



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH: LEVERAGING MIGRATION FOR STRONGER, MORE INCLUSIVE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

The GCM is rooted in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and recognizes that well-managed migration contributes to positive development outcomes. Covering all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner, the GCM outlines how to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration while minimizing factors that compel irregular movement or cause or exacerbate vulnerability at different stages of migration. The 360-degree vision, ten guiding principles and 23 objectives, commitments and subsequent actions, therefore, provide a robust framework to support actors in achieving the migration dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Implementing the GCM presents a significant opportunity to leverage the positive relationship between migration and development to achieve the 2030 Agenda. By addressing challenges, mitigating situations of vulnerability and exclusion and capitalizing on the opportunities that mobility presents for development, migrants and migration can be an integral aspect of development efforts.

The GCM guiding principle of sustainable development states:

“The Global Compact is rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and builds upon its recognition that migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the sustainable development of countries of origin, transit and destination, which requires coherent and comprehensive responses. Migration contributes to positive development outcomes and to realizing the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially when it is properly managed. The Global Compact aims to leverage the potential of migration for the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the impact this achievement will have on migration in the future (GCM, para. 15 (e)).”

Beyond the Guiding Principle, the GCM also recognizes migrants and diaspora as key agents of change in communities through the specific GCM Objective 19: Migrant and diaspora contributions, which states:

“We commit to empower migrants and diasporas to catalyse their development contributions, and to harness the benefits of migration as a source of sustainable development, reaffirming that migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the sustainable development of countries of origin, transit and destination (GCM, para. 35).”

THE IMPORTANCE OF A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Migration is a cross-cutting issue relevant to all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many of the SDGs contain specific targets and indicators that align with migration or mobility. Thus, how the international community addresses migration and diaspora will be a decisive factor in the achievement of the SDGs. During the Decade of Action, migration can accelerate progress toward achieving the SDGs; however, unaddressed or improper management of migration can also exacerbate inequalities and create new development challenges. The GCM “strives to create conducive conditions that enable all migrants to enrich our societies through their human, economic and social capacities, and thus facilitate their contributions to sustainable development at the local, national, regional and global levels” (GCM, para. 12).

When it is properly managed, migration contributes to positive development outcomes for migrants and their communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. Migrants often bring significant benefits to their communities through their skills, strengthening the labour force, enhancing investment and building cultural diversity. Migrants in the diaspora also play an important role in improving the lives of communities in their countries of origin through the transfer of skills, social capital and financial resources, which contribute to positive development outcomes.

It is crucial to recognize that while migration impacts development, migration is also affected by development. The reasons for and ways in which migrants move are impacted by development conditions. Inequalities have a significant

impact on migrants, their families and their communities, as well as on migration patterns. These inequalities must be adequately addressed to achieve sustainable development goals. Implementation of the GCM can significantly advance these efforts.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH IN PRACTICE



Integrate GCM implementation into SDG planning and processes. Wherever possible, link GCM implementation to relevant national and United Nations SDG-related plans, strategies and mechanisms, such as Common Country Analyses (CCAs), UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), national 2030 Agenda implementation plans and the work of national planning mechanisms that systematize the implementation of international mechanisms. Training for UN Country Teams on integrating migration into CCAs and UNSDCF has been developed through UNNM's Core Working Group 2.1 to support these processes.



Connect SDG and GCM review processes. Implementation of the migration-related aspects of the 2030 Agenda and the GCM must not occur in silos. The International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) provides an opportunity to assess progress towards global commitments to promote safe, orderly and regular migration in alignment with the SDGs. Where possible, data collection and review processes for

the GCM, including voluntary national GCM reviews conducted for regional reviews and the IMRF, should align with and feed into that of the SDG processes, such as states' voluntary national reviews and local governments' voluntary local reviews, for the annual High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and vice versa.



Mainstream migration into development policies.

Integrating (mainstreaming) migration into international, national and local policies, projects and plans ensures that the needs of migrants and effects of migration are considered across all governance areas such as development, health, education and more. This includes integrating migration into COVID-19 response and recovery, to build back better and leave no one behind. Integrating migration into development policies and practices helps to ensure migrants' rights, needs, voices, and capabilities are respected and that migrants are empowered to contribute to development. Following the four-step approach presented in IOM's *Migration and the 2030 Agenda: A Guide for Practitioners* can help put this into practice.¹¹ The Guide supports national and local government actors, policymakers and practitioners to implement the migration aspects of the SDGs to integrate migration into local or national development planning, by designing and implementing interventions that relate to migration in the context of the SDGs.

11. For interactive versions of this guide and to explore the linkages between migration, sustainable development and development sectors, see the M4D Net at www.migration4development.org.



Engage vertically and horizontally. The positive contributions of migrants and migration to development cannot be harnessed without active and effective engagement at all levels and across all sectors of government. Local authorities are on the frontlines of effective migration governance and maintain crucial expertise required to both protect and empower migrants to contribute to local and national sustainable development priorities. At the same time, a cross-sectoral approach is needed to ensure that migrants' rights, needs, and opportunities are considered across sectors including, for example, health and education. Establishing vertical coordination between national, regional and local levels of government and horizontal coordination between different government ministries will help strengthen the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches called for in the GCM and support positive development outcomes.



Migrants' role in COVID-19 socio-economic recovery

The pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on migration, development and the achievement of the SDGs. The ability to develop responses that mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic, protect people on the move and their families, and harness the positive power of migration to *recover better* – as called for in the *UN framework for responding to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19* – depends on a good understanding of the effects of the pandemic on human mobility and development.

COVID-19 has restricted the positive contributions of migrants and migration to advance inclusive growth and sustainable development. Migrants and their families are disproportionately impacted by travel restrictions and lockdowns, increased unemployment and uneven access to social protections. The pandemic has deepened pre-existing inequalities, and at times exposed many migrants, including migrants in irregular situations, migrants with precarious livelihoods or those working in the informal economy, and migrant women, girls and children, to situations of increased risk or vulnerability. Yet migrants play a crucial role in our COVID-19 response and recovery. Migrants make important contributions at the frontline of COVID-19 response efforts. In addition, migrants can help fill labour shortages in key sectors, and bring valuable skills, experience and innovative perspectives to recovery and development efforts. Inclusive and integrated development policies, good migration management and effective partnerships can help harness the positive potential of human mobility to build back better and spur development.

No country will recover from COVID-19, nor achieve the SDGs, without well-governed migratory movements and the effective inclusion and protection of migrants and their rights. Migrants must be empowered to contribute to COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery, for instance by: “restarting mobility and expanding safe and regular pathways; empowering diaspora through inclusive financial and investment strategies; ensuring equitable access to services; and protecting migrant workers along global supply chains and in recruitment processes.”¹² The vision and guiding principles of the GCM provide precisely the approach necessary to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as help get back on track to achieve the SDGs.

Resting on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the GCM presents a cooperative framework to guide COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. To find out how the 23 Objectives can guide COVID-19 actions and to access examples of positive migration-sensitive COVID-19 initiatives and responses by Member States, read “The Global Compact for Migration (GCM): Well Governed Migration as an Essential Element of Effective COVID-19 Response” and “Unlocking the Positive Impact of Migration on Sustainable Development to Recover Better, Faster and Stronger from COVID-19” available on <https://migrationnetwork.un.org> from the UN Network on Migration.

12. IOM, “Leveraging migration to recover better from COVID-19 and achieve the 2030 Agenda” (2021).