Dialogue on Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM): Implementation and review processes in the East and Horn of Africa

MEETING REPORT

Date

7-9 June 2023

Venue

Hotel Pride Inn Azure, Nairobi, Kenya

SUMMARY

The first inter-state dialogue on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) in the East and Horn of Africa (EHoA) region took place in Nairobi, Kenya between 7 – 9 June 2023. Ethiopia and Kenya, as GCM Champion countries, convened the dialogue, which included senior officials responsible for migration/GCM implementation in countries that have established a UN migration country Network (Djibouti, Rwanda, Somalia, and Uganda). Representatives from the African Union Commission (AUC), East African Community (EAC), Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), stakeholders and the UN Migration Network were also present.

The dialogue aimed to facilitate the exchange of good practices in GCM implementation, share experiences on the development of national GCM Implementation Plans, identify trends and emerging priorities related to cross-border migration issues, and discuss preparations for the 2024 GCM Regional Reviews.

The dialogue fostered collaboration, peer-learning, and coordination among countries and stakeholders in the EHoA region, contributing to the advancement of GCM objectives and the preparation for the upcoming Regional Reviews.

Panel discussion - Dialogue on Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM): Implementation and review processes in the East and Horn of Africa- Nairobi 2023.

SESSION I - Opening Remarks and Setting the Scene.

The opening remarks for the dialogue were provided by the following speakers:

- Ambassador Julius Bitok, Principal Secretary and Chair of the National Coordination Mechanism in Kenya, State Department of Immigration and Citizen Services, Ministry of Interior and National Administration, Kenya
- Ms. Evelyn Cheluget, Director General, Department of Immigration Services, Ministry of Interior and National Administration, Kenya
- Mr. Geoffrey Wafula, Migration Coordinator, AUC
- Dr. Fatuma Adan, IGAD Head of Mission in Kenya
- Dr. Stephen Jackson, UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya
- Ms. KatrinHagemann, Deputy Head of Delegation, European Union (EU) Delegation to Kenya
- Mr. Justin MacDermott, Deputy Regional Director,IOM Regional Office for EHoA

In his opening remarks, Mr. Justin MacDermott, Deputy Regional Director, IOM Regional Office for EHoA emphasized the importance of migration governance in transforming mobility. He stressed the need for member states to engage in dialogue on the GCM, discuss progress, and continue supporting its advancement. Mr. MacDermott also highlighted that GCM implementation requires a whole-of-government approach and mentioned the role of Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) in shaping national migration policies, encouraging relevant government agencies to develop migration governance plans.

Dr. Steven Jackson, UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya, underscored the significance of migration in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). He recognized migration as a powerful force for sustainable development, provided it is well managed. Dr. Jackson emphasized the need for regional, national, and subnational efforts to maximize the contribution of the GCM. He also highlighted challenges such as human trafficking and socio-economic disparities, calling for coordinated and joint responses from governments. Dr. Jackson urged stakeholders to come together, explore the opportunities offered by the GCM, and strive for safe, orderly, and regular migration.

Dr. Fatuma Adan, IGADHead of Mission in Kenya, acknowledged migration as a defining feature of the globalized world. Dr. Adan noted that IGAD recognizes the need for coordination and has adopted a policy framework focusing on migration and integration for regional economic development. Dr. Adan mentioned the Free Movement Protocol shared by member governments and the implementation of the GCM objectives. Dr. Adan expressed IGAD'S commitment to supporting the advancement of the GCM and highlighted several opportunities for its implementation, including collaboration with IOM, ILO, and UNHCR on migration and displacement data, addressing vulnerabilities caused by climate change, and spearheading Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for free movement.

Mr. Geoffrey Wafula, Migration Coordinator, AUC, reflected on the implementation of the GCM following the international review forum. The AUC remained actively engaged in all

aspects of GCM implementation and aimed to provide technical leadership for a harmonized approach. Mr. Wafula acknowledged the challenges, including the impact of COVID-19 on migration governance, and called on countries to fast-track GCM implementation by addressing technical and financial needs. He also assured that the AUC is committed to providing support and ensuring the success of GCM implementation.

