

## LEVERAGING MIGRATION TO RECOVER BETTER FROM COVID-19 AND ACHIEVE THE 2030 AGENDA

One year into the Decade of Action aimed at delivering sustainable development for all, COVID-19 has significantly threatened the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The positive contributions of migrants and migration to advance inclusive growth and sustainable development – as outlined in the 2030 Agenda – have been set back, with many migrants and their families bearing the brunt of travel restrictions and lockdowns, increased unemployment, and uneven access to social protection.

Although there are now more international migrants in the world than ever, with over 281 million migrants at the beginning of 2021, the expected growth of international migration slowed by 27 per cent over the past year.<sup>1</sup> The enormous morbidity and mortality impact of this global pandemic, as well as the related response measures such as restrictions on mobility and other measures enforced around the world to combat the transmission of COVID-19, will have long-term negative effects on sustainable development.<sup>2</sup> While often necessary to curb the spread of the virus, these measures have deepened the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.

As COVID-19 related mobility restrictions have been imposed, many migrants face increased challenges that lead to situations of vulnerability, risk and exploitation that must be urgently addressed if we are to reach the Goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda. Hundreds of thousands of migrants have been stranded in transit, many lacking resources to return home. Numerous others have been forced, by circumstances and in some cases by policies, to return to their home countries. Returning migrants are often unable to access employment due to lockdowns and other restrictions, thereby facing significant challenges to providing for themselves and their families.<sup>3</sup> Reduced pathways for regular migration, triggered by lockdown measures and border closures, have pushed too many migrants into irregular situations, which make them more susceptible to exploitation and abuse, including human trafficking and forced labour.

The pandemic is disproportionately impacting those who are already in vulnerable situations, including migrants and displaced persons who often fall outside of social safety nets and lack access to basic services.<sup>4</sup> While migrants are not inherently more vulnerable to, or at heightened risk of, contracting infectious diseases, migrants may be more affected by and vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19 due to the conditions in which they migrate, live and work. Situations of vulnerability are exacerbated by increased levels of stigma, xenophobia, and racism that migrants have faced since the onset of the pandemic.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UNDESA (2021). [International Migration 2020](#).

<sup>2</sup> IOM (2020). [Issue Brief: Why Migration Matters for “Recovering Better” from COVID-19](#).

<sup>3</sup> UNDESA (2021). [International Migration 2020](#).

<sup>4</sup> IOM (2020). [IOM Institutional Statement on COVID-19 and Mobility](#).

<sup>5</sup> Global Migration Data Portal (2021). [Migration Data Relevant for the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

Extreme poverty and food insecurity have also driven humanitarian needs to new levels and further intensified on-going crises that, without adequate intervention, will have far-reaching impacts on fragility and displacement. The majority of the world's 50.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) live in countries that reported high levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition before 2020. The pandemic is deepening the dependence of IDPs on external food assistance, increasing protection risk and reducing their chances for durable solutions.<sup>6</sup> As of the start of 2021, 235 million people require humanitarian assistance, presenting enormous challenges for the international community and its commitment to *leave no one behind*.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, migrants around the world play an important role in the response to COVID-19. Among the 20 countries with the highest number of COVID-19 cases as of November 2020, at least eight – the United States, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Chile and Belgium – significantly rely on foreign-born health care workers.<sup>8</sup> Further, on average, 13 per cent of all “key workers” in the European Union (EU) alone are migrants.<sup>9</sup> This means that migrants themselves have a key role to play in pandemic response and recovery.

## REMOVING MOBILITY-RELATED BARRIERS AND BOTTLENECKS TO RECOVER BETTER FROM COVID-19 AND ACHIEVE THE 2030 AGENDA

The pandemic has underscored the importance of migration for prosperous and healthy societies.<sup>10</sup> As governments reopen economies and recover from COVID-19, human mobility must be a critical part of their efforts. We must protect migrants and their communities and harness the positive power of migration to accelerate progress toward the SDGs. To do this, we need to better understand the ways in which human mobility impacts sustainable development, and vice versa. Migration needs to be coherently integrated into sustainable development cooperation, planning and implementation efforts, including the UN system's Common Country Assessments and Cooperation Frameworks. Innovative solutions based on existing and emerging evidence about the pandemic, as well as the effectiveness of various public health and socio-economic response measures, must guide concrete action.

