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Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/195 of 19 December 2018, which requested the Secretary-General, drawing on the United Nations Network on Migration, to report to the General Assembly biennially on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the activities of the United Nations system in this regard, and the functioning of the institutional arrangements. It focuses on progress since the previous report from 2021 (A/76/642). This report further responds to the request by the General Assembly in resolution 76/266 (Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum) for the Secretary-General to propose a limited set of indicators to assist reviews of the Compact and a strategy for improving disaggregated migration data (paragraph 70); and to provide actionable recommendations on strengthening cooperation on missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress (paragraph 76). This report builds on written inputs from, and consultations with, Member States, stakeholders and United Nations entities. Its drafting was overseen by the Network's Executive Committee.[1]

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[1] https://migrationnetwork.un.org/executive-committee.

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I.   Introduction

1. Human mobility is central to today's major global transformations. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (the Compact) has proven invaluable in guiding national and collective approaches to migration governance, including in response to challenges such as climate change, post-pandemic recovery and accelerating efforts to meet the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This framework for international cooperation is needed now more than ever, a sentiment reflected by participating States and stakeholders at the International Migration Review Forum (the Forum) in May 2022.

2. At the Forum, participating States renewed their commitment to the Compact, emphasizing the importance of cooperative approaches to meeting the challenges and harnessing the opportunities of migration. They acknowledged that facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration both protects migrants and promotes development. The critical contribution of migrants and migration to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was reiterated at the Summit of the Future and in the Political Declaration of the 2023 SDG Summit.

3. Since the 2022 report, many States and stakeholders have strengthened rights-based and people-centred migration governance, offering promising practices for others. In the Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum[2] (the Progress Declaration), States committed to accelerate the Compact's implementation, in line with its 360-degree vision, guiding principles and comprehensive approach, recognizing that greater efforts are needed to develop ambitious national responses. States further requested recommendations on missing migrants and humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress to prevent loss of life in transit; and development of a limited set of indicators to assist States in conducting inclusive reviews of progress related to the Compact's implementation. The United Nations Network on Migration (the Network) has responded to these requests in Section III and Annex I of this report.

4. Efforts to save the lives and protect the human rights of migrants must be rapidly scaled up. Current safe and regular migration pathways have failed to respond to migration trends, often pushing migrants towards hazardous and irregular routes that leave them vulnerable to violence, exploitation, abuse and even death.[3] Notably, 2023 was the deadliest year of the past decade for migrants on these routes.[4] Adverse migration drivers and development challenges continue to compel human mobility within and across borders. Migration issues cut across the humanitarian and development spectrum and must be considered in relevant instruments and forums, including the Global Compact for Refugees, the Global Refugee Forum, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties (UNFCCC COP), and processes related to the Sustainable Development Goals.

5. Demographic changes, economic shifts and labour market trends will affect labour migration dynamics. Labour migration can contribute to climate adaptation strategies and just transition,[5] while

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[2] A/RES/76/266.

[3] IOM, *World Migration Report 2024*.

[4] IOM, *A Decade of Documenting Migrant Deaths* (2024).

[5] IOM, 'Harnessing Labour Migration to Respond to the Climate Crisis' (2024).

technological advancements are creating new employment opportunities and reshaping recruitment practices. However, these developments will not meet their potential unless labour migration pathways are rights-based, regular and well-governed. The adoption of labour migration frameworks and agreements is encouraging, but their effective implementation will be key to preventing abusive practices such as unfair recruitment, exploitation and human trafficking. These issues contribute to migrant workers facing a prevalence of forced labour that is three times higher than national workers.[6]

6. We cannot achieve the goal of 'leaving no one behind' without upholding and protecting the human rights of all migrants and their families, irrespective of their status. Dehumanizing and divisive narratives on migrants and migration have featured in many recent elections, with migrants cast as scapegoats for broader societal problems and fears. The Compact offers a powerful counter-narrative that recognizes migrants as rights-holders and emphasizes their significant and diverse contributions to our communities. It promotes balanced, evidence-based dialogue and decision-making, advocating for rights-based and people-centred approaches to migration governance as the most effective means to deliver the best outcomes for all.

Global data and trends

- There were an estimated 281 million international migrants at the end of 2020, representing 3.6 percent of the world's population.[7]

- Almost 68,000 deaths or disappearances during migration have been recorded since 2014 (with many more unrecorded), including around 8,500 in 2023.[8]

- In 2019, there were an estimated 169 million migrant workers worldwide, including 70 million women.[9]

- Remittances to low-and middle-income countries reached an estimated USD 656 billion in 2023, surpassing foreign direct investment and overseas development assistance.[10]

- There were 35.5 million international child migrants in 2020.[11]

- Data from 150 countries identified 450,000 trafficking victims between 2003 and 2021 (60 percent women). Children account for 35 percent of identified victims.[12]

- 117.3 million people were displaced globally by the end of 2023, including 68.3 million internally displaced persons due to conflict and violence,[13] of whom 28.1 million were children.[14]

II.   Progress on implementation

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[6] ILO et al, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery* (2022).

[7] IOM, *World Migration Report 2024* (2024). The UN Statistical Commission's operational definition of "international migrants" includes refugees and others in need of international protection.

[8] IOM, Missing Migrants Project (2024).

[9] ILO, *Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers* (2021).

[10] World Bank, *Migration and Development Brief 40* (2024).

[11] International Data Alliance for Children on the Move, *9 Facts about Children on the Move* (2024).

[12] UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (2022).

[13] This figure does not include persons internally displaced by climate change and disasters.

[14] UNHCR, *Global Trends Report 2023* (2024).

7. States increasingly integrated migration as a cross-cutting issue in national development plans and other relevant frameworks. States referenced the Compact in 21 percent of Voluntary National Reviews for the 2023 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, an increase from 9 percent in 2022, and discussion of migration in Voluntary National Reviews has become more frequent and substantive. The Network published a tool to support integration of the Compact into Voluntary National Reviews, Voluntary Local Reviews and Voluntary Subnational Reviews of the 2030 Agenda.

8. The Champion countries initiative grew to 35 States. Champion countries deepened and expanded State engagement with the Compact, generating promising practices, facilitating peer-learning, strengthening regional and cross-regional dialogue and ensuring migration was well reflected across United Nations forums.

9. The sections below provide an overview of promising practices advancing implementation of the Compact's 23 objectives and guiding principles. They are structured into five thematic areas reflecting State inputs and the Compact's 360-degree approach. Further examples are available through the Migration Network Hub's Repository of Practices.

