



**International Dialogue on Migration 2022**  
**Global Compact for Migration Implementation in Practice: Successes, Challenges**  
**and Innovative Approaches**

28 February–2 March 2022, 09:00-12:00 EST, online

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**Summary of conclusions**

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The first session of IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) in 2022 was held online from 28 February to 2 March, on the theme: Global Compact for Migration Implementation in Practice: Successes, Challenges and Innovative Approaches.

The session was dedicated to the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, as called for by United Nations Member States in United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/195 on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which states: “We invite forums such as the IOM International Dialogue on Migration, regional consultative processes and others to contribute to the International Migration Review Forum by providing relevant data, evidence, best practices, innovative approaches and recommendations as they relate to the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.” The IDM session aimed to encourage dialogue among IOM Member States, stakeholders, and partners on the progress made by the international community in advancing the objectives of the Global Compact since its adoption in 2018. Specific objectives, grouped into three themes and aligned with the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (document A/76/642), were given heightened attention during the discussions.

This session involved around 900 registered participants, out of which 70 per cent represented governments from approximately 150 countries. Along with representatives of governments, members of diasporas, academic experts and representatives of the private sector and civil society organizations participated in this session, exchanging views and sharing their experiences and examples of effective practices. The session was structured around seven panels led by 34 speakers and moderators, including the President of the Seventy-sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, one of the co-facilitators of the IMRF Progress Declaration, the Chairperson of the IOM Council, high-level policymakers and practitioners from governments (Canada, Egypt, Mexico, Philippines, Somalia, Sweden, Thailand, United States of America), senior representatives of the European Union and African Union Commission, representatives of partner United Nations agencies (United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Health Organization), as well as representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations, academic experts, youth organizations, migrants, members of diasporas, as well as private companies. The panels were designed to ensure a diversity of perspectives from all relevant stakeholders.

The panels addressed the following themes:

Day 1:

- **Panel 1:** Saving lives and protecting migrants in vulnerable situations
- **Panel 2:** Combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons

Day 2:

- **Panel 1:** Legal identity: enabling regular migration and access to rights
- **Panel 2:** Enhancing predictability and addressing inequalities for the future of human mobility in the pandemic era
- **Panel 3:** Migration, environment and climate change: from adaptation to regular pathways

Day 3:

- **Panel 1:** Migrant inclusion in COVID-19 recovery and social protection – a renewed social contract
- **Panel 2:** Rethinking skilled migration to address persistent labour shortages

The meeting was opened by the Director General of IOM, António Vitorino, who mentioned that the IDM was not just an opportunity to bring States and other relevant stakeholders together, but was especially an occasion “to set out some issues and concerns [...] some timely, some urgent, but also matters which risk being left behind in both domestic and multilateral discussions.” He also emphasized the urgent need to work together across borders, across economies and across sectors to enhance the predictability and certainty of cross border-mobility, while fully integrating public health and protection concerns and building capacity to manage admission and stay safely and equitably.

The Director General was joined in the opening session by Abdulla Shahid, President of the Seventy-sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Rabab Fatima, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the People’s Republic Bangladesh to the United Nations, who is also one of the two co-facilitators of the IMRF Progress Declaration, and Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Chairperson of the IOM Council, who delivered keynote speeches. In his remarks, the President of the General Assembly, recalled that the adoption of the Compact was a historic opportunity to shape a new global framework for migration. He urged participants to build on the IDM dialogue, and to use the intervening time between the IDM and the IMRF to listen and prepare. Speaking on behalf of the two co-facilitators of the IMRF Progress Declaration, Ambassador Fatima shared their expectations for the Progress Declaration and mentioned the timeliness and value of the IDM session, not only for identifying the priorities of all stakeholders for the Progress Declaration, but for allowing for a deeper understanding on the way forward to reach a common ground. She further called on Member States and other stakeholders to guide the co-facilitators with specific ideas and inputs to strengthen the collective action to achieve the commitments outlined in the Global Compact. The Chairperson of the IOM Council noted the challenging time at which the Dialogue was taking place and called for strengthened cooperation and governance on migration and better and stronger humanitarian responses based on international human rights law. Emphasizing their importance given their inclusive and transparent nature, she further noted that the IDM discussions could contribute in a significant and pertinent way to the IMRF.

The main outcomes and conclusions of the three-day discussion are summarized below.