Well-governed migration can mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19, stimulate strong socio-economic recovery and build more inclusive societies that protect human rights and are better prepared to address future crises.<sup>11</sup> The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) provides a supportive road map to leverage migration for the acceleration of response and recovery efforts which keeps the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in sight.

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<sup>6</sup> IOM and World Food Programme (WFP) (2020). [Populations at Risk: Implications of COVID-19 for Hunger, Migration and Displacement](#).

<sup>7</sup> UNOCHA (2021). [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).

<sup>8</sup> Global Migration Data Portal (2021). [Migration Data Relevant for the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). See also: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2019). [Recent Trends in International Migration of Doctors, Nurses and Medical Students](#).

<sup>9</sup> Fasani, Francesco and Mazza, Jacopo (2020). [Immigrant Key Workers: Their Contribution to Europe's COVID-19 Response](#).

<sup>10</sup> IOM (2020). [Issue Brief: Why Migration Matters for “Recovering Better” from COVID-19](#).

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Network on Migration (2020). [The Global Compact for Migration \(GCM\): Well Governed Migration as an Essential Element of Effective COVID-19 Response](#).

COVID-19 related mobility restrictions limit GDP growth and create labour shortages in key sectors (SDGs: 2, 3, 8; GCM Objectives: 5, 6, 11, 19, 20)

Border closures and travel restrictions have been put in place on an unprecedented scale over the past 18 months and have direct repercussions on economies in both developing and developed countries, causing disruptions to global value chains and labour markets.<sup>12</sup> A recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) study showed that every additional percentage of immigration has the potential to boost GDP growth by 2 per cent in destination countries, in addition to supporting economies in countries of origin through remittances and other mechanisms.<sup>13</sup> These numbers show the potential of migration to boost economic recovery. Lifting mobility restrictions, with appropriate health measures in place and in line with international guidance to ensure safe and orderly migration, should therefore be a priority.

Exclusion of migrants from vaccination efforts will counter recovery, increase general health risks and prevent migrants from contributing to sustainable development in countries and communities (SDGs: 3, 10; GCM Objectives: 7, 15, 16, 17, 19)

While migrants and displaced persons are currently being included in immunization campaigns led by several national health authorities, far too many are not. Unacceptably, it is often the poorest, those who find themselves in irregular situations, people displaced by natural disaster or conflict and other vulnerable groups who do not have equitable access to immunization services. National COVID-19 vaccination plans should be developed and implemented in line with international recommendations and public health evidence, with priority given to those most at risk, regardless of legal immigration status. Including migrants in national COVID-19 vaccination plans is not only the right thing to do, as access to basic health care is a human right, but also the smart thing to do, as this pandemic has shown that when it comes to public health, *no one is protected unless everyone is protected*. Vaccines must be made available to all migrants, including those in irregular situations, not only on paper but also in practice.<sup>14</sup>

Deepening fragility and conflict and their consequences for societies, and in particular people on the move, are increasing humanitarian needs and preventing recovery from the pandemic (SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 13, 16; GCM Objectives: 2, 7, 8)

Humanitarian needs and protection risks for migrants and displaced populations have increased considerably throughout the pandemic and continue to require urgent attention. With 235 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2021, the impact of COVID-19 has deepened on-going humanitarian crises and displacement which have been exacerbated by the rise in political conflicts and violence, extreme poverty, hunger, disease, adverse climate change impacts and natural hazards.<sup>15</sup> Recovery from the pandemic cannot happen without ensuring continued humanitarian assistance to populations in need, including refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, migrants in crisis situations and their host communities. This, together with equitable access to COVID-19 management measures, including vaccines, will be crucial to

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<sup>12</sup> UNDESA (2021). [International Migration 2020](#). See also: McKinsey Global Institute (2016). [People on the Move: Global Migration's Impact and Opportunity](#).

<sup>13</sup> International Monetary Fund (2020). [The Macroeconomic Effects of Global Migration](#).

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Network on Migration (2021). [Striving for Equitable Access to COVID-19 Vaccines to Leave No Migrant Behind](#).

<sup>15</sup> UNOCHA (2021). [Global Humanitarian Overview 2021](#).

ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable and affected populations are met, and recovery processes benefit societies.<sup>16</sup>

Xenophobia, discrimination and exclusion of migrants are increasing protection risks and preventing societies from mobilizing their full potential for recovery (SDGs: 1, 8, 10, 16; GCM Objectives: 16, 17, 19)

Stigmatization, racism and xenophobia towards many migrants has increased during the pandemic, with migrants often scapegoated as responsible for spreading COVID-19.<sup>17</sup> As lockdown measures are extended and vaccination campaigns begin, xenophobia persists, exacerbated by social tensions created by the economic downturn.<sup>18</sup> Stigma, racism and xenophobia undermine migrants' human rights, negatively impact their living and working conditions and limit their ability to fully contribute to national and global recovery efforts. In addition, these phenomena erode social cohesion, which is critical to COVID-19 recovery. Overcoming the pandemic and recovering better requires collaboration and collective action across societies. It is therefore all the more important that the vital role of migrants in economic recovery is prominently built into national and local communication efforts about COVID-19, and that messages and policies are based on available data and evidence, thereby effectively addressing stigma and xenophobia in general.

Government responses are in some cases aggravating inequalities for migrants, with the potential to force more people to move out of necessity (SDGs: 1, 10, 11; GCM Objectives: 2, 4, 5, 7, 11)

COVID-19 is revealing and exacerbating existing social inequalities. Human mobility restrictions aggravate existing inequalities with direct repercussions on individuals and societies, with the potential to force more people to move out of necessity. The impact of crises is greater on the poorest, and poverty is increasingly concentrated in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.<sup>19</sup> When migrants are excluded from social payments and stimulus measures, it can be a driver of migration.

## ELEVEN CRUCIAL ACTIONS FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RECOVER BETTER FROM COVID-19

During the 2020 High-Level Political Forum, IOM presented a list of **accelerating actions**<sup>20</sup> on migration and sustainable development with the potential to catalyze progress towards the 2030 Agenda. With the COVID-19 pandemic, these actions have become only more urgent and are key factors for sustainable recovery, helping to address the bottlenecks above whilst also maximizing the positive impact of migration

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<sup>16</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2019). [DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#).

<sup>17</sup> IOM (2020). [Issue Brief: Countering Xenophobia and Stigma to Foster Social Cohesion in the COVID-19 Response and Recovery](#).

