

## Template for Notetaking for the IMRF virtual side-events

Date and time: Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (8-9am EDT)

Notetakers: Milad Pournik, UNESCWA

### Notes of the session

- H.E. Marta Lucía Ramírez, Vice President of Colombia
  - Colombia is a champion country with deep commitment and one that approaches migration as an opportunity, having a record of regularizing more than 1.8 million migrants.
  - Importance of raising awareness of shared responsibility we all have.
  - GCM objectives contribute to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
  - Importance of providing migrants access to formal and dignified jobs.
  - Paradigm shift from humanitarian assistance to socioeconomic integration.
  
- Ms. Sarah Lou Y. Arriola, Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines and Chair of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
  - Migration in the region had grown in scale, complexity and impact
  - Regional reviews had provided a platform to advance GCM implementation and to recognize the pressing implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrants and their families
  - Migration was recognized as an intersectional phenomenon, hence a shared responsibility
  - Main lessons included:
    - migrants and their families were development actors in countries of origin, destination and transit, especially through remittances
    - COVID-19 had exacerbated vulnerabilities of migrants
    - national action plans and laws were important for GCM implementation, and the Philippines has enacted a law that had an explicit provision for the realization of the 23 GCM objectives
    - better data and analysis were needed for evidence-based policymaking
    - since most migration was regional in nature, regional collaboration in migration governance was very important
  
- Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP
  - Scale of migration to and from the region had grown, most of which was intra-regional
  - COVID-19 had impacted migrants and their families
  - There was need to enhance data collection and capacity-building and engage with the academic community on this



- The Asia-Pacific Regional Review had been a success by adopting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in reviewing GCM implementation, and a new ESCAP report analysed its main findings and recommendations
- Countries in Asia and the Pacific should make migration a central element of the annual regional reviews of the 2030 Agenda, building on the synergies between both documents
- Dr. Mounir Tabet, Deputy Executive Secretary (ESCWA)
  - Main challenges to the implementation of the CGM in the Arab region include:
    - Weak capacity to collect, centralize and share migration data
    - Political and economic instability, occupation and conflict continue to be adverse drivers of migration
    - Limited financial and human resources available to translate migration governance frameworks into programs and initiatives
    - The need for increased intra-regional coordination and collaboration.
  - Need to work together to:
    - Guarantee the rights of migrant children and women
    - Ensure that migrants have access to services without discrimination
    - Strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation on migration governance
    - Make sure migration is always a choice and not a last desperate alternative
- Ms. Edlam Abera Yemeru, Director, Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division (ECA)
  - Large number of migrants staying within the region
  - Migration is on the development agenda and a priority
  - Important role of remittances, which come close to \$80 billion in Africa
  - Migration in context of overlapping crises, including COVID-19, is an opportunity to help aid recovery and build longer-term resilience
  - Private sector should be more involved
  - National and regional information systems require strengthening, especially data collection
- Mr. Simone Cecchini, Director, CELADE - Population Division (ECLAC)
  - Urgent to close structural gaps, stemming from lack of development – lack of work opportunities, inequality, etc.
  - Pandemic played a role in slowing down flows with border closures and lockdowns but still a resurgence of push factors due to pandemic effect on economies
  - Migration characterized by vulnerability including extortion by criminal groups
  - Promote recognition of contribution of migrants to development processes



- In January 2023, ECLAC is co-hosting the International Forum on Migration Statistics in Chile
- Reaffirmed support for all objectives of GCM and will continue to provide technical support to Member States
- Professor Joseph Teye, Director of the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana
  - 72% of migrants from West Africa stay within the African continent, stressing the intra-regional nature of migration
  - Poverty is not the only driver of migration, as West African countries develop, expect even more migration from the region. Also noting that conflict and climate change also drive migration.
  - COVID-19 has shown that many countries do not have systems in place to provide support to migrants during times of emergency.
  - Improvements seen in area of migration governance in the region, for example, Ghana mainstreamed migration into development planning, in line with the GCM.
  - Efforts made to improve data collection, including migration observatory in Morocco and the Centre for Migration Research in Mali but still a lot more needs to be done.
- Dr. Ayman Zohry, President of The Egyptian Society for Migration Studies
  - Recommendations on implementation of regional and national action plans
  - Data needed and related to all GCM objectives actually
  - Need for consistency between national laws and international frameworks
  - Need to develop gender-sensitive migration policies
  - Call for greater emphasis on the role of cities in migration governance, with a need to involve local bodies

#### Summary (500 words max)

- The Regional Commissions held a side-event to reflect on gaps, challenges, and opportunities in implementing the GCM across their respective regions.
- Moderated by Ms. Yera Ortiz de Urbina, Deputy Director, and Ms. Rosa Malango, Director, of the Regional Commissions New York Office, the event benefitted from speeches by high-level government representatives, UN officials, and other stakeholders.
- Participants highlighted the significant scale of migration to and from their respective regions. They also stressed that while migration is a global phenomenon, much migration takes place intra-regionally.
- H.E. Marta Lucía Ramírez, the Vice President of Colombia, called on all of us to acknowledge the shared responsibility we have in migration management. She also promoted a paradigm shift from one that is focused on humanitarian assistance to one that prioritizes socioeconomic integration.
- Common challenges identified by many of the speakers were:



- Data: although some progress had been made, developing data capacity was critical for informing evidence-based policies for migration. This was critical for the achievement of all 23 GCM objectives.
- COVID-19: the global pandemic often revealed that many countries did not have systems in place to provide support to migrants during crises. At the same time, the pandemic allowed migrants to demonstrate their ability to contribute to their host and origin societies.
- Structural gaps: addressing the push factors of migration, including lack of job opportunities and stark inequality, was an ongoing challenge that must be addressed to ensure that migration was a choice rather than a desperate alternative.
- Several common opportunities were:
  - Remittances: these flows have remained significant despite the global pandemic and have much potential to contribute to development in origin countries.
  - Linking migration with development: capitalizing on the positive consequences of migration to help achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
  - Building resilience: using migration as an opportunity to aid recovery and build longer-term resilience.
- To address the common challenges and build on the identified opportunities, speakers agreed that the following to be critical:
  - Cooperation: strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation on migration governance.
  - Holistic approach: adopting a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach given the shared responsibility different stakeholders have and the intersectional nature of migration.
  - Inclusion: promoting effective socioeconomic integration of migrants in host countries can help reap gains from their unique skills and experience and support host countries to overcome the challenges they face. This includes providing migrants access to formal and dignified jobs.