

I. 2017 Achievements: Highlights of Key Activities since 22nd RCM:

The [Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region](#), co-chaired by ESCWA, the League of Arab States and the International Organization for Migration, was established to coordinate the work programmes on international migration of regional actors in the Arab States region and to promote joint research on migration. Other UN agencies also expressed their interest in joining throughout the year, and which in September 2017, UNCEF sent a formal request, which would bring the total membership to 17 participating organizations following approval of co-chairs.¹

In 2017, the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab region maintained frequent communications and coordination meetings. The activities of the working group primarily focused on two main objectives: the coordination of regional consultations in preparation for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, and the completion of the *2017 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region*. The working group also plans to hold a capacity building workshop for Member States in the last quarter of 2017.

- **The Regional Consultation on International Migration: Input to the Global Compact**

The [Regional Consultation on International Migration: In Preparation for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Arab Region](#) was held on 26-27 September 2017 in accordance with General Assembly Resolution A/71/280, which requests the regional economic commissions to cooperate with other relevant entities of the United Nations system, member States and relevant stakeholders to hold debates and provide input to the preparatory process of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

The consultation was organized by the working group co-chairs with contributions of other working group member agencies. It assembled a wide range of stakeholders, including high-level representatives of Arab governments, international and regional organizations, representatives of civil society networks, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations, experts and academia. The main objectives of the consultation were to:

¹ As of November 2017, the members of the working group include: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), the League of Arab States (LAS), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Entity for Gender Empowerment (UN-Women), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

2017 Progress Report for the RCM

Working Group on International Migration

Co-chairs: LAS, IOM, and UN-ESCWA

- Enhance Member States' and other stakeholders' awareness of the global process leading to the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
- Discuss key migration issues, priorities and challenges in the Arab region, which Member States would like to see considered in the Global Compact negotiations; and
- Build a common understanding of the importance of the Global Compact as a framework to address the Arab region's and Arab countries' priorities in the area of international migration.

In preparation for this consultation, members of the working group contributed five issue briefs on emerging topics for migration. These briefs included:

- [Issue Brief#1: Migration Drivers, Trends and Patterns](#)
- [Issue Brief#2: Decent Work and Labour Mobility](#)
- [Issue Brief#3: Protection of Migrants in Vulnerable Situations](#)
- [Issue Brief#4: The Migration and Development Nexus](#)
- [Issue Brief#5: International Cooperation and Migration Governance](#)

Participants in the consultations agreed to several affirmations and commitments, including recognizing the importance of human rights and dignity of migrants and their families, regional and international cooperation on migration, positive contributions of migrants in countries of origin and destination, and the need to recognize and address root causes of irregular migration to reduce adverse impacts. The consultations of course highlighted a view to understanding the specificities of migration and its impacts in the Arab region. Participants also agreed to submit a summary of the current regional consultation to the United Nations Secretariat as part of the outputs from regional consultations in preparation for the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Key messages emanating from regional consultations will also be presented at the stocktaking meeting in Mexico on 4-6 December 2017.

- **2017 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region**

In the first half of 2017, ESCWA and IOM led the Working Group on International Migration through the final stages of editing and review to prepare for the publication of the *2017 Situation Report on International Migration: Achieving Migration-Related SDGs in the Arab Region*. The report is second in a series and included contributions and feedback from across the working group. ESCWA and IOM oversaw the consolidation of comments, and the report is currently in the final stages of editing and translation into Arabic. The final manuscript will be shared with the members of the working group in December 2017. The final report is expected to be launched in early 2018.

- **Capacity Building**

It is expected that before the end of 2017, the working group will organize and conduct a capacity building training targeting senior government officials to further work with Member States on emerging migration issues.

II. Main Activities and Outputs Planned for 2018:

The working group will have an opportunity to take stock of its activities to date and to discuss lessons learned, membership, terms of reference, proposed work programme as well as key outputs for 2018-2019. Based on previous years and preliminary discussions, the Working Group on International Migration in the Arab region is considering the following key activities and outputs to take place in 2018:

- **Launch of the 2017 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region (early 2018).**

It is expected that the *2017 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region (SRIM)* will be launched in early 2018. Following the launch of the report, ESCWA and IOM will convene a working level meeting to discuss the group's main activities and outputs for 2018.

- **Begin Preparations for the 2019 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab Region**

The co-chairs will convene a meeting of the working group to discuss the 2019 SRIM process, timeline and focus. The working group will aim to agree on modalities for preparation, resources, and responsibilities.

- **Follow the Progress toward the General Assembly's 2018 Intergovernmental Conference on International Migration with a view to adopt a Global Compact on Migration (February 2018).**

The outcomes of the September 2017 Regional Consultation on Migration in the Arab Region for the Global Compact on Migration were consolidated and shared to inform deliberations in a global conference taking place in Mexico, 4-6 December 2017 and subsequently intergovernmental negotiations in February 2018. The working group will continue to follow the updates on this global process, including the negotiations working towards a Global Compact on Migration in September 2018.

III. Decisions Requested from the Members of the RCM:

These additional two issues are pending discussion with the working group:

- As of September 2017, UNICEF had requested to join the RCM Working Group on International Migration in the Arab Region. This request is pending a decision by the co-chairs of the Working Group.
- All working group members are kindly requested to inform ESCWA of any updates regarding their leadership and focal point(s).