



Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement with the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific

Meeting held on 23 September 2021, 12:00-15:30 hrs. (*Bangkok time*) - Virtual

SUMMARY REPORT November 2021

I. Background

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/195,¹ Member States, in 2018, committed to a periodic and effective follow-up and review mechanism of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

2. Member States agreed that the GCM is based on a set of cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles, including a whole-of-society approach in GCM implementation, promoting broad multi-stakeholder partnerships to address migration in all its dimensions by including migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, the private sector, parliamentarians, trade unions, national human rights institutions, the media and other relevant stakeholders in migration governance (para 15 (j)).

3. Member States also committed to implementing the GCM at the national, regional and global levels in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders. 12 distinct categories of stakeholders were identified, namely migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders (para 41 and 44).

4. The Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific (The Regional Network)² is committed to facilitating and translating into practice meaningful engagement of stakeholders in line with the principles underpinning a whole-of-society approach:

- ✓ **Transparency:** Generating an open call for engagement to all relevant stakeholders and providing an open and equal channel to receive inputs;
- ✓ **Inclusivity:** Creating room for the widest possible access to all relevant stakeholders through different forms of engagement;
- ✓ **Diversity:** Ensuring non-discriminatory access to all, with particular attention to underrepresented voices and to migrants in situations of vulnerability;

¹ General Assembly Resolution 73/195 of 19 December 2018. At: https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_73_195.pdf

² The Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific (The Regional Network) is comprised of all United Nations agencies at Asia and the Pacific regional level wishing to join. The Regional Office of IOM, Asia-Pacific serves as the Coordinator and Secretariat of the Regional Network. The Executive Committee of the Regional Network comprises of ESCAP, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UN DRR, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, and UN Women.

- ✓ **Meaningful participation:** Providing effective access to all preparatory and follow-up processes within the context of the regional review and encouraging the mobilization of resources to enable participation of stakeholders.³

5. The Regional Review of Implementation of the GCM in Asia and the Pacific was organized from 10 to 12 March 2021 by ESCAP along with the Regional Network. Over 300 representatives from ESCAP member States and about 60 stakeholders, representing 7 stakeholder groups took part in the three-day intergovernmental meeting, representing a cross-section of stakeholder categories and geographies. During the Regional Review, stakeholders had dedicated speaking slots in the opening and closing as well as throughout the meeting, in particular in the four roundtable discussions. In addition, a number of stakeholders organized and participated in eight side events, which took place on the side lines of the meeting.

6. In the context of the Regional Review process, five stakeholder consultations were organized from October 2020 to March 2021. The consultations were held in line with the indicative clusters of the 23 GCM objectives envisaged for the roundtables of the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) scheduled to be held in May 2022. Approximately 430 participants took part in the stakeholder consultations, which were aimed at enabling and ensuring effective participation of stakeholders in the review process. Prior to each consultation, calls were made to stakeholders to actively take part in the design and running of the consultation, and stakeholders served as co-organizers and co-moderators in each consultation. The fifth stakeholder consultation on 2 and 4 March 2021 aimed at providing stakeholders with an opportunity to draft joint statements for the regional review meeting. It was designed and led entirely by stakeholders with no involvement from the Regional Network.⁴

7. Four summary stakeholder consultation reports, containing stakeholders' identification of gaps, good practices and recommendations on the implementation of the GCM were produced, and resulted in the summary report: *Implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: summary of stakeholder consultations for Asia and the Pacific* (ESCAP/GCM /2021/CRP.2)⁵ which was presented to the Regional Review as an official conference room paper. This report, along with other official documents from the Regional Review, will be submitted to the IMRF.

8. The Regional Network remains committed to continuing its collaboration with the growing and increasingly diverse network of stakeholders beyond the Regional Review. It intends to strengthen and nurture partnerships and collaboration with all categories of stakeholders, through continued outreach and consultation. After each consultation, evaluations from participants were considered for improvement, and following the Regional Review, a questionnaire was sent out to all active stakeholders to gauge weaknesses and strengths during the consultation process, whether the process had informed participants' work on migration, and suggestions for future collaboration. Additionally, the Regional Network, in the lead-up to the 23 September meeting, organized 10 additional focused group conversations on potential roles of

³ For more information on the Regional Network's overall approach to stakeholder engagement in the GCM process in Asia and the Pacific, please see: *Engagement of civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*. At: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Stakeholders_engagement_20200819.pdf

⁴ For more information on stakeholder consultations, please visit the website of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. At: <https://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/asia-pacific-regional-review-implementation-global-compact-safe-orderly>

⁵ The report can be downloaded here:

https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/default/files/docs/summary_of_stakeholder_consultations_asia_rr.pdf

stakeholders and the Regional Network, with around 60 stakeholders from those categories who had no, or limited, presence during the five stakeholder consultations between October 2020 and March 2021. During this process, 40 persons joined the list of stakeholders.