To facilitate the implementation process, he mentioned that the Commission, in partnership with IOM, has conducted a review of the continental POA (Plan of Action) and hosted an expert meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, to develop a new POA draft. The draft will be presented for validation and adoption by Member States and RECs at the upcoming Specialized Technical Committee (STC) in 2024. Once adopted, the draft will provide a harmonized approach based on the continent's needs and specificities, allowing for collective implementation, and showcasing during the upcoming International Migration Review Forum (IMRF).

Mr. Wafula acknowledged the efforts made by several Member States in the region in implementing the GCM, despite challenges including the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migration governance. He encouraged fast-tracking a harmonized approach to GCM implementation by developing a clear Plan of Action that aligns with the continental one. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of supporting robust implementation and reporting frameworks at the national level, recognizing that successful implementation of the GCM ultimately rests with the States.

Ms. Katrin Hagemann, Deputy Head of EU Delegation to Kenya, emphasized the importance of the GCM in contributing to safe, orderly, and regular migration. Ms. Katrin noted that the EU advocates for well-managed migration as it benefits migrants and their families, highlighting EU's support in Kenya in managing safe and orderly migration, reducing trafficking in persons, assisting vulnerable migrants and EU coordination on return, readmission, and reintegration efforts. Ms. Katrin emphasized the EU's commitment to dialogue on the GCM, ensuring that policies and frameworks benefit migrants and addressing the concern of human trafficking.

Ms. Evelyn Cheluget, Director-General, Department of Immigration Services, Ministry of Interior and National Administration, Kenya, expressed gratitude to IOM for hosting the meeting and stressed the perpetual nature of migration in the region and continent. She emphasized the need for a common understanding of trends and highlighted the potential benefits of migration, particularly in terms of remittances. Ms. Evelyn acknowledged the challenges posed by COVID-19 and natural disasters, calling for effective, synchronized, and concerted efforts to hedge against such risks. She expressed support for GCM implementation and called for the alignment of frameworks to facilitate safe, orderly, and regular migration.

Acknowledging the challenges associated with migration, such as trafficking and smuggling, she emphasized the need to protect the dignity and safety of all migrants, as advocated by the GCM. She highlighted the transnational nature of these migration-related vices, requiring collaboration and coordination to address the complex networks and protection challenges involved.

She noted that recent events like the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change have highlighted the cross-cutting nature of migration, necessitating effective regional and international migration management. She emphasized the importance of synchronized efforts by states and non-state actors at local, regional, and international levels.

Ambassador Julius Bitok, Principal Secretary and Chair of the National Coordination Mechanism in Kenya, thanked IOM for hosting the meeting and regarded the GCM as a major milestone in strengthening migration governance. He emphasized the importance of taking action at the national level to implement GCM objectives and develop coordinated national strategies. Ambassador Bitok stressed the timeliness of the meeting to align national strategies with regional policies and called for peer review and sharing of best practices to advance better migration governance.

He highlighted Kenya's proactive role in GCM implementation and commitment to championing safe, orderly, and regular migration and achieving the goals of the GCM. . Amb. Bitok also mentioned Kenya's participation in the Africa Regional Review and the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in 2022. He added that during the IMRF, Kenya made a financial commitment to the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) to strengthen international cooperation for safe, orderly, and regular migration. He highlighted the importance of this dialogue in aligning national strategies with regional aspirations and emphasized the ongoing efforts to implement the GCM through the Draft National Migration Policy developed by the National Coordination Mechanism (NCM) with support from international partners.

Dr. Abdi Hersi, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Officer (SRLPO), IOM EHoA, emphasized the importance of migration governance in transforming the region into a more integrated one where citizens can freely move and trade across borders. He added that the GCM dialogue serves as a practical platform for Member States to discuss their progress in GCM implementation and for IOM, UN partners, civil society, and other stakeholders to support them in meeting their commitments. Mr. Hersi noted that it was an opportunity to contribute to the preparations for the 2024 Regional Reviews by identifying common priorities, sharing best practices, and strengthening collaboration in the region.

Mr. Hersi acknowledged the mobilization of GCM Champion countries across different regions in support of implementation, follow-up, and review. He highlighted the role of stakeholders and various sectors of government present at the dialogue, emphasizing the need for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach aligned with the guiding principles of the GCM. He also recognized the Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) and its participants as central actors in regional migration governance, shaping national migration policies, and promoting coordinated approaches.

