited data on people rescued/disembarked at sea. UNHCR encourages greater data collection in these areas and making this data available. In conclusion, Mr. Breen welcomed the work of the African migration observatory to which UNHCR provided technical support.

Mr. Zohry, Expert on Population and Migration Studies asserted that special attention needs to be paid to data collection processes and national agencies for statistics' needs which should be established in line with data collection strategies. It was noted that even countries that have such data collection strategies often omit to include sufficient elements related to migration. He also mentioned the importance of creating mechanisms to ensure coordination between the different agencies tasked with data collection. Finally, further importance needs to be given to administrative data and the need to overcome the increasing securitization of data which, often, is treated as confidential.

Ms. Karima Belhaj, High Commissioner for Planning, National Statistical Office, Government of Morocco, began her intervention by highlighting how essential it is to sensitize political decision makers to promote evidence-based decision making. She also noted that the High Commission au Plan (HCP) is responsible for carrying out the national census (Le Recensement général de la Population et de l'Habitat - RGPH) which is the main source of data on migrations in Morocco. She informed the audience that additional questions have been added to the next iteration of the census (2024) in Morocco aiming to gather information on the socio-economic integration of migrants as well as information about migrants.

Ms. Belhaj referred to the use of administrative data as a key element to increase the availability of migration data. In this regard, HCP is partnering with ILO to integrate data collection in labor market database.

Session II: Assistance to migrants in distress and improving coordination for saving lives: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM

The second session aimed to provide the opportunity for Champion countries to discuss ways in which to accelerate Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Migration (GCM) implementation in the three regions, in line with the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) Progress Declaration. Session II included the following expert interventions:

- Florian Von Koenig - Deputy Head, Missing Persons Project, International Committee of the Red Cross
- Sanjula Weerasinghe, Coordinator, Migration and Displacement, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- Merna Abelazim, Data Analyst, Missing Migrants Project, Global Migration Data Analysis Center, IOM Berlin

During the panel discussion, it was highlighted that the Missing Migrants Project is mainly based on a qualitative research component as well as resources for families with extensive regional and

thematic data analysis in briefings and reports. It was noted that assistance to migrants in distress and improving coordination for saving lives is an umbrella for several policy recommendations. This includes the facilitation of safe, orderly and regular migration in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10.7 where the Missing Migrants Project data is also used as an indicator.

Furthermore, assistance to migrants and saving lives responds to GCM objective 82, in line with the establishment of the working group on missing migrants and humanitarian assistance (IMRF declaration paragraph 76) under the UN Network on Migration.

The panel discussion referred to the main goal of the working group on enforced or involuntary disappearances in the context of migration as highlighting the direct link between migration and enforced disappearance as well as the factors that contribute to the enforced disappearances of migrants, and States' obligations in this context. The working group aims at developing actionable recommendations, in line with mandate 17 of the progress declaration as well as mapping exercises of the Missing Migrants Project and humanitarian assistance. It also represents a platform for hybrid and virtual cross-regional consultations to engage member states and ensure whole of society and whole of government approaches.

Session III: Planning for national GCM implementation

For Session III, the aim of this session was to engage the Champion Countries in a discussion on national GCM implementation plans and explore how migration can be mainstreamed in overall development planning. Session III included the following expert interventions:

- Kristin Eitel, Coordination Officer (Migration & Sustainable Development) IOM
- Elizabeth Nyantakyi, Director of Diaspora Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ghana
- Sarah Carl, Regional Policy and Liaison Officer, IOM, Co-Chair of the Regional UN Network on Migration for West and Central Africa
- Dan Opon, Director of Immigration, Government of Kenya
- Woubrist Ashenfai, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), Ministry of Justice, Government of Ethiopia

In her intervention, Ms. Eitel, Coordination Officer from the IOM Migration & Sustainable Development Unit, referred to the GCM Implementation Guidance³ developed to support stakeholders to implement their initiatives within their countries and capacities. The guidance looks to support states to take initiatives that are aligned with their country's priorities. She further explained that the guide lays foundation of success in GCM implementation through whole of government and whole of society approaches. Finally, she highlighted the role of IOM and other international agencies in supporting states strengthen their existing efforts to advance national priorities and deliver on international obligations.