9. As per November 2021, the active network of stakeholders consisted of around 300 persons from around 200 organizations in around 25 countries across Asia and the Pacific.⁶

II. Objectives, Organization and Attendance

10. On 23 September 2021, the Regional Network convened a meeting with stakeholders to explore meaningful ways in which the Regional Network and stakeholders in the region could continue to work together on migration and migration governance, and upholding the rights and well-being of migrants, through advancing GCM implementation, follow-up and review in the Asia-Pacific region.

11. The purpose of the meeting was to

- better understand the nature and scope of interaction between stakeholders and the Regional Network, as envisioned by stakeholders, both in terms of processes and substance; and
- provide a space for information-sharing and discussion on, inter alia, the Regional Network's work plan, the road map to the IMRF, and other relevant issues.

12. The meeting centred around the following key questions:

1. What are the top 3 thematic priorities that the Regional Network should work on responding to the 23 GCM objectives?

- at which level: local, country, regional, global?
- how have the COVID-19 pandemic and response measures impacted these priorities?

2. How can we ensure regular interaction between stakeholders and the Regional Network?

- what are your suggestions to ensure connections between the global, regional, country and local level in areas such as research, data gathering, monitoring, knowledge-sharing, policy advocacy?
- what are some good practices in this regard?

13. In preparation for the meeting, an open call for co-moderators and speakers was sent to stakeholders. Those who responded were assigned active roles at the meeting.

14. About 100 stakeholders from 15 countries in Asia and the Pacific attended the consultation. Participants came from a broad range of sectors and included all 12 categories of stakeholders identified in the GCM, except parliamentarians. About 45 cent of all participants represented civil society organizations (CSOs). There was balanced gender representation among participants.

⁶ According to the list of ESCAP member States.

15. This report aims to be a non-exhaustive summary of recommendations and key points raised in the meeting. The meeting was conducted under the Chatham House rule, which means that recommendations will be generalised and not attributed to particular participants.

III. Opening

The work of the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific Supporting the follow-up and review of the GCM at the global level

i. Opening

16. Dr. Nenette Motus, Coordinator, Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific, and Regional Director, IOM Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, welcomed participants. She recognized that a wide range of stakeholders had collaborated with the UN Network, globally, regionally, and nationally, including as co-leads and members of workstreams, and in support of the Capacity Building Mechanism of the GCM - the Migration Multiple Partner Trust Fund, and the Migration Network Hub⁷. Dr. Motus thanked participants for attending pre-consultation meetings and for providing recommendations through questionnaires. She provided a brief overview of some of the recommendations, which included calls to:

- build stronger and deeper connections between the various categories of stakeholders;
- connect migration discussions at the global, regional, country, and local levels, including through connecting stakeholders to United Nations agencies and government representatives;
- engage in effective advocacy and communication, and develop collective messaging and information sharing, including positive messages on migration;
- ensure participatory platforms and engagement modalities, both virtual and in-person, that go beyond traditional channels such as surveys, case studies, audio and visual engagement; and
- facilitate funding opportunities for stakeholders to strengthen their capacities.

17. Dr. Motus highlighted that the IMRF marked a major milestone, recognizing the GCM as the foundational cooperative framework on international migration. As the first of its kind, stakeholders and the Regional Network had the opportunity to help shape its tone and level of ambition, and to provide strong guidance for the future. The UN Network on Migration would issue a roadmap outlining key stages in the preparation for the IMRF, including entry points for stakeholder engagement.

18. Ms. Sumitha Shaanthinni Kishna, *Our Journey*, expressed her gratitude for inviting various stakeholders to the meeting. She urged inclusion of stakeholders, including civil society and trade unions, in the designing of these meetings. Highlighting that governments and the United Nations had embraced the diverse views of civil society and trade unions, Ms. Kishna urged that that civil society and trade union's self-organizing process be acknowledged and respected.

19. She concluded by posing two questions, namely: 1) How would the Regional Network build capacity or gauge the interest of different stakeholders in engaging with the GCM?, and 2)

⁷ Migration Network Hub: <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/hub>

In preparation for the IMRF, how would the programme be reflective of all the listening sessions that the global UN Network had organized during the pandemic?

20. Mr. Rey Asis, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, reflected on ways in which migrants could and must take center stage, and asked that the GCM implementation be for, with and by migrants. Referring to a recently held Echo Conference for Migrants for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the GCM⁸, he called for effective participation of migrants in implementing the GCM. Awareness and capacity development for migrants on the GCM was key, and initiatives needed to be matched by the openness of governments to welcome and create a free, democratic, safe and independent space. Migrants should not only provide testimonies, but join in monitoring, evaluating, decision-making and advocating. Mr. Asis called for the help of the Regional Network and emphasized that the participation of migrants would only happen when they felt safe and secure.

