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UNDP Position Paper on the Global Compact for Migration

GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

OUTLINE

PREAMBLE

This paper outlines UNDP's development approach to migration and highlights our recommendations and commitments for the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. The paper highlights three key areas that UNDP will mainly focus on in support of Member States' implementation of the compact. Section 1 briefly describes the migration and displacement issues; Section 2 summarizes the GCM with a focus on the GCM Objectives as a reminder to the reader; Section 3 describes UNDP's global offer, suggestions and recommendations to Member States and partners; Section 4 zooms into the commitments UNDP is making towards support for Member States' implementation of the Global Compact for Migration; and Section 5 provides a few concluding remarks.

By advancing sustainable development and empowering migrants as agents of change and leaders in the development processes that shape their lives, UNDP envisages a more inclusive and prosperous world. This is central to the Sustainable Development Goals' principle of leaving no one behind and the importance of making migration work for all.

As the UN development agency and part of the UN Migration Network, UNDP is committed to supporting Member States achieve the objectives and commitments in the Global Compact for Migration. Thus, UNDP is ready to help in translating the GCM objectives and commitments into policies, strategies and programmable interventions that support nations, societies and the migrants themselves.

Already in September 2016, UNDP made specific commitments in support of Member States and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.[1] This paper and its commitments are also in line with those made in the New York Declaration.

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[1] UNDP Position Paper: New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Development Approaches to Migration and Displacement. September 2016.
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/position-paper-for-the-2016-un-summit-for-refugees-and-migrants-.html

MIGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – NOT A CRISIS, BUT A LONGER-TERM TREND

Around the world, people are on the move, looking for safer and better environments in which to live, to find work and prosper, and to reunite with family members abroad. Forced displacement is affecting over 70 million people worldwide, of whom over 25 million are refugees, while the rest are internally displaced or seeking asylum. Indeed, in 2017, there were 258 million international migrants globally[2] – a 49 percent increase since 2000. Women migrants constitute about 48 percent of international migrants, although women are in the majority of international migrants in Europe (52.4%) and North America (51.2%).

The movement of people occurs in different ways and for different reasons in different regions. Migration flows and trends are difficult to predict and monitor. Nevertheless, demographic trends, including a growing youth population, combined with limited jobs and livelihood opportunities, poverty, violent conflicts, weak governance, impacts of climate change and inadequate investment in human capital, are also expected to increase migration levels. For example, by 2030, which is the target date for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the number of youth is projected to grow by 7 percent, to nearly 1.3 billion,[3] and, by 2050, an estimated 35 percent of global youth will be in Africa. This will only magnify the urgency of adequately addressing migration.

On the positive side, migration plays a critical role in economic growth and development by meeting labour market shortages at all skill levels, enriching culture, providing remittances to migrant-sending and poor communities and increasing knowledge exchange and innovation across different socio-economic sectors. Overall, migration is an engine of economic growth, innovation and sustainable development. Millions of people seek new opportunities through migrating. Worldwide remittance flows are estimated to have exceeded US$601 billion in 2015. Of this, it is estimated that more than US$441 billion were sent by migrants back to their families living in developing countries – nearly three times the amount of official development assistance (ODA).[4] By increasing demographic and cultural diversity, migration can nurture technological innovation and the diffusion of new ideas.

Despite this, migrants are often criminalized and face harassment, animosity and violence in transit routes and host countries. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, sexual violence and forced prostitution. Other challenges are the disintegration of families; insufficient child and elder care; social anomalies; unprotected employment; and work in informal sectors. Due to gender stereotypes and other factors, migrants tend to be concentrated in the service sector (child and elder care, domestic work, sexual services). This sector has higher levels of unofficial employment. As a consequence, women have limited access to social and legal systems. At the same time, women migrant workers earn lower wages than men, even when equally qualified and engaged in similar activities.[5] Overall, the gender-differentiated impacts of migration in countries of origin and destination present a mixed picture of migration.

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[2] United Nations (2015). International Migration Report 2015, UNDESA, Population Division. Available from:
www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf

[3] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/YouthPOP.pdf

[4] World Bank Group, 2016. Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016. Available from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1199807908806/4549025-1450455807487/Factbookpart1.pdf. The true size of remittances, including unrecorded flows through formal and informal channels, is believed to be significantly higher. As of the third quarter of 2015, the average cost of sending back remittances worldwide remained close to 8 percent – far above the 3 percent target set in the SDGs. The cost of remittances is the highest in sub-Saharan Africa and in the Pacific Islands.