A) Enhancing regular migration pathways and minimizing adverse drivers

10. Migration should be a choice, not a necessity. In the Progress Declaration, States committed to enhance and diversify safe and regular migration pathways that are flexible and respond to human rights, development and humanitarian needs, and other considerations including labour market realities, the principle of the best interests of the child, family life and reunification, and the protection needs of victims of human trafficking and gender-based violence, as well as other situations of vulnerability. States also reiterated the need for enhanced cooperative efforts to address structural factors that compel people to migrate, including the adverse effects of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters, underdevelopment and lack of quality education and sustainable livelihoods. [15]

11. While progress has been made in adopting measures to regularize migrants, these often grant only temporary stay with limited access to labour markets and basic services. [16] Twenty-two Western Hemisphere countries endorsed the 2022 Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection, committing to expand regular migration pathways. The United States of America and Canada launched the Safe Mobility Initiative in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala, offering pathways through family reunification, humanitarian parole, special sponsorship options, refugee resettlement, and labour opportunities grounded in fair recruitment and respect for labour rights. Colombia and Ecuador have regularized thousands of Venezuelan migrants, while Australia has introduced protections against visa cancellations, and introduced a short-term visa that includes work rights to help migrant workers remain in the country to exercise their labour rights.

Climate and human mobility

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[15] A/RES/76/266, paras.27, 29, 58, 59.
[16] *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, 20 April 2023* (A/HRC/53/26).

12. Every year, disasters and loss of livelihoods related to both sudden and slow-onset hazards compel millions of people to move.[17] Policy coherence between the Compact and global policy frameworks is critical, including the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Governments and stakeholders have increasingly recognized and prioritized the link between human mobility and climate change. At UNFCCCCOP 28, States decided to operationalize the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage and include human mobility in its scope. Constituents at the 2023 International Labour Conference stressed the need for coherence between just transition frameworks and labour mobility schemes.[18] Migrant workers in sectors such as construction and agriculture are particularly exposed to heat stress and other climate-related occupational hazards, resulting in avoidable workplace deaths and violation of the fundamental right to a safe and healthy workplace.[19]

13. The Network's CLIMB Database showcases over 1,600 policy instruments containing provisions relevant to human mobility in the context of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation. States have facilitated admission and stay of people displaced by disasters and climate change, including through regular migration categories, such as temporary residence and work permits, provision of exceptional migration measures including humanitarian visas and temporary protection status, relaxing of visa requirements and fees including through free movement agreements, use of special certificates or other supplemental documentation, such as transhumance agreements, and planned relocation.[20] In 2022, Argentina created a three-year humanitarian visa for people displaced by disasters in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

14. Anticipatory Action based on early warning systems must be expanded to reach more communities at risk, including migrants. Furthermore, progress towards universal access to early warning systems under the Secretary General's 'Early Warnings for All' initiative must be accelerated. Continued investment is needed in community-led resilience-building that empowers individuals and communities to prepare for and respond to challenges posed by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation.

15. States have adopted multiple frameworks addressing climate and human mobility, including the Continental Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change; the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility; Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States; and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Declaration on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situations.

16. Countries have mainstreamed human mobility into national climate change, disaster risk reduction, and development plans. National climate adaption plans in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan address impacts of climate change on human mobility pathways. Panama included a protocol for the care of migrants in disasters in its Regional Disaster Response Drill in 2023. However, while 85 percent of National

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[17] Platform on Disaster Displacement, *Implementing the Commitments Related to Addressing Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation* (2022).
[18] ILC.111/Record No.7A.
[19] ILO, *Ensuring safety and health at work in a changing climate* (2024).
[20] UN Network on Migration (UNNM), *Regular Pathways for Admission and Stay for Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability* (2021).

Adaptation Plans (NAPs) submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) NAP Central as of February 2024 referenced human mobility, only 66 percent contained concrete provisions to address mobility. The UNFCCC's Taskforce on Displacement is finalizing technical guidance on integrating human mobility and climate change linkages into national climate change planning processes.[21]

17. Rural communities remain exceptionally vulnerable to climate impacts. Rural dimensions should be considered when integrating human mobility into climate adaptation policies. In India, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) commenced a three-year Joint Programme through the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (the Fund) to enhance resilience of migrant and vulnerable households in coastal and drought-prone areas. Tanzania and Ethiopia, with FAO, are implementing a project to foster youth employment in rural areas and promote sustainable rural livelihoods, reducing the need to migrate.

Labour migration and decent work

18. Migration pathways responding to labour market needs must be rights-based[22] and underpinned by decent work for all, guided by General Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment, International Labour Organization's (ILO) guidance on temporary labour migration, and the Network's Guidance on Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements and Regular Pathways for Admission and Stay for Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability. In 2022, ILO constituents agreed that the right to a safe and healthy working environment is a fundamental right applying to all workers without exception, including migrants in irregular situations.[23]

19. States continued to ratify international labour standards and the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and many adopted or revised labour migration policies. Morocco and Tunisia developed national labour migration policies closely aligned with national employment policies and benefitting from social partner engagement. The 2023 South African Development Community (SADC)Protocol on Employment and Labour enhances rights-based labour migration governance and regulatory systems in Southern Africa. The Philippines created the Department of Migrant Workers to consolidate government agencies mandated to protect the rights and welfare of overseas Filipino workers. Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia signed Protocols for Free Access to the Labour Market in the Open Balkans.

20. Eliminating recruitment costs is key to ensuring fair and ethical recruitment, aligning with SDG target 10.7. ILO's 2024 Global Study on Recruitment Fees and Costs shows increased awareness about the illegitimacy of recruitment fees, with most of the 110 countries surveyed regulating or prohibiting recruitment fees for migrants.[24] However, recruitment fees and costs, together with wage underpayment, continue to generate USD 37 billion in annual illegal profits from international migrants in forced labour.[25] To address unfair recruitment, Sri Lanka developed a Code of Conduct for Licensed Recruitment; and Bangladesh revised its Overseas Employment and Migrants Act to regulate sub-

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[21] UNFCCC, Warsaw International Mechanism Teaser 6.
[22] OHCHR, *Human Rights and Temporary Labour Migration Programme in and from Asia and the Pacific* (2022).
[23] ILC.110/Resolution I.
[24] ILO, *Global Study on Recruitment Fees and Costs* (2024, forthcoming).
[25] ILO, *Profits and Poverty* (2024).

agents and established a taskforce and mobile courts to identify and charge recruitment agents and intermediaries engaging in unfair practices.