21. Additional recommendations included translating GCM and migrant-relevant information into mother languages of migrants; organizing consultations in a format and at a time friendly to migrants, and building cooperation among migrants, CSOs and other stakeholders.

ii. The work of the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific

22. Ms. Sashini Gomez, IOM Regional Office for Asia Pacific, provided an overview of the Regional Network's core workstream 1: *Support the implementation of the GCM at the country, sub-regional, cross-regional and regional levels*. She outlined five priorities:

- supporting country level networks and United Nations country teams on GCM implementation, by providing demand-led support;
- supporting and engaging with stakeholders to inform priorities of the Regional Network;
- promoting and producing tools and guidance, in supporting regional, sub-regional and national actors, including country networks in GCM implementation, follow-up and review. Ms. Gomez informed participants that a mapping of country-level networks was ongoing;
- supporting 6 GCM Champion Countries, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand, through targeted engagement and outreach. Ms. Gomez highlighted that the Regional Network was working with Champion Countries on a multi-stakeholder consultation series that would focus on the impact of COVID-19 on migrant;
- strengthen discourse, engagement and advocacy around GCM through targeted outreach and support.

23. Ms. Nicola Brandt, UNICEF East Asia & Pacific, gave an overview of core workstream 2: *Joint advocacy and strengthening the voice of the Network/ speaking with one voice on core priorities at the regional level*. She outlined five priorities:

- identifying and developing advocacy initiatives drawing on the network communications strategy, guidance and tools;
- amplifying messages developed by Regional Network member entities and establish linkages to regional issues and/or priorities;

⁸ For more on the Echo Conference, please see: <http://www.apmigrants.org/index.php/wwh-4/statements/255-firstmigrantsechoongcm>

- responding to the expressed advocacy needs of country networks and United Nations country teams;
- addressing topical matters in a collaborative manner; and
- responding to advocacy needs of stakeholders, by identifying entry points and facilitating entry

24. Ms. Sabine Henning, ESCAP, provided an overview of core workstream 3: *Support the Regional Review of the Implementation of the GCM*. She outlined activities which had been undertaken, including building knowledge and awareness towards the regional review, which included the drafting of the Asia-Pacific Migration Report 2020; engaging with champion countries and organizing stakeholder consultations; and organizing and implementing the 10-12 March Regional Review. About 22 Member States had submitted voluntary reviews on GCM implementation, and countries which had not yet submitted responses were encouraged to do so soon. ESCAP continued to communicate and disseminate outcomes of the Regional Review process, including at the 6th session of the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development, at the 77th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; in the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted for the IMRF; to the IMRF meeting itself, which included the summary report of stakeholder consultations; and to the Migration Network Hub.

25. Ms. Carolina Gottardo, International Detention Coalition, gave an overview of the recently established thematic workstream 1: *Alternatives do detention*. Its focus was for States to prioritize non-custodial alternatives to detention that are in line with international law, to take a human rights-based approach to any form of detention of migrants, and to end child immigration detention. The aim of the group was to foster enhanced collaboration among United Nations agencies, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders on immigration detention in the region. Activities would include peer learning on alternatives to detention (ATD) for member States in the region as a preparation for the IMRF.

26. This regional peer learning followed and complemented the work done by the UN Migration Network working group on ATD. Members of the group also planned to map immigration detention in the region, as well as current practices and gaps in ATD practices. The results of the mapping would be used to inform an Asia-Pacific Roundtable, organized by the ATD thematic workstream in early 2022, and to support preparation for the IMRF. Ms. Gottardo called for more stakeholders to participate actively in the Regional Network and its different core work streams and working groups. There should be open and transparent representation, mainly including grassroots organizations.

27. Ms. Pia Oberoi, OHCHR, Regional Office for South-East Asia, introduced the recently established thematic workstream 2: *Climate and migration*. Similar to Ms. Gottardo's call above, Ms. Oberoi looked to stakeholders for suggestions on the work plan, as well as expressions of interest to join this working group.

28. Reactions, comments and questions included a call for more attention to country-level work. It was also suggested that the Regional Network appoints a liaison person for each country and sub-region, to ensure regular contact with stakeholders at country and sub-regional levels, and to establish national mechanisms where civil society organizations could effectively interact with their national governments. Some participants expressed interest in joining the working groups and thematic work streams of the Regional Network.

29. A participant raised the issue on how to respond to the realities of mixed migration in the region, commented on the inadequate structures of protection for refugees and asylum seekers, as well as vulnerable migrants, and called for those protection gaps to be closed. One participant remarked that there was little information about the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) process. Climate change driven migration seemed to lie somewhere between forced and voluntary migration, and was often seen as labour migration.