**Day 1: Reducing risks and vulnerabilities for migrants**

**The need to strengthen and improve cooperation on saving lives, protecting the rights of migrants and reducing risks and vulnerabilities for migrants.**

- Participants mentioned the unique challenges posed by the deaths and disappearances of migrants and highlighted that solving cases of missing persons required transnational mechanisms involving countries of destination, transit and origin. Some speakers called for the establishment of a high-level panel on deaths in transit to bring continued attention to the issue.
- Actions to identify migrants who have already died or gone missing, and supporting families impacted by those losses need to be stepped up. At the same time, concrete action on the prevention of loss of life is also needed and efforts must be extended to policy changes that address the risks caused by existing deterrence-based migration frameworks.
- Participants drew attention to the need for better data collection to enable identification of dead and missing migrants and to inform policy responses, and for better data protection. The migratory context is highly sensitive. The exclusive use of data for humanitarian search purposes therefore needs to be assured
- There was consensus among speakers on the need to expand regular migration pathways and regularization options to offer safe legal alternatives to current dangerous irregular migration routes and, thereby, to undercut criminal smuggling and trafficking networks. Speakers also called for effective and impactful collaboration and meaningful multi-stakeholder, whole-of-government, whole-of-society and cross-sectoral partnerships, including with the financial and technology sectors.
- Participants also emphasized that data on trafficking in persons, both in terms of administrative records and prevalence estimates, were still limited, which reduced the effectiveness of anti-trafficking responses. Additional efforts were thus needed, particularly to improve data granularity and coverage.
- While the criminal justice approach to addressing smuggling and trafficking is important and progress is being made on that front, criminal justice should target organized criminal networks not smuggled and trafficked migrants or the humanitarian organizations working to save lives and protect migrants in situations of vulnerability. The criminal justice approach needs to go hand in hand with a rights-based approach. More broadly, anti-smuggling and counter-trafficking efforts must focus more on prevention in the sense of increasing human security – creating jobs, addressing discriminatory practices in our society – to aid the criminal justice approach.

### **Day 2: Facilitating regular migration**

#### **The need to address unregulated migration, to protect the rights of people on the move and facilitate access to services.**

- Speakers called for people on the move, including irregular migrants to be recognized as a person before the law, to enjoy respect for human rights without discrimination and to have the right to a legal identity and adequate documentation to protect their rights and facilitate access to services. For migrants, lacking proof of legal identity increases the risks of unsafe and irregular migration. Lacking legal documents makes it more difficult for migrants to reunite with family abroad and to return to their country of origin. It presents an additional threat to migrants caught up in crisis situations as they may find it harder to access critical services, including international evacuation assistance.

- Participants underlined that many States still lacked robust and inclusive civil registration systems or the capacity to issue adequate identity and travel documents and to link these to national identity management systems and common databases. The lack of consular services to register life events and issue documentation for nationals abroad, while safeguarding the right to privacy and protection of personal data, was also a concern. There is a need to strengthen these capacities in countries of origin, and through consular representations abroad, as well as to ensure stronger cooperation between States.
- There is also a need for the standardization of identity documents, such as passports and identity cards, across countries, including civil documents, and for digitalization of access to legal identity. Speakers also highlighted the need for countries to improve national civil registration to ensure non-discriminatory access to legal identity for all, regardless of migratory status, and to counteract the emergence of a parallel shadow society that enhanced vulnerabilities and fed both segregation and crime.

**The need for human rights-based predictability of human mobility and migrant-centred, inclusive responses during times of crisis.**

- The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated how integral migrants are to the societies they reside in and the essential role they play in key economic sectors. However, it has also highlighted and exacerbated the structural inequalities and challenges already faced by migrants, especially by those in irregular situations or situations of vulnerability. Speakers insisted on the fact that increasing access to services boosted predictability, while ensuring that migrants remained healthy through access to health services protected them and the communities they lived in and enhanced their contributions.
- In order to enhance predictability in the migration regime, participants noted that more transparent and increased collaboration in terms of migration management and the provision of easier and a greater number of pathways for regular migration were needed. A cautious approach should be taken regarding the increasing calls for digitization, as such steps could result in human rights violations and exacerbated inequities.
- Speakers mentioned efforts to reach migrants and refugees in conflict situations and fragile States through the COVAX Facility, which had donated 1 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines to more than 144 countries. Given the inequitable access to vaccines globally, they also mentioned the need for countries to not request proof of vaccination as the only pathway to exit or enter a country.
- Discussions touched upon the importance of fully assessing and including the needs of people on the move and addressing the issues pertaining to human mobility as Member States negotiate a potential international legal instrument on pandemic preparedness. Panelists called for coherence with ongoing political and policy processes including those for the future pandemic preparedness and response treaty, the preparations for the IMRF, work on the Sustainable Development Goals action and monitoring and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.
- Participants expressed commitment to the achievement of universal health coverage and equity in access to COVID-19 vaccines, and emphasized the importance of an equitable, rights-based approach to migration. The best way to ensure the rights of migrants was to also ensure universal access to the social services provided by the State, in particular its social health regimen. The COVID-19 pandemic

had reiterated the need for collaboration among States to build a universal regime to prepare for future disasters.