In line with the GCM's mandate, he mentioned that the Director General of IOM invited the chairs of RCPs to discuss the sub-regional aspects of GCM implementation and identify convergent approaches to migration issues. The aim was to inform the preparations for the upcoming regional reviews on the continent. He reiterated IOM's commitment to supporting Member States in implementing their GCM commitments and expressed anticipation for

collaboration with partners, including the UN system, the African Union Commission, and the Economic Commission for Africa.

During this session, a presentation was made on the recommendations and key messages from the Rabat Informal Dialogue on GCM Champion countries in the Middle East, Africa and on wide-ranging priorities for enhancing progress related to data, assistance to migrants in distress, planning for GCM implementation, climate change, and xenophobia.

A presentation was also made on key data and information from the recently launched Africa State of Migration Report 2022.

SESSION II - Accelerating National GCM Implementation.

The session highlighted the experiences and efforts of different countries from the region in advancing GCM implementation, focusing on stakeholder engagement, policy alignment, and the need for effective monitoring and evaluation. The importance of collaboration, whole-of-government approaches, and addressing cross-cutting issues were emphasized, highlighting the commitment to accelerate GCM implementation and foster cooperation among stakeholders. During the session, the UN Network on Migration Guidance for Governments and all Relevant Stakeholders on Implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) was discussed. Some good practices in the region mentioned, include:

- Kenya is the first country in the region to use this UN Network tool and to present its GCM implementation plan. Kenya is also the first country in the region to make a financial pledge to the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF).
- Uganda expressed the plan to establish a sub-regional level structure of coordination on migration governance and sought Kenya's experience in involving sub-regional stakeholders. Kenya presented on an ongoing process to incorporate lower-tier government authorities and establish a migration governance structure at the local level.
- Ethiopia has incorporated GCM objectives into its national development plan and sector-specific strategies. They have engaged stakeholders, developed key performance indicators, and identified challenges such as duplication of activities and the lack of a monitoring and evaluation framework. Ethiopia is taking steps to accelerate GCM implementation through an action plan, revisiting priorities, resource mobilization, capacity building, and policy development.
- The IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) mandate and program interventions align with the GCM's thematic areas, including data collection and mapping of migration policies. Workshops on social protection and migrant inclusion have been conducted in the region. IFAD pledged to develop a monitoring, evaluation, and reporting tool to enhance migration interventions.

Challenges, such as the need for a monitoring, evaluation, and reporting framework and adopting a whole-of-government/society approach were highlighted. Participants recommended continuous engagement, discussions, and follow-up with the UN Network on Migration and other stakeholders for effective GCM implementation.

SESSION III - Climate change and mobility nexus collaborations in the East and Horn of Africa (good practices/lesson learnt).

The discussions focused on good practices, priority areas, interventions, research, and initiatives aimed at addressing the challenges posed by climate change and human mobility. The insights provided in the session were aimed at contributing to preparations for the next GCM review and informing more effective approaches in addressing the complex issues at the intersection of migration, climate change, and the environment. Participants stressed the importance of policy frameworks and agreements such as the Sendai Framework and Paris Agreement highlighting the nexus between human mobility and climate change. Participants also highlighted the interlinkages between climate change and the labor market, particularly in the IGAD region. Good practices include:

- Somalia emphasized the need to address climate change and mobility, with sustainable livelihood initiatives such as improved irrigation systems, climate-smart agriculture, and renewable energy. They have appointed a GCM Focal Point and established a National Coordination Mechanism.
- IGAD has been involved in consultations on climate change, the Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, and the development of action plans and flood risk profiles. IGAD also highlighted their collaboration with The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on drought risk profiles and developed a framework and Standard Operating Procedures.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) highlighted its approach to whole-of-government and society, working with CSOs, communities, and governments. FAO is collaborating with IGAD on an early warning system.
- The International Labor Organization (ILO) presented a policy brief on human mobility and labor migration. The organization has also initiated work with IOM, UNHCR, UNOPS under the Migration MPTF funded project to strengthen livelihood access.