30. Regional Network members responded that GCM implementation was a country-led process. Priorities from the 23 GCM objectives had been identified, and governments were working on national implementation plans. It was suggested that tracking of country networks and national implementation plans should be undertaken by the Regional Network. In addition, there were tools that had been produced at the global level that could be of interest to colleagues at country level.

iii. Supporting the follow-up and review of the GCM at the global level

31. Mr. Jonathan Prentice, UN Network on Migration Secretariat, thanked the many Asia-Pacific stakeholders across diverse sectors who joined the Network's 3rd quarter stakeholder meeting the previous day and offered their viewpoints on outcomes for the IMRF. He emphasized that the follow-up and review component of the GCM was vital, as it was this element of the Global Compact that required and obligated states to reflect on how they were implementing the 23 objectives. He urged stakeholders to think imaginatively and dynamically about how they could inject momentum for the IMRF, stressing the focus on engaging governments in preparation for the IMRF rather than viewing the four-day meeting as the sole entry point.

32. Mr. Prentice emphasized that there was significant room for stakeholder engagement in the IMRF. A pre-IMRF meeting would be convened by the President of the General Assembly for stakeholders the day before the IMRF, and there were further opportunities for engagement and stakeholder voices to be heard in the plenary, roundtables and in the policy debate, including as keynote speakers.

33. If United Nations country networks in the Asia-Pacific region had not been reaching out to stakeholders, stakeholders should reach out to the networks proactively. Mr. Prentice highlighted that it was a fundamental component of the network's responsibilities to ensure that stakeholders were involved in the development of work plans and activities. In the run up to the IMRF, and in the forum deliberations itself, stakeholders should focus not simply on the impact of the GCM on the ground, but also acknowledge the many and very serious challenges to safe, orderly and regular migration that continued to exist.

34. Ms. Ellene Sana, Center for Migrant Advocacy, remarked that stakeholder engagement with the United Nations agencies was limited. This was due to prohibitive costs for direct engagement and because, as most stakeholders were operating locally and nationally, they had less time and resources to also participate at regional or global levels. Ms. Sana emphasized the importance of collective action in GCM implementation, and she presented the following recommendations:

- the Regional Network should engage with stakeholders, particularly with grassroots migrant organizations, civil society organizations and trade unions in giving feedback to governments and United Nations agencies- assisted reports on the GCM, in a manner that reflected the day-to-day realities of migrants;

- in the lead up to the IMRF, the Regional Network should assist and facilitate stakeholder participation by ensuring that the United Nations protocols for participation were relaxed, and by ensuring that groups with clear track records in upholding the rights of migrant workers and their families were supported and enabled to participate; and
- the Regional Network should recognize and support the independent initiatives and processes of various networks and affiliations of stakeholders in the region in preparation for the IMRF.

Ms. Sana concluded that her organization valued diverse voices, but that these voices must be authentic voices.

35. Rev. Chris Frazer, the Anglican Diocese of Wellington, New Zealand, provided examples of cross-sectorial collaborations on trafficking and migrant labour exploitation. The Movement worked in partnerships with government representatives, human rights groups, the private sector, other faith-based organizations and NGOs. However, giving more prominence to migrant voices was a priority area that needed more attention.

36. Faith-based organizations had been recognized as important actors in combating exploitation. In 2019, the Anglican Diocese of Wellington, New Zealand, established the Modern Slavery and Labour Exploitation Advisory Group. Membership comprised representatives of faith-based organizations, NGOs, a migrant workers' union, the private sector, academia, government, the United States of America Embassy, and the British High Commission. Such groups could develop working relationships with the Regional Network. Moreover, there should be consideration to establish a stakeholder task force linking different stakeholder groups throughout Asia and the Pacific. This could be facilitated locally in each area by a key United Nations agency.

37. One participant remarked that there should be migrant-inclusive mechanisms and platforms to foster discussions among migrants about the GCM. These could directly inform decision-making on policy.

IV. Outcomes of the Meeting

A. Overall summary of recommendations on strengthened collaboration between stakeholders and the Regional Network

38. Stakeholders expressed strong interest in continued collaboration with the Regional Network. All 23 GCM objectives, except objectives 8, 20 and 22, were included in the list of objectives and activities, stakeholders wanted to pursue in collaboration with the Regional Network. Cross-cutting topics, such as the GCM guiding principles on the promotion of gender-responsive and child-sensitive approaches to migration governance, were also highlighted.

39. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrants' rights, opportunities, well-being and migration governance, both immediate and long-term, was significant in priority settings. As migrant workers were returning home due to the pandemic, return, re-integration, and re-migration, had become a priority. Challenges for those migrants who were stranded and could not leave their country of destination due to border closures were also highlighted. One participant commented that migrants faced scapegoating, detention and trafficking, in particular during the pandemic. Another participant reflected that there had been reduced government attention and efforts on GCM implementation, including on stakeholder engagement due to government's preoccupation in addressing the pandemic.

40. Participants provided several recommendations on what collaboration between stakeholders and the Regional Network might look like. Many emphasized that a robust infrastructure with clear communication channels to facilitate regular interaction between stakeholders and the Regional Network should be in place. Many participants urged that migrants must be directly participating with the work of the Regional Network. Another participant advocated for children and youth to be meaningfully involved in the GCM process at the regional level.