² Objective 8 of the GCM is to "Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants."

³ GCM Implementation Guidance: <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/gcm-guidance>

Ms. Nyantakyi, Director of Diaspora Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Ghana, spoke on the achievement of Ghana in the implementation of the GCM. She shared that Government of Ghana is in the process of developing GCM action plans, adopted a state-led process involving different ministries in the implementation process and integrated the 2022-2025 National migration policy into national development plans. Additionally, a National Labour migration policy was put in place and a draft stakeholders engagement policy was completed. The implementation of the GCM and government involvement in the Regional reviews was also supported by the National UN Network on Migration in Ghana.

She further highlighted that Ghana diaspora contributed 2 billion USD in 2022's GDP. The government rolled out a biometric registration for Ghana's diaspora to facilitate national development and conducted trainings to support its foreign services provision abroad and improve cross border, data management and collaborates on Combating Trafficking in Persons / Countering Violent Extremism (CTiPs/CV). In closing, Ms. Nyantakyi called for more sustainable funding to support GCM implementation efforts and thanked IOM for the continued support in GCM implementation and operationalization within the country.

In her intervention, Ms. Carl, Regional Policy and Liaison Officer, IOM Regional Office Dakar, and Co-Chair of the Regional UN Network on Migration for West and Central Africa, called for the development of comprehensive migration policies, as well as the need for trainings on UN Network tools and information on the implementation of the GCM. She also encouraged the exchange of best practices among the regional countries in West and Central Africa, which the Regional UN Network on Migration members remain ready to support.

During his intervention, Mr. Opon, Director of Immigration, Government of Kenya, spoke on the achievements of the government of Kenya towards the implementation of the GCM: the government mainstreamed GCM into its national development plans and a three (3) year national action plan was adopted in July 2020 by a multi-stakeholder forum. Currently, the government is working on the development of the second National Action Plan for the implementation of the GCM (2023-2026). Kenya joined the Champion initiative in 2021 and actively participated in the African regional reviews and the IMRF, coupled with multi-stakeholder consultations on the GCM. Adding to the achievements of the Government, Kenya contributed to the UN Network on Migration repository, along with a financial contribution to the Multi-partner Trust Fund (MPTF). The government also worked on one national, and two local migration governance indicators and is currently finalizing a draft for the national migration policy with government and non-government stakeholders.

The need to enhance monitoring and reporting mechanisms during the second phase of the GCM action plan was highlighted. Mr. Opon also called upon other champion countries to contribute to the MPTF to support the implementation of the GCM and encourage more partnerships and exchange among champion countries in East and South Africa.

The last intervention of the session was made by Ms. Ashenfai Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), Ministry of Justice, Government of Ethiopia, who spoke on Ethiopian efforts

to implement the GCM, noting that the Government of Ethiopia prioritized ten objectives of the GCM. The government is working on mainstreaming migration in a five (5) year development plan aiming to enhance the protection of migrants, refugees' proclamation and prevention of trafficking and smuggling in persons. Within the same framework, there has been an increased focus on migration data to capture diaspora data to facilitate protection and assistance efforts accompanied with ongoing work towards creating a national database on migration as well as manual screening system to support vulnerable migrants.

Finally, Ms. Ashenfai confirmed that while there is still no migration policy, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been developed on migration management. She further mentioned there are ongoing plans for a national communication strategy on GCM implementation, including multilateral partnerships.