21. Migration pathways tying a worker's migration status to their employer exacerbate power imbalances and deter migrant workers from reporting exploitation and joining unions. In 2023, the United States of America adopted a policy protecting migrant workers who raise concerns about workplace violations from deportation. In 2024, Australia enacted a law decriminalizing undocumented workers and confirming that workplace protections apply to all workers regardless of migration status.

22. Migrants' contributions are enhanced when they can develop their skills and qualifications and have them recognized. In Pakistan, the Government and the Employers Federation launched the Skills Passport in 2023 to create opportunities for entrepreneurship, higher learning and upward employment mobility. In 2022, the United Kingdom launched the Recognition Arrangements Grant Programme to provide financial support towards recognition arrangements for professional qualifications. Countries in the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation have developed a South Asian Qualification Referencing Framework to facilitate mutual understanding of skills and qualifications and enhance recognition of migrant workers' skills in destination countries.

23. The European Union launched "Talent Partnerships" with Bangladesh, Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan and Tunisia to match skills and needs between the European Union, its Member States and partner countries. Skills mobility partnerships, if designed through social dialogue, robust skills planning, consideration of work conditions in countries of origin and destination, quality data, and with a people-centred approach that invests in vocational training, can help employers and destination countries meet skill shortages and contribute to development in origin countries.

B) Rights-based border management and protecting migrants in vulnerable situations

24. There is a worrying tendency to externalize migration governance and to intensify border controls, coupled with increasing securitization and deterrence measures that often expose migrants to risks of human rights violations. These trends have led to pushbacks at borders, arbitrary detention, discrimination, containment in designated areas, limited access to basic services, and the criminalization of migrants, human rights defenders and those providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress.[26]

25. Advances towards non-custodial alternatives to immigration detention made during the COVID-19 pandemic have been reversed in many States, with some using electronic monitoring of migrants in ways that exceed necessity and proportionality. However, others have adopted alternatives to immigration detention that are compliant with human rights and offer replicable practices. For example, Colombia prohibits detention of children and has regularized large numbers of migrants. Türkiye adopted a law on alternatives to immigration detention. Thailand progressed in evaluating the implementation of its whole-of-government memorandum of understanding on alternatives to immigration detention. Additionally, States, including Belgium and Canada, have invested in case

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[26] A/HRC/54/81.

management systems, working with migrants residing in the community to achieve case resolution. Evidence emerging from these models demonstrates high levels of compliance, often achieved through partnerships between governments, United Nations agencies and civil society organizations.[27]

26. Nevertheless, concern remains over the growing number of migrants in vulnerable situations who face heightened risks of human rights violations. Vulnerability may result from various factors, including reasons for leaving countries of origin, circumstances in transit, at borders and at destination, as well as personal attributes such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, health or migration status, or a combination of these and other factors. To protect these individuals, legislation and migration policies and practices must be consistent with obligations under international human rights treaties, utilizing the Principles and Guidelines on the Human Rights Protection of Migrants in Vulnerable Situations that are grounded in these obligations. Migrants in irregular situations are disproportionately vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation and marginalization, often denied access to rights and essential services and employed in unregulated sectors without workplace protections.[28] In response, initiatives like Ireland's 2022 regularization of 'long-term' undocumented migrants aim to support their social integration and labour market mobility.

27. Strengthened legal identity infrastructure and processes, including through digital innovation, are vital for safe and regular migration, facilitating access to services and reducing risks of statelessness. Jordan is registering the births of all foreign newborns irrespective of their parent's legal status. The Philippines introduced electronic apostilles in 2024 to enhance accessibility of civil registry documents to Filipinos worldwide. States have also enhanced consular services through facilitation of information and assistance, including in emergency situations, issuance of identity documents and capacity-building for consular officers. Honduras rolled out mobile 'mega-consulates' in the United States of America to support Honduran migrants, including with birth registration. Cambodia, Indonesia, Kenya and Uzbekistan reaffirmed commitment to strengthening consular services and the capacity of crisis management departments to assist migrants in need. Argentina developed a 'Guide to addressing gender-based violence' for its Consular Network to respond to cases of violence where migrant status is an intersecting factor increasing vulnerability.

Children

28. Without safe migration pathways and child-sensitive support mechanisms for integration or reintegration, children are at risk of being denied access to education and healthcare, and may face violence and exploitation, including trafficking, child labour and early marriage. Inclusion of all children, regardless of migration status, in national child protection, education, health and social protection systems is crucial and in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.[29] States have implemented the Compact's child-sensitivity guiding principle. Germany is not practicing pre-deportation detention of children, Ireland has prohibited the immigration detention of children by law, and in Guinea unaccompanied children are placed with foster families instead of being kept in detention centres or shelters. States, such as Egypt and Morocco, have included migrant children in their national child protection systems and are expanding family- and community-based alternative care for

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[27] UNHCR, *Evaluation of the Refugee and Migrant Advice Service's Alternative to Detention Pilot* (2023); European Programme for Integration and Migration, *Alternatives to Detention: Building a Culture of Cooperation* (2020).
[28] Ibid, para.17.
[29] UNICEF, IOM, *Inclusion of Children in the Context of Migration into National Child Protection Systems* (2024).

unaccompanied children and non-custodial community-based reception for children with families. The Mexican state of Tlaxcala eliminated the need for an apostille for migrant children's enrolment in public schools, and within Burkina Faso's national child protection system, mobile teams and one-stop facilities provided migrant children with healthcare, psychosocial assistance and counselling in remote and border regions.

29. Some States have progressed on child-sensitive returns and reintegration. El Salvador implemented a sustainable reintegration program for returnee children and their families (including social protection, health, psychosocial support and education). Luxembourg convenes a multidisciplinary committee to analyze a child's best interests before a return decision, enabling an unaccompanied child or their representative to be heard. Mexico launched the National Care Model for Children and Adolescents on the Move and facilitated the incorporation of returnee children into the school system. Additionally, a child protection memorandum of understanding was signed between the United States of America and Mexico in 2023 to improve transborder protection of unaccompanied children.

Returnees

30. Utilizing the Network's existing guidance,[30] measures must be strengthened for safe, dignified and rights-based return and readmission and sustainable reintegration, including through clear and mutually agreed procedures that uphold international human rights obligations. Returns must be accompanied by sustainable reintegration measures, at individual, community and structural levels, that recognize differentiated needs based on intersecting factors including age, gender, rural contexts, and labour market opportunities.[31]

31. Local governments in Senegal established Orientation and Support Desks for prospective and returning migrants in rural municipalities. The Philippines partnered with United Nations entities in the Fund's Joint Programme on Bridging Recruitment to Reintegration in Migration Governance. Additionally, IOM and the European Union launched Migrant Protection, Return, and Reintegration programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa, which adopt a route-based approach to aiding vulnerable and stranded migrants, offering protection and assistance and facilitating assisted voluntary return and reintegration in partnership with target countries.