41. Stakeholders' right to self-organize was called for by many participants, and that the Regional Network must recognize the long-established self-organizing process of, for example, trade unions and civil society organizations. Some participants emphasized that new initiatives and processes must also be welcomed, and that there should be no gatekeeping in stakeholder involvement.

42. Regarding the links between the local, country, regional and global levels, many participants called for a focus on the country level; that country-level consultations should be held, and spaces and opportunities created for different stakeholders to interact with representatives of governments and United Nations agencies at country levels. In this regard, the Regional Network could tap into existing networks and platforms, such as those by trade unions or civil society organizations.

43. There were many varied recommendations from participants on the scope and nature of future collaboration between stakeholders and the Regional Network, both in terms of substance, themes and processes. The summary below reflects the diversity among stakeholders who took part in the meeting:

B. Thematic Priorities

The summary of thematic priorities by participants below is organized according to the GCM objectives that were used in previous stakeholder consultations, and in line with the indicative clusters of the 23 GCM objectives envisaged for the roundtables of the IMRF.

i. Ensuring that migration is voluntary, regular, safe and orderly (addressing GCM objectives 2, 5, 6, 12, 18)¹¹

44. Addressing root causes of migration in the region was the best way to address and prevent exploitation. Participants called for holistic interventions to address adverse drivers and structural causes that led people to migrate, such as lack of jobs, social protection, wage floors and economic insecurity in countries of origin. A participant suggested that GCM champion countries should lead by example in GCM implementation. There should be close collaboration between governments active at the national and subnational levels, including local governments.

45. More attention needed to be paid to climate-induced migration and displacement. Climate migration and its drivers was often forgotten in the light of migration motivated by economic factors. There was a call for developing local studies and build capacity related to climate migration. One participant advocated for a discussion of climate change and migration at the regional level to understand the risks and drivers of people's mobility, as well as advancing and enhancing pathways for vulnerable migrants.

46. There was a call for a review of temporary migration, including on bilateral agreements and fair and ethical recruitment practices, in destination countries. Addressing labour migration governance at regional level should be linked to the global and national levels. Moreover, there should be discussions about recruitment, skills development and recognition of skills, social protection, and access to justice. A participant highlighted that often, seasonal workers were not recognized in bilateral agreements between sending and receiving countries. Many participants emphasized the right to self-organization, and the ability right to create union membership for migrant workers, and that unions should be able to recognize its members in other countries.

Priorities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

47. The need for fair and ethical recruitment and decent work during and post-COVID-19 were highlighted. Due to COVID-19, many migrants were opting to return to their countries of origin, having been forced to leave their jobs, and seeking new employment opportunities in their countries of origins. One participant noted that during the pandemic the withholding of wages increased, including in countries of origin, which could lead to trafficking in persons, as some migrants wanted to re-immigrate.

ii. Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance and border management measures (addressing GCM objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 21)

48. Ensuring that all migrants, including youth migrants, have an identity and adequate documentation was listed as a priority. The issue of mixed migration, and the complementarity of the GCM and the GCR was highlighted. One participant commented that there was penalization of forced migrants due to COVID-19 in some countries, and that refugees and asylum seekers continued to be treated as immigration violators.

49. Ending detention of children, making use of immigration detention for adults as a measure of last resort only, and at all levels, and promoting alternatives to detention, were listed as priorities. One participant noted that during the pandemic, migrants had been detained as their immigration permits had expired.

Priorities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

50. Reintegration of returning migrants with institutional and governance support should be a priority, and participation in reintegration programmes by trade unions and other stakeholders, including the private sector, was a high priority. Countries in the region had been unprepared to respond to the very large number of returning migrants, with some countries not being able to provide returning migrants with livelihood opportunities and access to social safety nets and other services. This was a particular challenge for women and children, who faced disproportionate vulnerabilities. As a result of limited resources for reintegration in countries of origin, re-migration became the only option for many migrant returnees.

51. A participant mentioned a good practice from the Philippines, namely a public-private partnership, including with civil society organizations and universities, which provided training programmes and financial assistance, grants or loans to returning migrants.

52. Combatting smuggling and trafficking activities, which had increased due to prolonged border closures, and strengthening a transnational response, were listed as a priority. Women were often targeted for human trafficking and when they asked for assistance, it was difficult to find support. There was a call for international cooperation, including with transnational police

forces, to protect women who had been trafficked. One participant mentioned lack of information to migrants about border closures.

iii. Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development (addressing GCM objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22)

53. A participant reflected on the importance of focussing on mutual benefits of migrants to both sending and receiving countries. There was often too much emphasis on exclusion, and on considering migration as a threat, or something that needed to be controlled and managed.