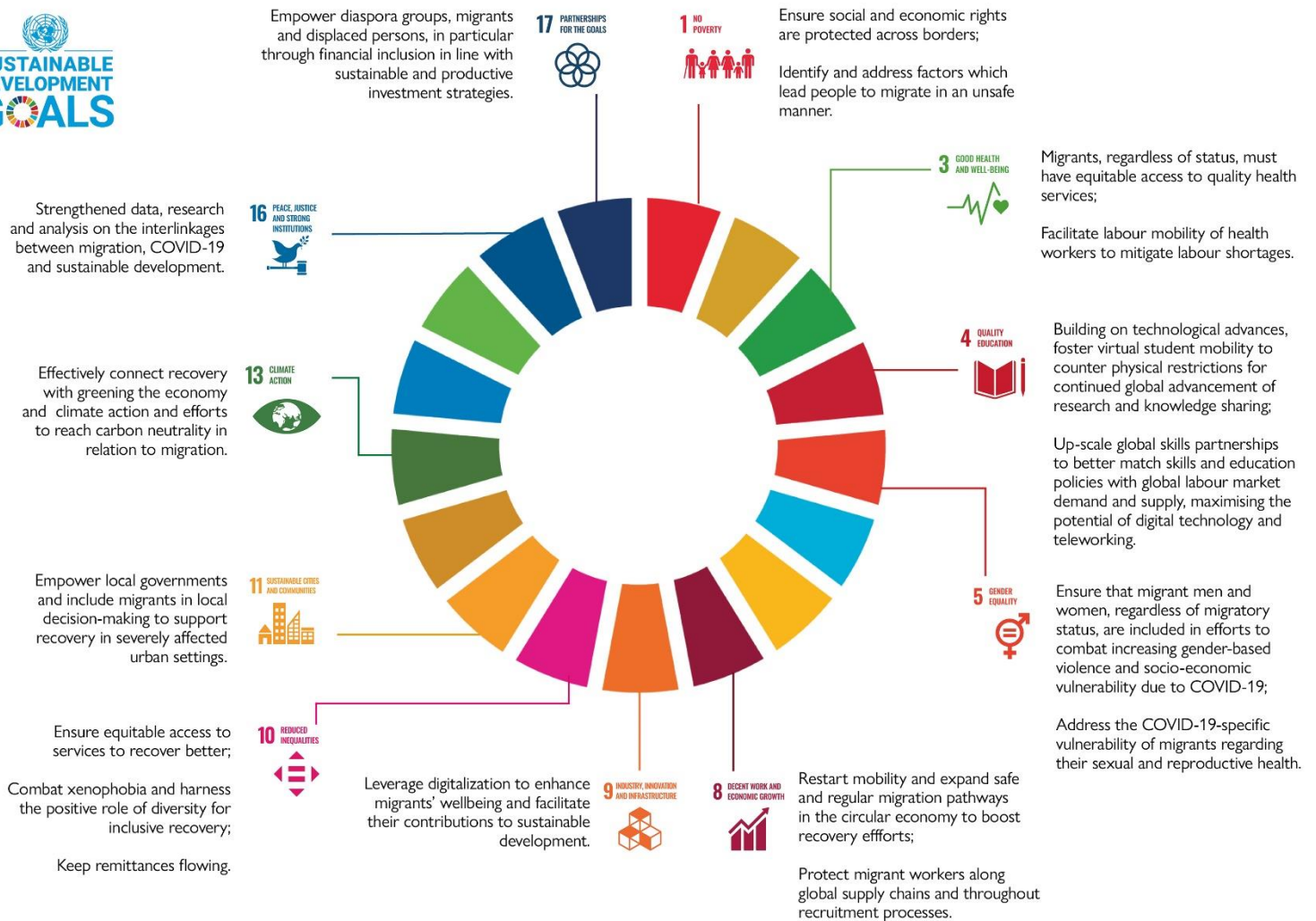
<sup>18</sup> IOM (2020). [Quarantined! Xenophobia and Migrant Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

<sup>19</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2020). [OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): COVID-19, Crises and Fragility](#).

<sup>20</sup> IOM (2020). [IOM Input to the HLPF 2020 – Accelerated Action and Transformative Pathways: Realizing the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development](#).

on sustainable development. These accelerators are embedded in the GCM as the UN's main multilateral framework of action for safe, orderly and regular migration. The global response to COVID-19 presents a unique opportunity to reimagine human mobility from the ground up, to implement the vision of the GCM and build prosperous, healthy and resilient communities. Doing so will ensure that no one is left behind, that we build back better, that migrants and their families contribute to and benefit from a green recovery, resilience building, and climate change adaptation, and that we work towards safer, healthier, more sustainable and inclusive mobile societies.

### Accelerating actions to leverage migration for the COVID-19 recovery





**1. Protect migrants' human rights, including to ensure that social and economic rights are protected across borders (SDGs: 1, 10, 16; GCM Objectives: 15, 16, 22)**

Ensuring that the rights of people on the move are “portable”, or transferable across borders (internal and international), is a critical policy area for recovering better. This includes access to vaccination efforts and health care during the response and recovery from the pandemic. We need to extend social protection access, eligibility and coverage for all migrants and ensure that benefits are transferable and portable especially for returnees. This will reduce migrants' exposure to health risks, exploitation and multidimensional poverty and will enhance their agency and capabilities as development actors.



**2. Identify and address factors which lead people to migrate in an unsafe manner (SDGs: 1, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16; GCM Objective: 2)**

The economic recession brought about by COVID-19 is increasing global inequalities and deepening fragility across the globe, diminishing opportunities for human development. It has the potential to force more people to migrate out of necessity, including through irregular means.<sup>21</sup> It is crucial to understand these factors and the impact of COVID-19, in order to address them in an integrated way within sustainable development planning which reduces risks and enables societies to recover more quickly from the pandemic.