Adopting a route-based approach

Migrants and refugees along the Horn of Africa to Yemen and Southern Africa routes face harsh conditions and protection risks, including human trafficking, arbitrary arrest and detention, xenophobic attacks, and forced returns. The Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa to Yemen and Southern Africa (2024) is an inter-regional, inter-agency plan steered by governments with support from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, United Nations system and stakeholders. It provides a route-based, comprehensive framework for joint humanitarian and development programmes

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[30] UNNM, *Ensuring Safe and Dignified Return and Sustainable Reintegration* and *Checklist* (2021).
[31] IOM, UNICEF, *A Child Rights Approach to The Sustainable Reintegration of Migrant Children and Families* (2020); FAO, Samuel Hall, *Global Lessons Learned Report on Sustainable Reintegration in Rural Areas* (2023); ILO, *Guidelines on Labour Market Reintegration upon Return in Origin Countries* (2023).

for migrants, coordinating life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection; improving access to essential services; and supporting development to address adverse migration drivers along these routes.

Gender

32. Migration experiences and patterns are influenced by deeply entrenched gender inequalities. Access to decent jobs and education is still severely limited for millions of women and girls. This, combined with limited access to regular migration pathways, increases the likelihood of women moving through low-skilled labour migration pathways that offer insufficient protection, or turning to dangerous irregular migration routes. Sexual and gender-based violence remains prolific in the context of trafficking in persons, with women three times more likely than men to be subjected to physical or extreme violence by traffickers.[32] Migrant women domestic workers are particularly vulnerable, especially when domestic work is unrecognized in national labour laws. As of May 2024, among 82 countries that completed a Migration Governance Indicators assessment, only 23 percent had a migration strategy addressing the different needs of migrant women.

33. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and other sexual and gender minorities (LGBTIQ+) migrants face distinct risks of human rights violations and marginalization due to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Factors such as criminalization, social exclusion and deprivation of rights often contribute to their decision to migrate while also increasing their vulnerability to trafficking. LGBTIQ+ migrants face risks of physical and sexual violence in transit, including in immigration detention. Entry at borders can be denied when official documentation does not match a person's gender identity; and there is an increased risk of separation at borders and denial of healthcare and other services for non-heterosexual couples and their families. LGBTIQ+ migrants continue to experience higher rates of unemployment and poverty, facing significant disadvantage in the labour market and being more likely to work in the informal economy.[33]

34. Countries strengthened laws, policies and services to uphold principles of equality and non-discrimination and progress implementation of the Compact's gender-responsive guiding principle. Malaysia amended the Employees' Social Security Act to include migrant domestic workers under employment injury schemes; Spain extended residence permits to foreign survivors of sexual violence; and Canada requires federal departments to apply a gender-based analysis when developing policies, programmes and legislation to ensure they address the intersecting experiences of migrants, particularly women and girls. In Bangladesh, 60 recruitment agencies are licensed to screen, match, recruit and place women migrant workers using criteria to ensure gender-sensitive recruitment. Ethiopia strengthened migration policies, laws, programmes and services from a gender perspective with UN-Women's support, including strengthening the collection, analysis and publication of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics on migration.

Victims and survivors of human trafficking and smuggled migrants

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[32] UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022*.
[33] UN-Women, *Migration Experiences of People with Diverse SOGIESC* (2023), pp.4-6.

35. Between 2022 and 2023, there was a 58 percent increase in the number of smuggled migrants or attempted smuggling cases in the Mediterranean.[34] Additionally, organized criminal gangs are trafficking people into online scam operations in Southeast Asia, forcing them into criminal activity.[35] Ringleaders of smuggling and trafficking networks are rarely successfully prosecuted. Victims and survivors of human trafficking and smuggled migrants must never be criminalized but supported through child-sensitive and gender-responsive approaches; and States should invest in understanding intersections with organized crime, technology and linkages between migration, forced labour and human trafficking.

36. In 2023, the European Commission launched a Call to Action for a Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling, calling for greater cooperation between countries, international organizations and service providers (including digital) on prevention, response and alternatives to irregular migration; and ASEAN adopted a Declaration on combatting trafficking in persons caused by the abuse of technology. The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), with support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), supported authorities from over 33 countries to conduct Operation Turquesa V along human trafficking and migrant smuggling routes to the United States of America and Canada, leading to 257 arrests and the rescue of 163 potential victims. There have also been efforts to counter human trafficking and improve support for victims and survivors at the national level. Bahrain established an Office for the Protection of Victims and Witnesses of the Crime of Trafficking in Persons. Ecuador and Peru established a Binational Immediate Response Team to enhance protection for trafficking victims and support coordination between law enforcement, including providing residence permits to remain in either country or assistance to return home safely.

C) Access to services, inclusion, socio-economic integration and meaningful participation

37. Many migrants are excluded from social protection and face obstacles to accessing rights and services, including discrimination based on nationality or migration status, language and cultural differences, excessive costs, administrative hurdles, fear of deportation, limits on free movement, and lack of information about entitlements. Migrant workers, and their children and families make up millions of the 4.1 billion people worldwide without access to social protection.[36]

Access to basic social and health services

38. Although the right to health is universal, a 2024 IOM study found that all migrants had the same access to government-funded health services as nationals in only half of 100 countries assessed.[37] The World Health Organization's (WHO) Refugee and Migrant Health System Reviews supported Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Jordan, Thailand and Uganda to ensure that health systems promote and protect migrants, refugees and vulnerable host populations. In 2023, the Rabat Declaration was adopted by 49 States to accelerate efforts to improve the health of migrants, refugees and host communities. WHO observed progress in at least 63 countries since adopting its 2019-2030 Global Action Plan on

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[34] UNODC Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants, "Update #2: April 2024" (forthcoming October 2024).
[35] OHCHR, *Online Scam Operations and Trafficking into Forced Criminality in Southeast Asia* (2023).
[36] ILO, *World Social Protection Report 2020-22* (2021).
[37] IOM, *Migration Governance Insights* (2024).