54. Enhancing consular protection, assistance, and cooperation throughout the migration cycle was emphasized.

55. More attention to securing access to services for migrants was needed, for example access to education for migrant children and adults. There was a call for governmental mechanisms in destination countries to ensure that student migrants have access to higher education. Access to general health services was also mentioned, as was the lack of social protection for migrants, including the portability of social security, which COVID-19 had exposed.

Priorities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

56. Access to COVID-19 tests and vaccines for migrants was listed as an important priority. There were numerous barriers to accessing vaccines, including increased quarantine and vaccination measures, following general health concerns, which had increased the cost of migration (borne by migrants, not employers). Lack of identity and documentation were listed as additional challenges in accessing vaccines and COVID-19 relief packages. There needed to be further discussions on social protection measures and the portability of social security, as COVID-19 had exposed this vulnerability.

iv. Improving value-driven and evidence-based policymaking and public debate, and enhancing cooperation on migration (addressing GCM objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23)

57. Improving data collection and utilization of data for evidence based policymaking and public debate were listed as a priority. One participant recommended that compiling accurate and disaggregated data should be the top priority of all GCM objectives, as data were critical for actions. Accurate and timely data would enable a holistic discussion on, for example, labour migration and would also inform implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

58. Discrimination, racism and xenophobia were important cross-regional themes, and many participants noted that narratives against migrants were very toxic. There was a call for removal of discriminatory policies and practices at country and regional levels, for example mandatory HIV testing of migrant workers, including LGBTQI migrants. Migrants, when found HIV positive, would often lose their jobs and be deported. This practice also resulted in many migrants not seeking general health services in countries of destination.

59. Reducing vulnerabilities of migrants in both sending and host countries was listed as a priority, and the situation of migrant women was highlighted in this regard⁹. There was a call to

⁹ Please see: Policies and Practice: A Guide to Gender-Responsive Implementation of the GCM. At <https://ppguide.unwomen.org/>

make gender a priority objective, not only a cross-cutting issue of the 23 GCM objectives. Migrant children and youth were also highlighted as a priority. A participant noted that issues concerning migrant children and youth were not discussed in Asia and the Pacific. The needs and interests of migrant children were largely absent from mainstream debates and, as a result, most governments had failed to develop effective policy responses to assist and protect migrant children.

Priorities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

60. Mapping COVID-19 responses by local and national governments, NGOs and the private sector, should include how responses had affected migrants.

61. There was a call for research and for information-gathering on how the pandemic had impacted youth and children of migrant workers, also in preparation for the IMRF.

V. Additional Priorities

62. Some participants noted that there should be structured follow up and review of GCM implementation by countries. Indicators and a review system at local, national and regional levels could be developed.

63. There was need to build capacity for local government authorities on how to appreciate, recognize and implement the GCM at community levels. Networks at regional and national levels could support such capacity building initiatives. A participant shared the experience of regional stakeholder groups to organize information-sharing forums for community-based migrant organizations and local authorities.

64. Technology for GCM implementation should be promoted, and there should be capacity building on the use of technology in the GCM.

C How to ensure regular interaction between stakeholders and the Regional Network?

i. Approach

65. There was a call for a structured approach to facilitate regular and meaningful interaction between stakeholders and the Regional Network, also with stakeholders active at the sub-regional levels. The Regional Network should encourage different stakeholders to participate in the organization of future stakeholder consultations. A participant remarked that stakeholders were not well connected with each other. The Regional Network was also not yet working sufficiently with existing networks of stakeholders and building on their work and expertise. An inter United Nations- mechanism/focal point system at regional and country levels could be established to engage diverse stakeholders and the Regional Network.

66. Participants emphasized that there were many existing organizations, networks, groups, structures and mechanisms working on migration in Asia and the Pacific. The Regional Network should publicize lessons learned and good practices in GCM implementation of these organizations. One participant added that the Regional Network could provide funding to

support the work of self-organized groups. Some participants emphasized that new initiatives and processes must be welcomed, and that the work of the Regional Network be open and transparent. Reaching out to diverse CSOs, including grassroots organizations and underrepresented groups was very important.

67. Including migrants in the work of the Regional Network in a meaningful and non-tokenistic manner was recommended. Migrants should communicate their needs, concerns and recommendations directly to relevant policy- and decision-making forums, and other relevant platforms in the region, including the Regional Network, and not let others speak on their behalf.

68. Children and youth should be meaningfully engaged in GCM implementation. They should be participating, rather than adults who would speak on their behalves in meetings and forums, using a language that was not their own. Many children and youth wanted to participate in GCM implementation, and there was a call for building capacity of and provide resources to children and youth.

ii. Activities

69. Regional meetings on topics of the GCM should be organized, involving existing and new organizations, networks and platforms. Such meetings could be held twice a year, quarterly or monthly, and they could support existing and new initiatives in relation to the GCM.