Challenges raised include the lack of investment in resources for collecting climate-proof data.

SESSION IV - Data collection: Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the GCM.

The session highlighted ongoing initiatives and progress in collecting migration data. The

importance of migration data was emphasized, highlighting its role in informing evidence-based policies and interventions, as well as the importance of integrating migration data into official statistical frameworks. Trust in data collection and dissemination is essential, and efforts are made to aggregate and de-identify shared data to address privacy concerns.

Best practices include prioritizing migration data, establishing data working groups, and integrating migration indicators into national surveys. Further practices include:

- Uganda's National Coordination Mechanism (NCM) prioritizes migration data, with various initiatives including engagement with data institutes, a data technical working group, and integration of migration data into national surveys and the census.
- Uganda presented 18 priority areas related to migration data, addressing aspects such as documenting migrants, labor externalization, and combating human trafficking and smuggling. Data on diaspora and remittances is also crucial for economic development.
- The IOM Regional Data Hub has supported the establishment of data working groups in all IGAD member states and produced the "Migration Statistics Report." Migration indicators are increasingly included in national statistics surveys, integrating migration data into official statistical frameworks.

Technical challenges highlighted include variations in definitions of migrants, migration, and data formats. Overcoming these challenges requires coordination, collaboration, technological advancements, and adaptability. Solutions to overcome those challenges include coordination, collaboration, and technological advancements.

SESSION V - Discussion on cross-border cooperation on missing migrants and improving assistance to migrants in distress with the aim of preventing loss of life (good practices/lesson learnt).

The session focused on discussing good practices and challenges related to missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress. Speakers emphasized the commitment to preserving migrant lives and preventing loss of life in transit, as stated in the IMRF Progress Declaration. The alarming statistics of migrant deaths and disappearances globally were highlighted to showcase the urgent need for coordinated action. Participants emphasized a whole-of-society approach involving religious leaders and social circles to provide support and planned awareness programs to prevent migrants from going missing. Good practices include:

- Key organizations, including ICRC, IFRC, IOM, and UNHCR, are involved in the workstream established under the UN Network on Migration to develop actionable recommendations. Expert interventions from various organizations and government representatives provide insights to the process to identify the common challenges and joint initiatives to be undertaken.

- Djibouti presented summaries of the workshops organized in collaboration with ICRC and IOM, demonstrating their commitment to enhancing capacities related to missing migrants.
- Ethiopia acknowledged the existence of a social protection policy but identified a gap in explicitly addressing welfare support for families of missing migrants.
- ICRC highlighted the importance of establishing National Referral Mechanisms (NRM) and Migrant Resource Centers (MRCs), as well as interstate dialogues and roadmaps for different migration routes. The importance of prevention and transnational coordination was emphasized, referring to relevant resolutions and guidelines developed by ICRC.

Challenges discussed included the lack of clear data on missing migrants, difficulties for families in accessing information from government offices, and finding civil society organizations working on the issue.

Addressing irregular migration was highlighted as a crucial preventive measure. Effective coordination mechanisms, data collection, and respect for migrants' human rights were featured as essential elements in addressing this humanitarian challenge.

SESSION VI - Discussion on cross-boundary issues in the East and Horn of Africa: Labour migration and Diaspora engagement as a driver for development.

The session focused on labor migration and diaspora engagement as drivers for development in the East and Horn of Africa (EHoA) region. The panelists highlighted the numerous benefits of labor migration, including reducing unemployment, facilitating skills transfer, creating business networks, and contributing to development through remittances. Labor migration was also discussed as helping to address labor shortages in destination countries and provide opportunities for migrant workers to increase income levels, acquire new skills, and improve living conditions for their families and communities. Good practices discussed include:

- Safe and orderly labour migration was highlighted as crucial, requiring government-to-government bilateral labour agreements and regulation of private recruitment processes. Involving the diaspora community through regional ministerial forums and networks strengthens migration initiatives and policies.

Challenges in the region include inadequate policies and legislation to protect domestic workers, limited awareness about labor migration and its benefits, lack of integration of migration governance structures into national work plans, absence of harmonized labor migration policies, and lack of clear information management systems and ratification of labor conventions.