Promoting the health of migrants and refugees, including Cambodia's National Policy and Strategic Plan on Migrant Health 2022-2030. The Fund established a Joint Programme to strengthen resilience of health systems and migrant populations to climate change and disaster risks in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. In 2024, the 77th World Health Assembly for the first time prioritized the health of migrants and refugees in the WHO General Programme of Work, with specific indicators to track equal access to essential and emergency health care. The European Commission developed a comprehensive mental health strategy in 2023 that considers the specific needs of migrant populations; and the Sudanese Red Crescent and Sudan's Ministry of Health agreed to facilitate a roster of doctors providing free health services to migrants referred by Red Crescent Humanitarian Service Points.

39. Education is fundamental to the life trajectories of young migrants, helping to foster their capacity to integrate and contribute meaningfully to societies and reach their full potential. Many States have enhanced efforts to include migrant children in their national education systems.[38] Thailand provides access to education for all children, regardless of migration status, with around 100,000 children affected by migration registered in and attending government-run schools; Colombia has included over 600,000 migrant children in the education system; and Luxembourg provides free education to all migrant children irrespective of migration status.

Social protection and socio-economic integration

40. The disproportionate exclusion of migrants and their families from social protection heightens risks of poverty and marginalization. Twelve Southern African countries developed National Action Plans to support the SADC Guidelines on the portability of social security benefits for migrant workers; and ASEAN countries adopted the Declaration on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers. Oman extended coverage for employment injury, maternity and sickness benefits to migrant workers on equal terms as nationals, and the Tunisian Social Security Agency examined access to social protection for Tunisian migrant workers abroad, training staff to fast-track claims for migrant workers and dependents.

41. National, regional and local efforts have been made to strengthen the socio-economic integration of migrants and to foster social cohesion. Colombia established centres in nine cities that operate with local authorities to assist migrants and returnees through advice and referral. Peru has developed a National Strategy for the Socio-Economic Integration of the Refugee, Migrant and Host Population. Portugal established an Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum to strengthen reception and integration of migrants and refugees, streamlining documentation processes with a focus on family reunification, and improving access to services.

Meaningful participation

42. Meaningfully engaging migrants in policy- and decision-making processes is essential to generating sustainable outcomes. Our Common Agenda recognizes youth as key to delivering on the 2030 Agenda, recommending strengthened youth engagement in decision-making at all levels,[39] including in

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[38] See UNICEF, *Education, Children on the Move and Inclusion in Education* (2022).

[39] *Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 3: Meaningful youth engagement in policymaking and decision-making processes* (United Nations publication, 2023).

migration governance. The Network involved young people in many of its activities, including the Global Youth Consultation on Ending Child Immigration Detention organized by the Migration Youth and Children Platform, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the International Detention Coalition. The European Commission implemented its European Union Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027, which recognizes that participation of migrants in decision-making processes can be empowering and ensure that inclusion policies reflect real needs.

43. Migrant workers continue to face formal and informal barriers to their fundamental right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. To address this, as of 2022, Algeria has allowed non-national employers and workers to form organizations and become members of executive boards of trade unions. Guinea-Bissau adopted a new labour code extending freedom of association protections to foreign workers.

Countering harmful migration narratives

44. Fear-driven, anti-migration narratives remain prevalent and are used to justify marginalization and exclusion of migrants from basic services and civic engagement. Such narratives can lead to violence against migrants and human rights defenders and have corrosive effects on wider society.[40]

45. In 2024, Champion countries discussed deconstructing and reconstructing migration narratives to counter xenophobia, racism and discrimination, and exchanged promising practices on building balanced, evidence-based narratives. They stressed the media's role in shaping perceptions, countering negative stereotypes and showcasing migrants' contributions. States, United Nations entities and stakeholders have engaged in training for the media on accurate and rights-based reporting on migration. Spain adopted a Strategic Framework for Citizenship and Inclusion against Racism and Xenophobia (2023-2027) and established the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) rolled out its #StandUp4Migrants campaign and toolbox, including in Australia, Malaysia and Central America to challenge and reframe harmful migration narratives and offer guidance on shifting narratives. Furthermore OHCHR launched guidance for stakeholders on using behavioural science to inform narrative change interventions.

D) Harnessing migration to accelerate sustainable development

Sustainable Development Goals and localization

46. Migration and migrants are central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the six transitions identified as accelerators. Migrant workers play a critical role in sustainable food systems. Digital connectivity can improve transparency and efficiency of migration processes, promote faster and cheaper remittance transfer and foster financial inclusion. Investment in education, decent jobs and social protection will strengthen migrants' contributions and include them in sustainable development. Women migrants, in particular, make important contributions to sustainable

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[40] *Report of the Secretary-General on the Human rights of migrants, 3 August 2023* (A/HRC/54/81), para.11.

development, remitting a larger proportion of their earnings than men, bringing with them skills, innovation, cultural diversity and beliefs that help challenge traditional assumptions about gender roles, and transferring knowledge and skills.[41]

47. States are increasingly recognizing the connection between migration and sustainable development. Germany has helped establish Centres for Migration and Development in nine countries since 2023 to provide advice to prospective migrants and returnees, while the Better Regional Migration Management programme of the United Kingdom operates across the East and Horn of Africa to make migration safer and more productive, contributing to poverty reduction. The ILO, Spain and Morocco implemented the 'Women as financially independent rural actors' project to strengthen the capacity of seasonal women migrant workers to engage in sustainable income-generating activities upon return.

48. Local actors must be empowered in their efforts to support migrants and refugees. The Mayors Mechanisms' Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees delivered 70 pledges to the Forum and, in 2023, over 120 pledges to the Global Refugee Forum and Global Forum for Migration and Development. However, many participating cities report not being invited by governments or regional organizations to join discussions on implementation or review of the Compact.[42]

49. Financing remains a barrier for local actors, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, but there has been progress in development and migration funds localizing resources. For example, 75 percent of the Fund's programmes in 2022 had implementation agreements with local governments, and the Fund has included city organizations in its Steering Committee. The IOM and United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Global Joint Programme on Making Migration Work for Sustainable Development operated across 11 countries to foster sustainable interventions, including 25 national and local development plans, policies and laws integrating migration, empowering over 80 local and regional authorities and creating opportunities for over 20,000 migrants and community members.

Remittances and diaspora contributions

50. Ensuring that remittances promote the financial inclusion of migrants and their families in countries of origin and destination is key to maximizing their development impact, including through enhanced digitalization and linkages with tailored financial services. The Central Banks of the Gambia and Uganda included remittances in their National Financial Inclusion Strategies. The International Fund for Agricultural Development partnered with the European Union, Spain, Luxembourg and Sweden to promote rural development through the Financing Facility for Remittances; to deliver programmes in Africa and Central Asia to promote cheaper, faster and safer remittance transfers, and enhance financial inclusion of the rural poor. Remittance transfer costs must be reduced, with the average cost of sending USD 200 in remittances in 2022 still over double the SDG target of 3 percent.[43]

51. If well-structured, coordinated and supported, the human and financial capital of diasporas can be a powerful instrument to contribute to development goals, crisis response and mobilization of domestic

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[41] UN-Women, *Submission to Special Rapporteur's Report on Revisiting Migrants' Contributions* (2024).

[42] Mayors Mechanism, *Cities and Regions Localising the Global Migration and Refugee Compacts* (2023).

[43] IOM, *Leveraging Human Mobility to Rescue the 2030 Agenda* (2023).

resources. Uganda's first Diaspora Agribusiness Conferences and Investor Award recognized the contributions of diaspora "agripreneurs" to agrifood employment opportunities. The Philippines spearheaded a campaign to improve the diaspora's financial literacy. The Climate Vulnerable Forum, under Ghana's presidency, organized the first Migrants4Climate Award, identifying innovative initiatives led by, or with, migrants and diasporas.

E) Enhancing data, international cooperation and partnerships

Data, and evidence

52. Research and evidence are critical in responding to protection gaps and reaching those excluded from official statistics, including migrants in the most vulnerable situations. The International Data Alliance for Children on the Move, with a cross-sectoral membership including twenty-five States, generated better data on the needs of migrant and displaced children. Mexico launched the Children on the Move Registry, through which child protection authorities collect data on migration drivers, transit conditions, and risk and protection factors, providing disaggregated information. Serbia commenced a Joint Programme of the Fund to strengthen capacity on migration data collection. The Union du Maghreb Arabe published its first Labour Migration Statistics Report in 2023, while the SADC initiated establishment of a Labour Market Observatory focusing on labour migration and skills.

53. In 2022, the Platform for Disaster Displacement developed a framework and indicators to assist in monitoring implementation of commitments under the Compact related to human mobility and disasters, climate change and environmental degradation. Disaster Displacement Indicators developed by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and IOM were piloted in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mozambique and the Philippines, to standardize data collection on disaster displacement and improve evidence-based policymaking. In 2023, UNICEF and IDMC published new data on climate displacement and children to support mitigation measures.[44] WHO developed a global research agenda on health, migration and displacement in consultation with over 180 stakeholders across regions, including an Implementation Guide and Toolkit to adapt the agenda to national contexts to provide evidence to inform policy-making and implementation.

Partnerships

54. The complexities of human mobility cannot be addressed without increased cooperation, including sharing accurate and timely information and adopting whole-of-government approaches. El Salvador created the National Coordination Mechanism on Human Mobility comprising over 45 government institutions. South Africa developed an Inter-Departmental Protocol for the Multi-Disciplinary Management of Unaccompanied and Separated Migrant Children. Portugal introduced a network of 'one-stop shop' response services for migrants at national and local levels to provide coordinated support for migrants.

55. Multistakeholder partnerships are crucial to address migration in all its dimensions, reflecting the Compact's whole-of-society guiding principle. Strengthened partnerships with the private sector can

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[44] UNICEF, *Children Displaced in a Changing Climate* (2023).

mobilize innovative financing mechanisms and leverage insights and resources for skills development and decent job creation for migrants. Diverse stakeholders bring different voices and needs to migration dialogues and processes that should be encouraged and facilitated by States and the United Nations system. Civil Society Organizations in Ghana established a platform to coordinate their contribution to the Compact's implementation. In 2023, Canada launched a Strategic Immigration Review that included dialogues with migration thought leaders, businesses, Indigenous representatives, youth councils, migrants, and a public online survey. In 2024, Colombia launched a Civil Society Roundtable for Migration to facilitate stakeholder participation in the national migration system.

Complementarity between Compacts

56. States and stakeholders have reiterated the strong interlinkages between the Compact and the Global Compact on Refugees, particularly in the context of mixed movements. While recalling that migrants and refugees are distinct groups governed by separate legal frameworks, both Compacts are mutually reinforcing not only in common thematic areas but also in different areas reflecting their distinct aims and separate legal and policy frameworks. Expanding safe and regular migration pathways, and promoting rights-based, safe and dignified return and readmission and sustainable reintegration, can prevent and address situations of vulnerability but also alleviate pressure on asylum systems. The approach of humanitarian actors to providing humanitarian assistance to migrants and refugees based on needs allows equal access to life-saving services in mixed movements. The Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection reflected a collective commitment to enhance protection for migrants and refugees and foster cooperation for safe, orderly, humane and regular migration. The 'route-based approach' builds on this complementarity to provide more effective and predictable responses to challenges faced by refugees and migrants. Guidance on the complementary implementation of both Compacts, developed jointly by the Network, IOM and UNHCR, is encouraged.

57. Numerous pledges at the Forum, and pledges on protection at sea for refugees and migrants, trafficking and alternatives to immigration detention during the 2023 Global Refugee Forum – together with the Network's pledge on complementarity between the Compacts – will benefit migrants, refugees and host communities. The Network's work on alternatives to detention encouraged pledging to end immigration detention of both migrant and refugee children. FAO pledged to make its data collection in forced displacement contexts inclusive of all displaced populations. The Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees reflects commitment by local and regional governments to implement both Compacts in unison.

III.   Additional mandates

A) Indicators to support review of the Compact's implementation

58. In paragraph 70 of the Progress Declaration, Member States requested the Secretary-General to propose in this report a limited set of indicators to review progress related to the Compact's implementation, drawing on the Sustainable Development Goals indicator framework and other relevant frameworks. They also requested a strategy for improving disaggregated migration data at

local, national, regional and global levels. The Network established a dedicated workstream to address these requests, led by the United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs and IOM and comprising sixteen members from civil society organizations, academia and United Nations entities.

59. The Network mapped existing indicator frameworks and indicators, assessing their relevance to the Compact's 23 objectives. Building on existing frameworks and data collection processes, including the Sustainable Development Goals indicator framework and the work of the United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, the final proposal consists of 27 core and 83 additional indicators grouped by objective.[45] The indicators are accompanied by key background information and statistics on international migration.

60. Development of the indicators was based on consultations with States and stakeholders, including five regional consultations in 2023, two global consultations in 2024 for Member States and stakeholders with over 360 participants including 61 States, and two online surveys. Nearly fifty States, international organizations and stakeholders responded to the first survey, while 25 responded to the second survey.