**3. Leverage digitalization to enhance migrants' well-being and facilitate their contributions to sustainable development (SDGs: 1, 8, 9; GCM Objectives: 3, 7, 16, 18, 19)**

Digitalization has seen an important leap forward during the pandemic with far reaching consequences on migration. Remote working has become an established strategy across the globe to maintain jobs, with the potential to shift migration dynamics by enabling easy access to skilled workers irrespective of where they live. This creates new opportunities which need to be integrated into labour migration policies. Safe and accountable technological innovations and digitalization have also helped ensure the delivery of essential information and support to migrants and communities in times of the pandemic. Digitalization can also ensure border management integrates protection and right-based considerations with the global health security agenda to minimize the risk of disease transmission between countries and within border communities. Positive lessons learned and examples from this experience should be carried forward to protect the human rights of people on the move. If we want to reap the fruits of the potential of digitalization associated with migration, migrants need to be included in efforts to increase access to internet and technology, so they can actively contribute to recovery and sustainable development.<sup>22</sup>



**4. Restart mobility and expand safe and regular migration pathways in the circular economy to boost recovery efforts (SDGs: 1, 8, 10, 13; GCM Objectives: 6, 15, 18)**

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<sup>21</sup> IOM and World Food Programme (WFP) (2020). [Populations at Risk: Implications of COVID-19 for Hunger, Migration and Displacement](#).

<sup>22</sup> See: United Nations Network on Migration's discussion space on [Migration 4.0 – Digitalization & New Technologies](#)

Re-establishing safe and regular pathways, including promoting skills-based mobility, will be an important pathway to *recover better* from the pandemic in a green, sustainable and resilient manner, and can ensure that countries have the required capacities in place to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. As the focus is shifting to recovery, it is essential that public health is an integral part of mobility management. This includes the need to promote health-capacitated border management systems and ensure that health systems integrate migration and that migration systems better integrate health considerations, both in the immediate and long term.



**5. Empower diaspora groups, migrants and displaced persons, in particular through financial inclusion in line with sustainable and productive investment strategies (SDGs: 8, 9, 10, 17; GCM Objectives: 19, 20)**

The pandemic has shown once more that migrants and displaced populations can drive innovation and entrepreneurship when equipped with the right tools.<sup>23</sup> This requires ensuring equal access to financing and financial education in both places of origin and destination, as well as connecting diaspora groups with recovery and sustainable development strategies. There is a particular need to build capacities of and engage with groups of skilled diaspora health professionals, as migrants are essential to health care systems in the immediate COVID-19 response, in rebuilding health care systems during recovery and also in developing future preparedness plans and strengthening health systems.



**6. Protect migrant workers along global supply chains and throughout recruitment processes (SDGs: 5, 8; GCM Objective: 6)**

Migrant workers sustain many essential sectors of employment during the pandemic, including acting as essential actors that keep our global supply chains running – for food, hospital and health care equipment and other critical items. Migrants have also continued to support their families at home through remittances and other economic contributions, and research suggests that migrant women workers in particular are relied upon for health, social and domestic care during the pandemic.<sup>24</sup> Enabling migrant workers to continue to contribute to our societies in these ways will be critical to ensure that the recovery from COVID-19 can reduce global inequalities. Recovery strategies therefore must ensure that the rights of migrant workers are protected and their safety is guaranteed, including through access to vaccination and health care.



**7. Empower local governments and include migrants in local decision-making to support recovery in severely affected urban settings (SDGs: 11, 13, 16; GCM Objectives: 2, 15, 19)**

The pandemic has been a particular challenge in dense urban areas, where migrants predominantly settle.<sup>25</sup> Urban areas in particular face strained public health and socio-economic sectors, with an

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<sup>23</sup> iDiaspora (2020). [Global Diasporas Reacting to the COVID-19 Crisis: Best Practices from the Field](#).

<sup>24</sup> IOM (2020). [COVID-19 and Women Migrant Workers: Impacts and Implications](#). See also: Global Migration Data Portal (2021). [Migration Data Relevant for the COVID-19 Pandemic: Labour Migration](#).