[5] http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdrp_2009_04.pdf

Although migration can create and strengthen bonds between countries and societies when it is approached in a coherent and balanced manner, regular and orderly migration is not always the norm. Recently, migration has also become a source of division between states and societies. Large movements of migrants have cast a shadow over the broader benefits of migration, with some receiving countries tightening border controls, laws and policies for migration. Furthermore, large movements of uncoordinated migrants strain national and local governments' capacities to provide adequate protection, basic services and an environment conducive to jobs and livelihood opportunities and to maintain social cohesion. In such cases, infrastructure and systems are also stretched beyond their limits.

For these reasons, UNDP believes that migration requires the integration of development with due regard for social, economic and environmental dimensions and respect for human rights. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development fully recognizes migration and displacement as core development considerations. The 2030 Agenda has introduced a range of specific SDG targets on migration[6] and pledges to "leave no one behind", including migrants, refugees, displaced persons and vulnerable host communities.

Addressing the impacts of migration and displacement are key priorities for UNDP. Thus, this paper outlines UNDP's position on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, herein referred to as the Global Compact for Migration (GCM). It outlines recommendations and presents UNDP's corporate commitments in support of Member States as they implement the Global Compact for Migration.

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[6] The SDGs urge all states and development partners to protect migrant workers' labour rights, promote safe and secure working environments (Target 8.8), implement planned and well-managed migration policies (Target 10.7), reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances (Target 10.c), produce high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated among others by race, ethnicity and migratory status (Target 17.18) and eliminate all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking of women (Target 5.2) and children (Target 16.2).

2 THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

In a reaffirmation of the commitments made in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016, through an intergovernmental process, Member States have drafted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration for adoption in Morocco on 11 to 12 December 2018. The adoption of the Global Compact for migration is a commitment by Member States to cooperate on international migration in all its dimensions.

This Global Compact rests on the purposes and principles espoused in the Charter of the United Nations. As highlighted in the GCM, the Global Compact also rests on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, core international human rights treaties, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, the Slavery Convention and the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Paris Agreement[7], the International Labour Organization conventions on promoting decent work and labour mobility, as well as on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the New Urban Agenda[8].

In the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, Member States committed to elaborate a Global Compact for Refugees and to adopt this Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The two Global Compacts, together, present international cooperation frameworks that fulfil their respective mandates as laid out in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Member States have recognized that migrants and refugees may face many common challenges and similar vulnerabilities. They are all entitled to the same human rights and fundamental freedoms, which must be respected, protected and fulfilled at all times. While both Compacts may be particularly vulnerable to the risk of violations and abuses of their rights, only refugees are entitled to additional protections under international refugee law.

The Global Compact for Migration is a non-legally binding, cooperative framework rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and focuses on migrants. This Global Compact aims to:

i) Mitigate the adverse drivers and structural factors that hinder people from building and maintaining sustainable livelihoods in their countries of origin, and so compel them to seek a future elsewhere;

ii) Reduce the risks and vulnerabilities migrants face at different stages of migration by respecting, protecting and fulfilling their human rights and providing them with care and assistance;

iii) Address legitimate concerns of communities, while recognizing that societies are undergoing demographic, economic, social and environmental changes that have implications for and result from migration;

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[7] Adopted under the UNFCCC in FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21.

[8] Source: Global Compact for Migration. Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Draft Rev 2. 28 May 2018.

iv) 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.

To achieve safe, orderly and regular migration, Member States have agreed on 23 objectives listed in Table 1. Each objective consists of a commitment and a range of actions to be undertaken to contribute to the achievement of the objective. The Global Compact is also based on the following cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles of equal relevance: people centredness; international cooperation; national sovereignty; observance of rule of law and due process; human rights; migration for sustainable development; gender responsiveness; child sensitiveness; whole-of-government approach; and whole-of-society approach.

Table 1 | Objectives for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

(1) Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies

(2) Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin

(3) Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration

(4) Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation

(5) Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration

(6) Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work

(7) Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

(8) Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants

(9) Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants

(10) Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration

(11) Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner

(12) Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral

(13) Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives

(14) Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle

(15) Provide access to basic services for migrants

(16) Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion

(17) Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration