



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



United Nations
Network on Migration
Working Better Together



Multi-stakeholders dialogue on the GCM Regional Review in the Arab Region Concept Note

I. Background

The global dialogue on migration has gained increased momentum in the past decades that has led to the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016 by the UN General Assembly. In this Declaration, Member States committed to launch a process of intergovernmental negotiations that culminated in the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and formally endorsed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018. The GCM with its 23 objectives and their associated actionable commitments and suggested actions, provides a 360-degree approach to migration governance and offers a road map to help achieve safe, orderly and regular migration. Its guiding principles place the human rights and well-being of people at its core and call for a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach to migration governance that is gender sensitive and child responsive.

To ensure its effective implementation, Member States decided that the GCM includes a call for voluntary follow-up and review. At the global level, the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), which will be held every four years beginning in 2022, will serve as the primary intergovernmental platform to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all the objectives of the GCM. The implementation of the GCM will be reviewed at the regional level to monitor the progress on its implementation, beginning in 2020, and every four years thereafter, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders so that its outcome will inform the IMRF. To ensure a thorough and inclusive regional review, Member States are encouraged to prepare a voluntary GCM review to be presented during the regional review. A Concept Note and a guiding template for the voluntary GCM reviews were prepared in line with that developed by the UN Network on Migration (see attachments).

To assist in the preparation and organization of regional reviews, Member States requested support from IOM as Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration. Member States also invited relevant sub-regional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations, including the United Nations regional economic commissions and regional consultative processes on migration. Furthermore, Member States underlined the importance of engaging with all relevant stakeholders to ensure a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to achieve an effective implementation, by building strong cooperation and partnership with migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, workers' and employers' organizations, the private sector, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, national human rights institutions, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders.

Migration issues are a priority in the Arab region, which continues to be marked by complex migration patterns, with many Arab states serving as countries of origin, transit and destination. In 2019, the numbers of migrants and refugees hosted in the region exceeded 40 million, with women constituting almost one-third of them, while more than 31 million people migrated from Arab countries, almost half of whom stayed in the region ¹.

The outbreak of COVID-19, a health emergency at its core, that has also triggered an economic crisis has had an unprecedented impact on mobility worldwide, both in terms of regimes for border and migration management as well as the situation of all migrants, including those displaced by conflict or disaster. It has also highlighted the risk of human trafficking that is faced by migrant communities and has made detection, protection and prosecution far more challenging. It also shed light on the importance and contributions of migrants to our societies, who are still working in key sectors of the economy to provide essential services to fulfil basic needs of people of all ages, genders and backgrounds.

Against this backdrop, and in response to the global UN reform initiatives, an Issue Based Coalition on Migration (IBC/M) was established, which currently includes the membership of 20 UN agencies and the League of Arab States. Its scope of interest includes the different dimensions of human mobility including international migration, rural to urban migration, climate change-induced migration, among others. The members agreed to form a Regional UN Network on Migration in coordination with the IBC/M as per the GCM General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/73/195. The Regional UN Network supports the Member States' efforts to conduct the voluntary national review of the GCM and coordinates the efforts of national UN Networks on Migration, taking due consideration of a whole-of- government and whole-of-society approach. These national UN Networks already established or currently being discussed in countries of the region have mandates to engage with external partners and can assist engagement at the country level.

II. Multi-stakeholders Dialogue on the GCM Regional Review in the Arab Region

As part of the effort to conduct the GCM regional review in the Arab region, and in line with the GCM guiding principles that call for a whole-of-society approach in the GCM follow-up and review, UN ESCWA and IOM, in cooperation with the members of the Regional UN Network on Migration in the Arab Region, will organize a dialogue with all relevant stakeholders including migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations, trade unions, parliamentarians, National Human Rights Institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the media and other relevant stakeholders at global, regional and national levels in consideration with age, gender and diversity approach.

As reflected in the above new developments decided both by Member States and the UN Secretary-General, the need to include all relevant stakeholders in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM, is widely acknowledged. All relevant stakeholders are invited to actively contribute to national consultations and planning processes while building constructive and forward-looking engagements with the government.

¹ UN DESA. International Migrant Stock, 2019. Available at <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>

The UN agencies in the Arab region acknowledge the particularly crucial role that CSOs and other stakeholders are playing in supporting and providing direct assistance to hard-to-reach migrants prior to the pandemic, and in the context of the pandemic, at a time where many agencies and embassies have limited access to migrants under the severe movement restrictions. There is consequently mutual values added by exchanging diverse views among the UN system and all the stakeholders to ensure inclusive approach in the GCM Regional Review in the Arab region.

a. Objective

The objectives of the dialogue are to:

1. Provide stakeholders with an overview of the recent developments on migration governance at the global, regional and national levels and highlighting the new structures in place for coordination on migration and the timeline towards the 2020 Regional follow-up and review;
2. Encourage peer learning and collaboration among different stakeholders regarding their engagements and contributions to the GCM implementation, follow-up and reviews at regional and national levels;
3. Discuss means for ensuring optimal engagement and inputs of relevant stakeholders to the GCM Regional follow-up and review process in the Arab region.

b. Date and Venue

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the multi-stakeholder dialogue will be held through Kudo, a virtual platform allowing for simultaneous translation. To ensure the widest participation possible and to allocate enough time for meaningful discussions, the dialogue will be organized over two sessions, and the participants can register for both sessions or the session most convenient for them. Details for accessing the online consultations will be shared with the participants accordingly.

The sessions will be organized on Tuesday, 27 October and Tuesday, 3 November 2020 from 11 am to 12:30 pm (Cairo time).

c. Outcome

The outcome of the multi-stakeholder dialogue is twofold. First, the sessions will raise the awareness of stakeholders on the GCM national and regional Follow-up and Review processes and will allow them to share their experiences with regards to the engagement and efforts in the national level GCM Follow-up and Review processes.

Second, the dialogue will guide the development of the regional review modality in the Arab region to ensure a whole of society approach to the Voluntary Follow-up and Review process in the region.