61. The proposed indicators are a voluntary tool that can be used at Member States' discretion. The Network stands ready to provide technical guidance and other assistance to Member States to apply the proposed indicators in their national contexts.

62. The Compact encourages regular and inclusive national reviews of progress and countries may use the proposed indicators to help assess their own progress towards implementing the Compact's objectives and cross-cutting principles and guide further action based on their own context. Member States may also include these indicators in Voluntary National Reviews to enhance coherence between policies and commitments related to the Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals.

63. These indicators mark an important development in efforts to improve the reliability, timeliness, and accessibility of data to support the Compact's implementation. Additionally, the key background information and statistics on international migration that accompany the proposed set of indicators are crucial to reviewing progress, supporting harmonization of concepts, definitions, and methodologies for their collection and information sharing.

64. Many of the core indicators are part of established indicator frameworks, with data available for many countries and regions, and they are often accompanied by guidance on metadata, concepts and sources that could facilitate State efforts to pilot the indicators. Where lacking, relevant data could be collected, disaggregated and analysed.

65. The comprehensive strategy for improving disaggregated migration data[46] helps make the proposed set of indicators fit for purpose to support the Compact's implementation in line with the 2030 Agenda. The strategy identifies sex, age and migratory status as some of the critical characteristics for which such indicators could be disaggregated, where applicable and relevant.

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[45] https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sg-report-2024.

[46] https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sg-report-2024.

B) Strengthening cooperation on missing migrants and preventing loss of life in transit

66. Since 2014, almost 68,000 migrants are known to have died or gone missing along land and sea routes,[47] with the true number likely far higher. The scale of this tragedy and the frequency of preventable deaths and disappearances constitute an intolerable and solvable humanitarian crisis.

67. Member States, in paragraph 76 of the Progress Declaration, requested actionable recommendations on this issue. Developed in consultation with States and stakeholders, the recommendations annexed to this report (Annex I) and focus on prevention, search and identification, support to families, accountability and justice, and data and evidence. The recommendations build on existing commitments and recommendations and draw from an expanding body of practices.

68. For the purposes of these recommendations, humanitarian assistance is considered a means to prevent deaths and disappearances, including in situations where movements surpass the capacity of receiving countries to respond. In the context of mixed movements, noting the absence of mechanisms specifically dedicated to addressing such situations, the recommendations should also apply to refugees and other persons in need of international protection, without prejudice to their specific rights under international law, reinforcing the complementarity between the Compact and the Global Compact on Refugees.

IV. United Nations system institutional arrangements

69. The Network continued to coordinate United Nations system-wide support to governments to implement the Compact, including through tools, guidance and platforms for dialogue and knowledge exchange at local, national, regional and global levels.

A) Capacity-building mechanism

70. In the Compact, Member States established a capacity-building mechanism in the United Nations to support their implementation efforts. It consists of the Demand-Driven Facility, the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, and the Migration Network Hub (the Hub), all of which are supporting States to deliver on the Compact's commitments.

71. Through the Demand-Driven Facility, the Network supports national level implementation. The Network established regional inter-agency and multi-stakeholder facilitation teams to support United Nations Country Teams to strengthen United Nations support for the Compact's rollout. Country Networks embedded in United Nations Country Teams have provided technical assistance to authorities to integrate the Compact into their policies. Ecuador, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Mali and Türkiye are undertaking this process, and El Salvador, Ghana, and Kenya developed National Implementation Plans that reference concrete steps to advance the Compact's implementation.

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[47] IOM, Missing Migrants Project (2024).

72. The Fund, in its fifth year of operation, has supported 21 Joint Programmes. In 2023, the USD 20 million funding target was reached, with over USD 57 million mobilized since the Fund's inception. Funded Joint Programmes cover all thematic areas and regions, with the participation of 16 United Nations entities and a wide range of partners. In 2023, the Fund became the first-ever United Nations pooled financing mechanism to adopt a child sensitivity marker. It also adopted a Guidance Note on Engagement with Civil Society, Migrants and Communities, and an increased focus on climate and mobility that offers opportunity for collaboration with other climate change funding mechanisms. Strengthening multi-country programming and an enhanced focus on health, saving lives and child protection were identified as priorities for the Fund by its Steering Committee in 2023.

73. The Hub continues to bring together the Network and stakeholders to share knowledge to strengthen implementation. It includes a Repository of Practices incorporating over 300 peer-reviewed practices, hosts the Demand-Driven Facility and houses the CLIMB Database.

B) Follow-up and review

74. States participated in the first-ever International Migration Review Forum held in May 2022 under the auspices of the General Assembly. Some States included local authorities and other stakeholders in their delegations, implementing the Compact's whole-of-government and whole-of-society principles. To accelerate implementation, States and stakeholders made 303 concrete pledges through the Network's Pledging Initiative.

75. The second round of Regional Reviews is ongoing and constitutes a pivotal opportunity to review the Compact's implementation, focusing on regional cooperation, trends and dynamics, and commitments in the Progress Declaration. These have been organized by United Nations regional economic commissions with regional Networks and organizations such as the League of Arab States and the African Union, with relevant stakeholders participating. Outcomes from the Regional Reviews will inform the 2026 International Migration Review Forum (the 2026 Forum) and will be reported on in the next biennial Secretary-General's report on the Compact.

C) Network structure, tools and guidance

76. Seven regional and 85 country networks have been established to promote and facilitate the Compact's implementation, including through the roll-out of guidance, tools and spaces for dialogue and peer-learning. For example, in 2022, the Regional Network for Migration in Latin-America and the Caribbean established a Civil Society Open and Permanent Dialogue Mechanism; and the Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific launched the Immigration Detention and Alternatives to Detention in the Asia-Pacific Region report.

77. The Network progressed collaborative efforts on priority topics. For example, in addition to those outlined in Section III, it held a route-based peer learning exchange in North and Central America rolling out its Checklist for safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration. It also developed a policy brief covering gaps in responses and options for action to counter migrant smuggling; and

continued to roll its Guidance on Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements (now integrated into the ILO's International Training Centre).

V.   Conclusion and recommendations

78. Six years after its adoption, the Compact continues to prove its relevance in recognizing the vital importance of migration. It is imperative to respect and protect the human rights of all migrants and the pressing need to strengthen cooperation at all levels in delivering on the promise of well governed migration remain vital.

79. States have embraced the goals of the Compact and are working with the United Nations system, through the Network, to integrate its objectives and principles into their national planning. Through the cycles of follow-up and review called for by the Compact, new priorities and partnerships are being established by the international community on migration.