70. There was a suggestion to have a permanent stakeholder Advisory Board attached to the Regional Network to increase ongoing stakeholder involvement in analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring of the work of the Regional Network. There was a specific call for a monitoring mechanism to follow up activities and facilitate GCM implementation.

71. The role of academia should be highlighted. Young scholars with migration experience should be linked to the activities of the Regional Network. A global academic network, undertaking policy research and migration studies, should be formed.

72. Stakeholders should collaborate closely with groups working on similar thematic issues, set up task forces, and discuss how task forces could contribute within the network. A participant remarked that it was necessary to intensify work with different stakeholders, including policymakers, and that government and NGO collaboration was needed at all levels. There was a suggestion to create multi-level mechanisms with institutional bodies to enable migrants to engage in GCM implementation.

73. Mass awareness initiatives of the GCM were needed at grassroots levels. There was a suggestion to develop multi-media campaigns to help make the GCM more accessible to diverse stakeholders.

74. The Regional Network should identify which channels stakeholders could use to provide information. A participant recommended not to confine GCM related information to one United Nations information hub, but to make use of other existing information hubs on NGO initiatives to avoid duplication of resources and imbalance of focus on issues.

75. Capacity building and providing resources to stakeholders was recommended by many participants. Capacity building activities should also develop awareness on migrants' security, to enable an environment and process where migrants could participate and speak up without fear of being arrested or deported.

76. The Regional Network should highlight and disseminate good practices on GCM implementation from the region.

i. How to connect the global, regional, country and local levels in areas such as research, data gathering, monitoring, knowledge-sharing, policy advocacy?

77. Participants emphasized the need for coordination on GCM implementation at local, country, regional and global levels. There was a call to the Regional Network to develop an infrastructure that enabled voices from the ground to reach regional and global levels, and ensured smooth communication from the global and regional levels to the ground. The Regional Network's core and thematic working groups should coordinate their work with national and global levels; work at the regional level should not be determined by the global level. The Regional Network should facilitate peer-to-peer learning and dialogues at country level between stakeholders.

78. Participants reiterated the call for the Regional Network to work at the country level. A mapping of actors at national level was suggested, and the Regional Network was encouraged to hold country level consultations with stakeholders to improve stakeholder engagement and to understand the local contexts. There should be space and opportunities created for different stakeholder groups, including grassroots organizations and the media, at country and local levels, to discuss migration matters, including annual and national plans of GCM implementation. United Nations country-level Networks on Migration should be part of these discussions, and if there was no country-level network, the regional level should engage with stakeholders and facilitate access to government entities within the country. There was a request to compile a list of coordinators of country-level networks on migration in Asia and the Pacific, so that stakeholders could liaise with the coordinators.

79. Participants suggested that the Regional Network should encourage the involvement of local governments in GCM implementation. The Regional Network could encourage national governments, perhaps beginning with the GCM champion countries, to involve local governments and stakeholders at local level in GCM implementation.

V. Conclusion and Closing

80. Mr. Syeed Ahamed, Institute of Informatics and Development (IID) and Co-Chair, Migration Technical Working Group (BDUNNM), called on the Regional Network to:

- tap into existing groups which were self-organizing, including self-organized social media groups of migrants;
- be open to engage with many diverse stakeholders, including self-organizing CSOs and trade unions. The United Nations should not put a limit on the number of stakeholders with which they intend to work;
- not allow gatekeeping in stakeholder involvement, so that “no one is left behind”. Mr Ahamed noted that there had been a lack of outreach on social media by the Regional Network;
- ensure that the road to the IMRF focus on linking the grassroots level to the global level by encouraging, recognizing and engaging national CSOs to organize grassroots consultations;
- strengthen the collaboration between national chapters of the UN Network on Migration and the technical working groups; and

- focus on capacity building and more learning, sharing and innovation, and how to use the innovations to connect migrants.

81. Ms. Fish Ip, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), recognized the recent efforts of the Regional Network in Asia and the Pacific to engage with stakeholders. However, there was room for improvement. Ms. Ip noted that “transparency” should be about approaching and speaking to people directly, rather than just having a website and sending emails. “Inclusivity” should be about ensuring wide participation of groups from the ground, and discussions should engage people at all levels, especially at the country level, with a clear time table for engagement. “Diversity” and “participation” meant providing access to all, ensuring resources and trainings, so that stakeholders were able to navigate and participate in the GCM implementation process.

82. Ms. Ip remarked that civil society was very diverse, and that they needed space to have their own and self-organized processes to raise their voices. Just bringing everyone together in one platform would not be sufficient and might be counterproductive, given the different agendas of the groups. She also called for the Regional Network to engage with stakeholders in the design, organization and follow-up of consultations. She noted that migration in Asia was predominately temporary migration and the majority of migrants were women. In the context of the pandemic, access to social protection and justice were crucial, in particular for returning migrants and for ensuring their reintegration.