To address these challenges, participants recommended developing comprehensive labour migration policies, conducting awareness campaigns, expanding bilateral labour agreements, establishing a social security platform for migrants, strengthening diaspora networks, developing national labour migration information systems, and ensuring political commitment for the ratification of labour conventions and protection of migrant workers' rights.

SESSION VII - Discussion on the preparations for the Regional Reviews 2024.

This session focused on the preparations for the upcoming Regional Reviews and discussions stressed on key elements that need to be reflected throughout the preparation process that will inform the Regional Reviews:

- Importance of data: Data plays a vital role in Research and Development, and it was emphasized that comprehensive data collection is necessary to enhance the review process.
- Inclusivity and engagement: Strategies to ensure inclusivity and encourage meaningful engagement from stakeholders were discussed. The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, as well as utilizing existing platforms like regional consultative processes, were identified as effective ways to enhance engagement and collaboration.
- Attention should be given to addressing the reporting burden, establishing priorities, exploring indicators, climate change, and discussions on pledges in the regional review process.
- Establishing a knowledge management system to document and disseminate information from other regions' preparations for the review process was proposed. This would enable effective knowledge sharing and utilization of valuable insights.
- It was emphasized that the outcomes of the dialogue should translate into concrete actions and implementation plans. Strategies for effective implementation of the dialogue outcomes should be explored.
- The significance of partnerships involving media, governments, financial institutions, and the private sector was emphasized. Such partnerships can contribute to improved migration management and the establishment of programs aligned with the GCM.
- Addressing financial burdens: The varying pace of GCM implementation among member states, mainly due to financial burdens, was highlighted. Fundraising efforts and coordination between organizations like IOM and regional bodies like IGAD were seen as important for addressing these challenges.
- Monitoring and evaluating progress: The question of assessing progress in the second review of the IMRF and GCM was raised. Encouraging member states to submit reviews and progress reports and establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress were seen as essential steps.

SESSION VIII - Implementation of pledges made in the framework of the IMRF.

The session introduced the pledges within the framework of the GCM. It aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of what a pledge entails and highlight the pledges made in the region.

- A pledge is a measurable commitment to advance the implementation of one or more principles, objectives, or actions of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM).
- Pledges can take different forms, including financial contributions, human resource contributions, process-oriented commitments, and policy-oriented commitments.
- Pledges should be concrete, measurable, realistic, and time-bound, and should respond to existing needs.
- They can be made at local, national, regional, or international levels and should preferably be developed and implemented in partnership with other stakeholders.
- Pledges should be consistent with international law and agreed frameworks, particularly the 2030 Agenda.
- They can be made individually, by multiple states or stakeholders making identical or complementary pledges, in partnership with different actions, or as matching pledges.
- Joint pledges, which promote partnerships, are encouraged within the cooperative framework of the GCM.
- Pledges can be made by UN Member and Observer States, UN system entities, and various relevant stakeholders, including financial institutions, private sector entities, local and regional authorities, international organizations, humanitarian and development actors, trade unions, academics, civil society, and diaspora organizations.
- A walkthrough of the pledges made in the region. The pledges were diverse in nature and scope, covering a range of areas.

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

Dr. Abdi Hersi, Senior Regional Liaison and Policy Officer (SRLPO), IOM Regional Office EHoA, provided the closing remarks for the meeting. During the closing, Mr. Hersi thanked all participants from different thematic areas for their positive engagement and contribution throughout the meeting. He thanked the governments of Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Djibouti, Rwanda, and Ethiopia for sending their delegates and whose perspective, through active participation in the dialogue enlightened the meeting.

He emphasized the importance of national coordination which brought together all relevant stakeholders and in paving a road to the implementing GCM. He thanked the regional bodies who participated including the African Union, EAC and IGAD who provided regional perspectives. He thanked all IOM colleagues, including from the headquarters, the region and the Kenya office for their participation and continued support in making the event a success.

He expressed his 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.

Mr. Hersi further noted that this GCM 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. He ended his speech by thanking the Kenyan government for hosting the representatives of other governments from the region and the Dialogue on GCM implementation in the East and Horn of Africa Region.