80. Nonetheless, significant challenges remain. Migrants continue to be subject to human rights violations and abuses along their journeys. Xenophobic and dehumanizing discourse continues to undermine collective efforts to strengthen humane and rights-based migration governance.

81. Throughout this report, recommendations have been provided to ensure progress of the Compact's objectives. In this regard and to advance implementation of the Compact, the following recommendations are offered to Member States.

A) Implementing the Compact

82. States are urged to accelerate implementation of the Compact, including by replicating and scaling up promising practices and following additional guidance in the Progress Declaration and the Network's resources. States are encouraged to consult with and contribute promising practices to the Hub.

83. States are encouraged to integrate the Compact into policy frameworks, including through establishing robust national implementation plans. These plans should be developed, implemented and monitored through consultative processes bringing together partners from across government and stakeholders.[48] The Network can provide support through the Demand-Driven Facility.

84. The Fund is the only pooled resource covering migration in all its aspects. Mandated by the General Assembly, it has demonstrated the positive impact that such a resource can deliver on the ground. Yet demand outstrips capacity. States are encouraged to increase financial support for the Compact's implementation through contributions to the Fund.

85. States are urged to make formal pledges to strengthen evidence-based discourse on migration, including to strengthen data collection and sharing via the Hub.

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[48] See UNNM, *GCM implementation guidance* (2023).

B) **Strengthening follow-up and review**

86. States are urged to participate actively in the Compact's follow-up and review mechanisms and to fully implement the Progress Declaration's recommended actions to accelerate implementation and the pledges made in the framework of the 2022 Forum.

87. States are urged to include local government and other stakeholders in their national delegations to ongoing regional reviews and the 2026 Forum, reflecting commitment to implementing the Compact's whole-of-government and whole-of-society guiding principles.

88. States are encouraged to use the proposed limited set of indicators outlined in this report when developing national action plans for the Compact and other related reviews; to utilize the indicator framework as a basis for reviews of the Compact's implementation for the 2026 Forum; and to make efforts to disaggregate data by sex, age, and migratory status.

89. States are urged to develop plans to implement the recommendations on missing migrants and migrants in distress annexed to this report, and report on progress made in their implementation of the recommendations during the 2026 Forum.

ANNEX I

Recommendations for Member States on strengthening cooperation on missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress with the aim of preventing loss of life in transit

Prevention of migrants dying and going missing

Migrant deaths and disappearances are preventable. The main direct causes of migrant deaths are drowning, accidents, violence, harsh environments, and lack of access to healthcare, shelter, food and water. Migrant disappearances are often due to an inability to communicate with families, or to the lack of identification of the dead. Policy choices, and limited access to safe and regular pathways, also affect deaths and disappearances.

a) Establish independent review bodies to assess and mitigate the impact of laws, policies and practices on the risk of migrants dying or going missing.

b) Revise or repeal laws and policies that criminalize or obstruct the provision of humanitarian assistance to migrants, irrespective of status.

c) Adopt a humanitarian and precautionary approach to identifying and responding to possible distress situations on land and at sea. Interpret 'distress' broadly and in good faith.

d) Prevent family separation, including at borders, during rescue operations and disembarkation. Reunite separated families wherever possible and without delay.

e) Strengthen search and rescue capacity at sea and on land in line with international law and the principle of humanity.

f) Adopt agreements to improve the coordination of search and rescue between States, including as provided by international maritime law.

g) Implement post-search and rescue procedures – including at disembarkation, border points and along land routes – in a humane, predictable, and rights-based manner, with attention to specific vulnerabilities, and enhance the capacity of first responders.

h) Ensure that governmental emergency response systems, particularly in situations of large movements, can provide needs-based humanitarian assistance and protection.

i) Use the Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict and Natural Disaster Guidelines to inform preparedness and response to situations of distress, even in the absence of conflict or disasters.

j) Adopt measures to separate humanitarian assistance from immigration enforcement ensuring migrants in distress, irrespective of status, can receive assistance without negative consequences.

k) Improve the coordination of humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress.

l) Provide unhindered access and safe operational space, including through humanitarian service points, for humanitarian actors to deliver assistance in line with humanitarian principles.

m) Allocate funding to humanitarian actors to deliver principled, needs-based assistance to migrants irrespective of status.

Search and identification of migrants who have died or gone missing

Searching for and identifying missing migrants, whether alive or deceased, requires national measures and cooperation among origin, transit and destination countries.

a) Develop national systems for the collection, centralization and systematization of case data on unidentified human remains.

b) Systematically mobilize Disaster Victim Identification responses to mass casualty events involving migrants.

c) Set up processes for families, co-travelers, and others to register cases in an accessible, safe and confidential manner. Use the information for humanitarian purposes only, unless otherwise agreed by those providing it. Follow a standardized approach to registration of missing migrant cases as per International Committee of the Red Cross guidance.

d) Appoint national focal points on missing migrants for transnational cooperation on search and policy.

e) Increase bilateral cooperation between key countries of origin and disappearance, as a steppingstone towards route-based cooperation, e.g. on access to biometric databases and exchange of relevant information for search and identification.

f) Leverage regional and sub-regional bodies to facilitate cooperation among States and other actors on search and identification along routes such as through common policies, information-sharing and exchange of practices.

Provision of support to affected families

Families of the missing face socio-economic, psychological, administrative, and legal consequences. The disappearance of a relative may affect access to property, inheritance, parental or social welfare rights.

a) Provide families access to critical legal documentation, such as certificates of absence, that can help address challenges including marital status, control of property and guardianship of children.

b) Support the role of civil society and other stakeholders as important intermediaries between families and States.

Justice, accountability and redress

Investigation and monitoring of allegations of migrant deaths and disappearances and prompt, effective remedies and reparations are crucial.

a) Provide justice, accountability and redress for migrants and their families even in the absence of a formal criminal complaint.

b) Conduct independent, impartial and thorough investigations, with the participation of families, into cases of endangerment to migrants' lives or safety during their journey and where they were subjected to rights violations by State or non-State actors.

Data and foresight

Gaps in available data, monitoring and reporting generate flawed perceptions of the problem and undermine effective responses.

    a) Collect, systematize, centralize, and publish anonymized data on migrant deaths and disappearances. Use standardized criteria to categorize migrants in mortality records and standardized protocols to record disappearances.

    b) Regularly report these data to the International Organization for Migration's Missing Migrants Project.

    c) Share migration forecasting data across government, to allow for preparedness measures that optimize humanitarian assistance.