Session IV: A deeper look at the GCM approach of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach (Theory and Practice)

Session four served to exchange good practices of the implementation of the GCM whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches and explore innovative ideas for cross-sectoral and cross-regional partnerships to implement the GCM and mobilize various sectors of society around it. Session IV included the following expert interventions:

- Hind Cherrouk, Middle East and North Africa Regional Program Director, Solidarity Center
- Professor Mohammed Charef, President of the Regional Commission for Human Rights in Agadir and University Professor at Ibn Zohr University in Agadir, Kingdom of Morocco
- Mirela Stoia, Head of Stakeholder Engagement Ad Interim and Amadou Sako, External Advisor for Africa, International Organization of Employers (IOE)
- Yassin Gai, Project Manager, International Trade Centre, The Gambia
- Aisha Abubakar Ibrahim, Special Assistant on Disaster Management to the Honourable Minister of the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Government of Nigeria
- Musa Camara, Director of Diaspora and Migration Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of The Gambia

Ms. Cherrouk, Middle East and North Africa Regional Program Director, Solidarity Center, began her intervention by explaining the objective and mission of the Solidarity Center, which is to advocate for labour migrants' rights and increase advocacy for policy coherence and the links to migrants' rights. She called for better migration coherence and the move away from working in silos, adding that Solidarity Center worked closely with the UN Network on Migration and ILO to engage trade unions and worker rights associations on GCM implementation.

Speaking on better migration governance, Ms. Cherrouk stressed that social and gender justice elements should be considered. She further emphasized the need for transparent cooperation between migrant workers, trade unions and national governments to ensure enhanced migration

management. In closing, she also referred to the adverse effects of climate change on migrant workers, namely those working in the construction field and agriculture sections.

The second intervention was made by Professor Charef, President of the Regional Commission for Human Rights in Agadir and University Professor at Ibn Zohr University in Agadir, Kingdom of Morocco, where he spoke briefly of migration management policies adopted by the Government of Morocco, which have been highly inclusive. Morocco has a large diaspora population of around five (5) million living abroad. It is a plural country with many origins and rich cultural heritage. He spoke of the different migration-related initiatives supported by the government, including a national council to discuss on migration issues, migration institutes in souss-massa regions, festival for migration and cinema, and a committee of civil society organizations on migration. Professor Charef encouraged advocacy highlighting needs of migrants and proposed more capacity building for civil society, he also called for the establishment of national museums as repository of memory and heritage of migrants in Morocco.

On behalf of the International Organization of Employers (IOE), Ms. Stoia, Head of Stakeholder Engagement Ad Interim and Mr. Sako, External Advisor for Africa, spoke of the objective of the organization to highlight the role of employers and call for continuous critical dialogue between employers and governments in the process of strengthening migration governance. IOE called for a review of labor frameworks with a focus on fair and ethical recruitment and recognizing the needs for skills recognition and qualifications. Additionally, Ms. Stoia and Mr. Sako advocated for the establishment of institutional mechanisms to manage migration, such as national taskforce on migration that coordinates institutions and that reduces contradicting priorities, as well as the enhancement of domestic and regional capacities to handle cross-cutting labor migration. The need to have a collaborative approach that includes business communities as key stakeholders was further emphasized as well.

In his intervention, Mr. Gai, Project Manager, International Trade Centre, Government of The Gambia spoke of the International Trade Center (ITC) Joint Program in The Gambia, and its overall goal to address the drivers and causes of migration-related vulnerabilities among border communities. The program utilized the whole-of-government approach through the inclusion of Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Interior, Interagency border management groups, and the Ministry of Gender collaboration with government steering committees to combat trafficking and smuggling at border points. The program utilized the whole-of-society approach by engaging border authorities, women in small scale business, youth, border community groups, among others.

Mr. Gai reported that the project is founded on four (4) main pillars: raising awareness among migrant communities, strengthening the capacity of migration-related institutions, integrating and securing border systems, and establishing child protection services and clear reporting systems. Finally, the project aims to strengthen reporting on Sexual and Gender-based Violence and support the construction of one-stop center for entrepreneur services and information.

The session included interventions on the national experiences from the Government of Nigeria and the Government of The Gambia. Ms. Abubakr, Special Assistant on Disaster Management to the Honourable Minister of the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Government of Nigeria, spoke first on the Government of Nigeria's efforts to chart the way forward on migration management through working on a national migration policy, labor migration policy, and an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) policy. She called for more stakeholders' engagement on the implementation of the GCM and requested a call for funding to activate the government's full capacity for the implementation of policies relevant to the GCM.