<sup>25</sup> For key figures, see: Global Migration Data Portal (2020). [Urbanization and Migration](#).

estimated 90 per cent of all reported COVID-19 cases in urban areas.<sup>26</sup> With the right policies in place, migrants can be active contributors and accelerate sustainable development goals within the wider community. It is therefore crucial to empower city and local governments to integrate migration into and ensure the participation of migrants in their local response strategies. This will help mitigate further spreading of the pandemic and allow local governments to tap into migrants' knowledge and skills. Many cities and local authorities are already stepping up to this challenge and have signed the Marrakesh Mayors Declaration, thus committing to the implementation of the GCM and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and will also soon be invited to join the forthcoming Mayors' Mechanism Call to Local Action on the same.<sup>27</sup>



## **8. Effectively connect recovery with greening the economy and climate action in relation to migration (SDGs: 7, 13, 17; GCM Objective: 2)**

Recovery efforts should contribute to the transition to a green economy and build climate resilience, create green jobs and support effective climate action and efforts to reach carbon neutrality. Migrants and their families are entrepreneurs, innovators and consumers of goods and services. During the low-carbon transition, new opportunities will be created and, if enabling conditions are provided, migrants and their family members can contribute to and benefit from a green recovery from the pandemic and climate action. Developing innovative mechanisms to leverage remittances and diaspora funding into clean energy, sustainable building and renovation, sustainable mobility, circular economy and sustainable agriculture is essential. At the same time, the transition to a low carbon economy will adversely impact the extractive and fossil-fuel industries where migrants are an important part of the workforce. A just transition would need to ensure that the migrants and their families have access to adequate social protection and opportunities for reskilling. Multi-stakeholder partnerships and international cooperation will be key for this work to increase the positive development impact of migration and promote sustainable, climate-resilient and just economies across different regions. Coherence across key policy areas<sup>28</sup> must be fostered, especially at the national and sub-national levels.



## **9. Combat xenophobia and harness the positive role of diversity for inclusive recovery (SDGs: 3, 10, 11, 16; GCM Objective: 16, 17)**

Negative perceptions around migration in public and political discourse contribute to the xenophobia, stigma and discrimination that migrants face. Continuing harmful rhetoric can jeopardize the safety of migrants and displaced persons, including their physical and mental well-being, and also hampers social cohesion in the long term and impacts the overall safety of the community. On the other hand, recognizing the different needs of and ensuring equal opportunities for all in diverse and inclusive societies will accelerate development, as diversity leads to innovation, new ideas and skills transfer and stronger

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<sup>26</sup> United Nations Secretary-General (2020). [Policy Brief: COVID-19 in an Urban World](#). See also: World Bank (n.d.). [Urban Development: COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) Response](#).

<sup>27</sup> These include: establish local-national policy coordination mechanisms, especially in times of crisis; to ensure cities have adequate legal and budgetary mandates to protect migrants; and to change international funding and financing mechanisms so that cities can access urgently needed resources and better serve all those in their communities, including migrants. See: Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) Mayors Mechanism (2021). [Press Release: In Landmark GFMD Summit, Cities Join National Governments to Discuss Migration Governance](#).

<sup>28</sup> E.g. migration, remittances, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, biodiversity, gender, rural development, urban development, etc.



economic, political and social systems. Communities should capitalize on the skills, knowledge, language and cultural proficiency of migrants to strengthen social cohesion and leverage migrants' contributions to development. Innovation and diversity best flourishes when communities are safe and migrants can live without fear or stigma.<sup>29</sup>



#### **10. Ensure equitable access to services to recover better (SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10; GCM Objective: 15)**

Through the GCM, Member States commit to ensuring that all migrants, regardless of their migration status, can exercise their human rights through safe access to basic services (Objective 15). A migrant-inclusive approach regarding access to services at the national and local levels, including health and other sectors such as education, training and decent work, will strengthen efforts towards achieving the SDGs. This will require a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach, working across sectors and stakeholders including immigration, finance, disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, rural development, urban development, education, labour and other ministries, at all government levels. Importantly, migrants themselves and their families are critical stakeholders who must be consulted and can help promote equitable access to services.<sup>30</sup>



#### **11. Strengthened data, research and analysis on the interlinkages between migration, internally displaced, COVID-19 and sustainable development (SDGs: 10, 16; GCM Objective: 1)**

Strengthening data remains crucial to developing evidence-based policies around all accelerating actions outlined above, as well as to support the implementation of GCM Objective 1. This has also been highlighted in the [UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery](#).<sup>31</sup> Stronger evidence is needed to understand all of the above bottlenecks and other topics. Furthermore, disaggregating COVID-19-related data by migratory status, and as far as possible by sex, age and/or disability in order to identify overlapping vulnerabilities, is essential to capture the impacts on migrants and better target these in prevention and response programming. This is necessary to benefit not only migrants but host communities as well, given that the full impact of COVID-19 on our communities and health systems (including the impact of vaccination programmes) can only be realized through an inclusive approach. In turn, for migrants to be included in vaccine deployment plans, timely disaggregated data is needed, particularly of at-risk groups.