- Participants called for better protection for migrants from racism and xenophobia and for the building of a new global social contract to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals that took into account labour migration systems and addressed the drivers of forced migration, such as poverty, unemployment, war, crises, climate change and natural disasters.

**The need to develop tangible action to integrate migration issues into climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies and frameworks at the national and regional levels.**

- Although significant progress has been made to advance political discussions on migration in the context of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation at the global level, participants emphasized that a coherent and systematic implementation of global commitments and recommendations should continue to be strengthened, and that States must move towards more and improved regular migration for people affected by environmental disasters and climate change.
- Ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2022 (COP27), States and actors at national and regional levels should work together to ensure that human mobility induced by climate change is fully accounted for and addressed in global negotiations.
- Climate change adaptation must be complemented by implementation and financing, with a just transition approach; and regular pathways must be enhanced to support legal migration, with mobility creating and transferring resources and enhancing sustainable development in countries of origin and destination.

**Day 3: Advancing migrants' socioeconomic inclusion and empowerment**

**The need to build inclusive societies and expand social protections to empower migrants, including by providing them access to health care and vaccination.**

- Participants emphasized that it was imperative that COVID-19 recovery planning and social protection schemes were inclusive of the diverse needs and intersectional identities of populations at risk of being left behind in communities, such as migrant women, children, older persons, migrants with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics and persons with disabilities.
- Speakers drew attention to the importance of empowering migrants and diaspora communities to ensure fully inclusive national preparedness and response plans. To achieve this, countries must act together by developing or strengthening humanitarian and development plans through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. The importance of empowering both migrants and local communities in responding to the pandemic and combating stigmatization and discrimination, thereby fostering inclusive and cohesive societies, was also emphasized.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that global issues confronting the entire international community require cities – especially, as they are at the front line – to work together through partnerships, sharing and learning from each other. However, it was noted that local authorities could not work alone. It is critical that cities engage with local private partners as well with national

governments to find solutions to address some of the challenges experienced by migrant communities.

- Capacity-building activities should target young people, including migrant youth. Migrant youth should be included in all stages of policy and programme design, implementation and review, so that they can be part of the solution to make migration safe for everyone. There is a need to move beyond recognizing the vulnerabilities of migrant youth to maximize their role in spurring development and broader prosperity.

**The need for holistic and broad stakeholder cooperation to leverage cross-border skills mobility to respond to skills and labour shortages, while contributing to the socioeconomic development of countries of origin and destination, and migrants.**

- As countries across the globe confront new skills and labour requirements, there is a growing need for innovative and forward-looking approaches to address chronic shortages and develop regular, safe and orderly migration options that build the skills for a future of work. Speakers mentioned initiatives aimed at harnessing the skills that many migrants, including those in need of protection, already possessed and more importantly, were eager to put to work.
- Speakers pointed out that countries of origin were facing issues related to legal pathways for mobility and the mutual recognition of skills and qualifications. There is a need for partnerships and investment in joint skills development and mobility pathways to promote human capital formation and positive labour market outcomes in both countries of origin and destination.
- Integrating a skills lens into migration, education and labour market policies will allow for more targeted strategies in future that are tailored towards labour markets needs and will unlock the potential of migrants of different categories to participate in human capital creation and equitable economic growth.
- Speakers reported on progress on upskilling young men and women, training them, providing advice, and focusing on creating new job opportunities, including in the green economy, which was broadening their job opportunities and career prospects and enhancing their ability to contribute to labour markets at home or abroad.

At the end of the session, numerous government delegates applauded the diversity of perspectives and the quality of the discussions and reiterated the need for common efforts at national and regional levels to review Global Compact implementation efforts in preparation for the IMRF. The Global Compact requires an effective and comprehensive multilateral approach as well as strong international partnerships based on a shared understanding.

In her closing remarks, the Deputy Director General for Management and Reform, Amy Pope, noted that the session had been a great opportunity to discuss and exchange good practices, experiences of successes and challenges in implementing the objectives of the Global Compact ahead of the IMRF, which would involve taking stock of the outcome of the various Global Compact review exercises and identifying challenges and gaps. The results of the discussions would be captured in a summary report that IOM was aiming to have ready in time for the IMRF to serve everyone as a resource and as an input to the Forum, as requested in United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/195 adopting the Global Compact.