Mr. Camara, Director of Diaspora and Migration Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representative of the Government of The Gambia, then shared the national experience of The Gambia, highlighting some of the challenges faced by the government including the exploitation of young Gambian migrants and the lack of service provision for migrant returnees. He also noted that the government reported on the 23 GCM Objectives and developed an implementation action plan, while highlighting milestones reached by the government including the establishment of a labor migration policy, development of diaspora policy, and establishment of national coordination mechanism on migration. The coordination mechanism strengthened capacity of institutions while promoting policy synergies. For instance, The Gambia supported Niger delegates conducting a benchmark exercised to gain best practices and initiated an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for partnership between the two governments.

Session V: Climate Change: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM

The session focused on issues related to human mobility related to climate change with the aim of identifying the challenges as well as measures that could be adopted towards addressing them. The session focused on ongoing interventions in various regions aiming at sharing good practices . Session V included the following expert interventions:

- Mohamed Omar, Mobility Analyst at Intergovernmental Authority on Development IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Center, IGAD
- Imanbellah Ghatwary, First Secretary, Embassy of Egypt in the Kingdom of Morocco
- Wonesai Sithole, Regional Liaison and Policy Officer, IOM, representing the Chair of the Regional Network on Migration of Eastern and Southern Africa
- Professor Ademola, Co-Chair of the Climate Mobility Africa Research Network (CMARN)

During his intervention, Mr. Omar, Mobility Analyst at Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Climate Prediction and Application Center, IGAD, added emphasis on the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) multi-agency program implanted with IGAD. He noted that the overall outcomes of the program include focus on data and knowledge management, support to national and regional policy framework development, enhancing better preparedness of member states to respond to climate change disasters, and support towards enhanced availability of safe

migration pathways. He further noted that the program brings together experts from different development agencies benefiting from their areas of strength and comparative advantage. In closing, he addressed the need for the free movement protocol in the IGAD region to be operationalized to address the adverse effects and risks associated with migration.

Ms. Ghatwary, First Secretary, Embassy of Egypt in the Kingdom of Morocco, spoke of the experience of the Government of Egypt in relation to climate change and migration. She stressed Egypt's voice on the current climate change challenges faced in the continent and explained that the climate change mobility nexus should be stressed at all levels of displacement and disaster management. The adverse effects of climate change and displacement are multifaceted, and solutions should be robust through an emphasis on a holistic and inclusive approach. She called for greater political will towards addressing climate change, and the integration of climate change risks in national planning. Finally, Ms. Ghatwary stressed that stakeholders and member states should work towards fostering strategic partnerships aimed at mitigating the risks of climate change and its linkages to displacement.

For his intervention, Mr. Sithole, Regional Liaison and Policy Officer, IOM Regional Office Nairobi, Chair of the Regional UN Network on Migration of Eastern and Southern Africa, emphasized the need to mainstream migration in disaster management, while linking migration, livelihood and the role that governments can play in addressing the risks faced by the displaced population. He also referred to the ongoing efforts in Southern Africa and the engagement of the UN Network on Migration with member states in the region. In closing, he stressed the Network's role in supporting member states through providing technical support aimed at enhancing capacity to respond to the negative impact of climate change.

Joining the floor afterwards, Professor Ademola, Co-Chair of the Climate Mobility Africa Research Network (CMARN), noted that the GCM is an important and comprehensive instrument for promoting safe migration which was developed with a human rights approach. However, to actualize its objectives within the context of climate change, three (3) challenges need to be addressed: legislative, bureaucratic, and consensus obstacles.