83. Ms. Pia Oberoi, OHCHR, thanked all participants for a rich and substantive discussion. She emphasized that the Regional Network was learning and wanted to learn more on how to widen and deepen space for stakeholders to support GCM implementation, follow-up and review at local, national and regional levels. Ms. Oberoi underlined that the UN Network on Migration – whether operating at country, regional or global levels – was one, and that stakeholders should expect a similar partnership at all levels, while also understanding how and why the work might differ. She encouraged stakeholders to become involved in core and thematic workstreams, adding that the Regional Network was keen to support national networks to facilitate the involvement of stakeholders.

84. Over the last year, and due in no small part to participants’ engagement in the Regional Review of the GCM in Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Network had developed an active stakeholder database of some 200 organizations. Ms. Oberoi remarked that the objective of the database was not to instrumentalise stakeholders, but to use the database to contact stakeholders and invite, consult, share information, and link them to the global level, including for the IMRF. She asked for suggestions on how to do this better. The Regional Network had witnessed a growing and increasingly diverse network of stakeholders who were interested to collaborate with others on GCM implementation in the region. The Regional Network had reached out directly to most stakeholder categories individually, and was pleased to learn that stakeholders were already collaborating and forming working relationships across sectors and countries in the region.

85. Recognizing that there was an interest in growing and deepening the partnership between stakeholders and the Regional Network going forward, Ms. Oberoi acknowledged that stakeholders wanted to be proactive partners, not reactive recipients of briefings or one-way information flows. Migrants were the most important partners and the Regional Network must try harder to include them in its work. Ms. Oberoi remarked that there were limitations – the Regional Network currently had limited human and financial resources, stakeholders had

different capacities and needs, and that the serious reality of shrinking civic space in the region was a collective challenge. She emphasized the need to be aware of expectations on both parts, and to proceed together in good faith.

86. In terms of next steps, Ms. Oberoi informed participants that a short summary report of this consultation would be drafted and shared for comment in the next few weeks. This report would inform future directions of work of the Regional Network on stakeholder engagement. If participants would have comments, questions and/or expressions of interest to join one of the working groups of the Regional Network, they should contact the Regional Network at UNRNAP@iom.int. Ms. Oberoi concluded by reiterating the Regional Network's commitment to nurturing the partnership with all stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region. She then closed the meeting.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

BKK Time	Details
11.30-12.00	<i>Virtual platform opens</i>
12.00-12.15	<p>Meeting moderator: Klaus Dik Nielsen, Stakeholder Liaison</p> <p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nenette Motus, Coordinator, Asia Pacific UN Network on Migration, and Regional Director, IOM Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (7 minutes) • Expectations from stakeholders: Sumitha Shaanthinni Kishna, Our Journey and Rey Asis, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (4 minutes each - 8 minutes)
12.15-13.00	<p>Session 1: The work of the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>Moderator: Pia Oberoi, OHCHR</p> <p>Overview of the work of the UN Network: Members of workstreams of the Regional UN Network on Migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core work stream 1 – Sashini Gomez, IOM • Core work stream 2 – Nicola Brandt, UNICEF • Core work stream 3 - Sabine Henning, ESCAP • Thematic work stream 1 (Alternatives to Detention) Carolina Gottardo, IDC • Thematic work stream 2 (Climate Change) – Chris Richter, IOM • Q&A
13.00-13.30	<p>Session 2: Supporting the follow-up and review of the GCM at the global level</p> <p>Moderator: Sashini Gomez, IOM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the regional review in a global context and plans for the IMRF, Jonathan Prentice, UN Migration Network Secretariat (5 minutes) • Discussants: Ellene Saana, Center for Migrant Advocacy and Chris Frazer, Anglican Movement New Zealand (5 minutes each - 10 minutes) <p>Q&A</p>
13.30-13.45	BREAK
13.45-15.15	<p>Session 3: Strengthened stakeholder engagement with the Regional UN Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakout session 1 (60 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-moderators: Nicola Brandt, UNICEF and Saramma Chandy, The Lords Universal College of Education • Breakout session 2 (60 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-moderators: Saranya Chittangwong, UN Women, and Ryan Figueiredo, Equal Asia Foundation • Breakout session 3 (60 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-moderators: Klaus Dik Nielsen, Stakeholder Liaison and Md Shamsuddoha, Center for Participatory Research and Development-CPRD • Breakout session 4 (60 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-moderators: Sabine Henning, ESCAP, and Sabir Farhat, Pakistan Rural Workers Social Welfare Organization (PRWSWO) <p>Co-moderators Shabarinath Nair, ILO and Estrella Dizon-Anonuevo, Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenary discussion (30 minutes)
15.15-15.30	<p>Conclusion and Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses and closing: Syeed Ahamed, Institute of Informatics and Development (IID) and Co-Chair Migration Technical Working Group (BDUNNM) and Fish Ip, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) (4 minutes each - 8 minutes): • Pia Oberoi, OHCHR (7 minutes)