Session VI: Fighting xenophobia and discrimination: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM

The session provided the space for Champion countries to discuss ways in which to accelerate GCM implementation in the Africa, Middle East, and Europe Africa, in line with the IMRF Progress Declaration. The session also looked into the need to manage the narrative around migration, that is directly related to GCM objective number 17. Session VI included the following expert interventions:

- Monika Peruffo, Migration & Development Specialist, UNDP

- Ismail Khalil Dahash Darraji, Minister Office, Chairman of the Government and Organization Department, GCM Focal Point, Ministry of Migration and Displaced, Government of Iraq
- Braima Mané, Director General for Communities, Government of Guinea-Bissau
- Margarida Filipe, The High Commission for Migration, Government of Portugal

Ms. Peruffo, Migration & Development Specialist, UNDP, spoke on behalf of the workstream of the UN Network on Migration working on discrimination which is co-chaired by UNDP. She noted that the relevance of the topic is addressed in the Progress Declaration, she emphasized that we should not deny that racism is present in our society and policies (misinformation, stigma, racial profiling), and that we should address where it takes form, recognizing that racial belonging as well as our gender take opportunities away from us in our everyday life. She explained that the narratives of hate and intolerance against migrants exist and even though migrants have been recognized as important actors during the COVID-19 recovery, they remained behind in gaining full access to services.

During the second intervention, Mr. Dahash, Minister Office, Chairman of the Government and Organization Department, GCM Focal Point, Ministry of Migration and Displaced, Government of Iraq, presented the country's accomplishments of the Government of Iraq in the implementation of the GCM, including the establishment of an intergovernmental and technical team supervised by the Iraqi government, an action plan on the GCM, and ongoing work on the national migration strategy in Iraq. He also addressed xenophobia and discrimination during his intervention, noting the legal, security, and national stability considerations of the issue. He elaborated that Iraq has always witnessed issues of discrimination, as there are originally 13 religions co-existing together and the integration of other ones has resulted in issues of instability among the communities.

Mr. Mané, Director General for Communities, Government of Guinea-Bissau, presented the accomplishments of the government of Guinea-Bissau in the implementation of the GCM, including community awareness campaigns to sensitize the communities on the issues of xenophobia and discrimination, the establishment of an Inter-ministerial committee on migration for the implementation of the GCM. The Government of Guinea-Bissau worked on a migration profile and Migration Governance Indicators (MGI), as well as working on a national migration policy and a strategy for the involvement of the diaspora in national development efforts. Mr. Mané also emphasized the importance of protecting the diaspora of hate speech in their countries of destination and underlined the important need to further support the positive narrative on migration by, inter alia, debunking incorrect stereotypes.

The last intervention of the session was from Ms. Filipe, the High Commission for Migration, representative of the Government of Portugal, who presented the country's accomplishments in the implementation of the GCM, including a national implementation plan for the GCM accompanied by graphic, demographic and social developments. The intervention also highlighted the role of civil society organization and their involvement in the process. Furthermore, the Government of Portugal is working on the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration, the

improvement of migration flows and integrated border management, and finally increasing and developing partnership with countries of origin and transit.

Session VII: Preparing for the GCM Regional Reviews for Africa and the Arab states in 2024:

Session VII aimed at looking ahead and preparing for the upcoming round of the regional reviews both in the Africa Continent and Arab region in 2024. The session was facilitated by Mr. Amine Chabi Head of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Division, Government of Morocco. The session also included an intervention from Ms. Marcia Porras, Migration Policy Officer, UN Migration Network Secretariat. Ms. Porras highlighted that this event presents an opportunity to strengthen and increase regional collaboration to foster the GCM implementation and have a tangible impact on the life of migrants. She further noted that this initiative and future replication aimed to build off of a successful IMRF and its Progress Declaration, adopted by consensus. This, in turn, means that the political climate around the GCM is now significantly more amenable towards its implementation and review. The floor discussion looked into how the 2024 round of regional reviews can be informed and build on the recommendations made during the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), as well as benchmarks that member states should be working towards in relation to the implementation of the GCM. The discussions looked into the upcoming round of the regional reviews, which will leverage on lessons learned from the first round, to move away from the impression of having the regional reviews as a duplication of the International Migration Review Forum at the regional level. Unlike, the first Reviews, this second round will most likely take place in person or through hybrid modalities.

Furthermore, this next cycle offers an opportunity to highlight regional dynamics, and enhance regional cooperation on GCM implementation, including reflecting the priorities set by Member States in the IMRF Progress Declaration and the pledges made at the Forum. It was noted that the next regional reviews could contribute to the discussions on regional priorities and gaps in the implementation of the Global Compact based on outcomes of the first round of regional reviews. Additionally, Member States and stakeholders could use the regional reviews to discuss existing regional migration governance frameworks and ways to further integrate the GCM objectives and guiding principles into them

Session VIII: Key Recommendations, Highlights and Conclusion:

For the final recommendations' session, Mr. Amine Chabi, Head of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Division, from Government of Morocco launched the discussion among the participants on the floor regarding the recommendations and outcomes of the first Informal Dialogue, as well as looked into the way forward and action points in preparation for the upcoming round of regional reviews. The recommendations were consolidated in the session and explored several thematic areas highlighted during the meeting sessions over the two-days' time. The thematic areas included: data collection and assistance to migrants in vulnerable situations.

Through Mr. Chabi's moderation, the participants group also discussed recommended action and plans for GCM implementation at the national level, as well as a deeper dive into the GCM approaches of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society.

Furthermore, the participants also discussed proposed actions to accelerate GCM implementation in relation to climate change and the linkages to mobility. The final thematic area highlighted for recommended action was the issue of fighting xenophobia and discrimination as part of the national plans towards the GCM implementation.

Ms. Kristina Mejo, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Advisor, IOM Regional Office MENA, provided the closing remarks for the meeting. During closing, Ms. Mejo thanked the participants for their positive and diligent engagement throughout the meeting. She expressed her wish that this initiative may encourage further positive cross-regional engagement among the Member States of the GCM Champion Countries, civil society, stakeholders, and academia to ensure a whole-of-society approach to migration and human mobility, making migration safe, orderly, and regular. Ms. Mejo further noted that this Informal Dialogue is considered one of the concrete steps towards mainstreaming an inter-regional, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to migration governance, striving to ensure that migration and migrants' needs are considered across all policy areas, laws and regulations from health to education and from fiscal policies to trade. She ended her speech by thanking the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting the first Informal Dialogue of Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) Champion countries in Rabat.

Annex I: Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Data collection: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

- Enhance the availability and use of migration data through building the capacity of national and regional institutions for statistics, more attention to data collection strategies and processes and create mechanisms to ensure coordination and harmonization of data collection standards, definitions and methods.
- Build upon and improve existing data governance practices, such as the establishment of National migration observatories as well as the African Observatory on Migration to achieve Objective 1 of the GCM (to collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data) which is key to inform migration policies.
- Enrich the body of data and information available on migration, notably on the socio-economic integration of migrants, labor migration as well as diaspora contributions.
- Overcome the “increasing securitization” of administrative data related to migration, which is often considered confidential, and hence hinders cross- countries and regional exchanges.

2. Assistance to migrants in distress and improving coordination for saving lives

- Implement country commitments to enhance multi- and intersectoral cooperation and solidify interregional collaboration, notably across countries of origin, transit and destination, to assume collective responsibility to save lives and prevent migrants from going missing.
- Focus the efforts deployed on four humanitarian priorities identified by ICRC and IOM: (1) Protecting migrants from death, disappearance, family separation and violations of their rights along the entire migration route; (2) Guaranteeing that migrants, irrespective of legal status, have effective access to essential services; (3) Prioritizing the most vulnerable; (4) Using alternative to detention measures and processes for migrants.
- Build upon good practices in cooperating with international agencies, CSOs and local communities in setting up mechanisms towards strengthening research and documentation, production of reliable data to allow for information exchange on missing migrants.
- Connect the efforts on missing migrants with the joint programs on combating trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

3. Planning for national GCM implementation

- Leverage the Champion countries initiative in the next phase of the GCM implementation, follow-up, and review notably through mainstreaming migration in development planning and aligning the efforts deployed for the GCM and the 2030 Agenda.
- Support can be provided from the National and Regional Networks on migration and the Secretariat, through the use of GCM guidance materials and tools aiming to support Member States, UNCT and stakeholders to put in place national implementation plans for the implementation of GCM objectives.
- Call on Champion Countries to contribute to the Migration Multi-Partners Trust Fund, the only fund with wide range of donors dedicated exclusively to GCM implementation.
- Encourage national governments to allocate significant funding for migration governance within national budgets, in line with operationalizing whole of government & whole of society for champion countries to replicate.
- Highlight the key role of Champion Countries in leading peer exchanges of best practices to drive the implementation of the Compact.

- Promote and protect of the rights of unaccompanied migrant children/minors, in accordance with the general observations of the Committee for the Rights of the Child 4 and 6.⁴
- Use the Rabat declaration as a blueprint for upcoming action to be taken by Champion countries.

4. A deeper look at the GCM approaches of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society (Theory and Practice)

- Advance inclusive and innovative partnerships to address international migration through international cooperation with various stakeholders including UN agencies, international organizations, CSOs, private sector, and academia as well as ensure horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government.
- Engage migration players more effectively to be more active at the local level, notably in collaboration with local authorities, labor organizations, private sector, civil society, and academia together with migrants themselves through diaspora and migrants' associations.
- Promote cross-cutting coordination architecture that forms a decentralized system of migration governance that can easily gain buy-in from key stakeholders. There is also a need to establish inclusive institutional mechanisms and national working groups on migration that encourage contributions from various institutions and reduce conflicting priorities.
- Foster the role of National Human Rights Institutions in the protection of migrants' rights.
- Promote Labour mobility schemes between countries of origin and host countries, while focusing on key areas like protection of migrants' rights and decent work. Human development in migrant sending communities should not only be about transforming funds, but also about transferring knowledge and capacities.
- Support the establishment of organized youth migrant groups (who have experienced the processes and undergone intervention and support, and can support new returnees with referrals, services; mentorship as well as awareness).

5. Climate Change: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM

- Improve the policy coherence between governance of climate change and migration issues. The migration and climate change nexus needs to be further explored through research that can inform policies to reduce forced displacement, maximize the positive impacts of migration, such as building resilience, and minimize potential negative aspects, such as labour exploitation and trafficking. In addition, emphasis should be placed on data and forecasting tools to improve preparedness and prevention, and priority should be given to anticipatory actions and early warning systems to monitor migration drivers and assess vulnerabilities caused by the negative effects/impacts of climate change.
- Support and consolidation of participatory and comprehensive approaches when integrating the impact of climate change on migration into regional, national and local planning and decision-making processes. In addition, it is essential to support country-specific capacity building needs to overcome institutional and technical challenges and constraints at national and local levels.
- Improve communication, education and awareness-raising at all levels regarding the migration-related impacts of climate change. Advocacy on climate change issues should be emphasized through education and public awareness programs on migration and climate change for citizens, with a focus on youth, women and other vulnerable groups in urban and rural areas.

⁴ Convention on the Rights of the Child: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

- Governments to promote migration and mobility as a climate change adaptation strategy while investing in the communities and areas most affected by climate change through remittances and diaspora contributions.

6. Fighting xenophobia and discrimination: Recommended to accelerate the implementation of the GCM

- Strengthen the engagement of diaspora, which is key towards mobilizing migrant outreach.
- Establish a communication strategy as Champion Countries and ensure a positive narrative around migration as a vector of development. The role of media and journalists is key to ensure sensitization and information awareness, including fighting against hate speech and promoting success stories of migrants and migrant workers in their receiving countries and an overall inclusive society as part of achieving the SDGs Agenda for 2030.
- Promote the role of social cohesion in communities and with returnees and provide migrants and their families access to all services offered by the host countries.
- Strengthen bilateral agreements, including BLAs and MOUs, between origin and destination (host) countries that protect the rights of migrant workers.