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<sup>29</sup> See: [United Nations Network on Migration \(2020\). Press Release: COVID-19 Does Not Discriminate; Nor Should Our Response](#) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (2021). [Reimagining Equality: Eliminating racism, xenophobia and discrimination for all in the decade of action for the SDGs](#).

<sup>30</sup> See: United Nations Network on Migration (2020). [Enhancing Access to Services for Migrants in the Context of COVID-19 Preparedness, Prevention, and Response and Beyond](#). For examples of good practices, see: United Nations Network on Migration (2020). [Inventory of Tools, Guidance, Policies, Statements and Best Practices Including for COVID-19 Response](#).

<sup>31</sup> In particular through its *Research Priority 3.3* on “How can a global economy with constant movement of people, goods and capital work for everyone and protect the planet?”, as well as *Research Priority 4.2* on “How can inequities in development opportunities be eliminated”. In: United Nations (2020). [UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery](#).

## IOM'S WORK TO RECOVER BETTER FROM THE PANDEMIC<sup>32</sup>

Since the beginning of the pandemic, IOM has been working closely with governments, UN and other partners, to actively involved and enhance the participation of migrants, displaced persons and communities to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. As a UN agency with strong humanitarian, development and peace footprint, IOM actively contributes to ensuring that the principles and recommendations of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus are applied throughout its work. IOM's 2021 Strategic Response and Recovery Plan<sup>33</sup> lays the groundwork for an inclusive recovery with a longer vision towards sustainable development, building on IOM's comparative advantages and its operational presence.

Through IOM's vast operational footprint, IOM 16,000 staff across the world have contributed to the pandemic emergency response and early recovery through the implementation of critical programs and services, including: mapping population mobility at border points of entry; community-based disease surveillance; ensuring continuity of essential health services; risk communication and community engagement to address xenophobia and misinformation; delivery of mental health and psychosocial support; and health services support for the UN system to 'stay and deliver', among others.

IOM has also supported policymakers to address specific thematic issues related to migration and displacement throughout the first year of the pandemic through a series of [Issue Briefs](#) and [Policy Papers](#), including a specific brief on "[Why Migration Matters for 'Recovering Better' from COVID-19](#)", as well as collaboration through the [UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement](#).

## FOCUS ON SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

### **IOM's [Toolkit for Development Partners to integrate migration into the COVID-19 socio-economic response](#)<sup>34</sup>**

IOM mobilized its policy capacity early in the pandemic, recognizing that with the right policies in place, the development potential of safe, orderly and regular migration can be harnessed to support the immediate socio-economic response. The aim of this Toolkit, developed in collaboration with EU DG INTPA, is to provide information and tools for development partners to integrate migration – in all its forms – into development-centred plans, programmes and projects linked to COVID-19 socio-economic response.

Informed by the "[UN Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19](#)" and relevant EU and UN policy frameworks, the Toolkit provides analysis and practical tools to enable

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<sup>32</sup> See: [IOM's webpage on COVID-19](#)

<sup>33</sup> Forthcoming

<sup>34</sup> The Toolkit was developed under *Mainstreaming Migration into International Cooperation and Development (MMICD)*, funded by the EU and implemented by IOM. It complements a series of sector guides that IOM is also currently finalizing under the project, in partnership with UN partners.

policymakers and practitioners to deal with the ways in which migration and sustainable development interact within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The five streams of work outlined in the UN Framework, which also provide the backbone of this Toolkit, lay out the institutional framing necessary to protect the needs and rights of people living under the duress of the pandemic, with particular focus on the most vulnerable countries, groups and people who risk being left behind.

### **Tracking COVID-19 mobility impact and consolidating relevant migration data through IOM's Global Migration Data Portal [page](#) and the [Displacement Tracking Matrix](#)**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, IOM has been tracking the impact of COVID-19 in human mobility spans across key monitoring initiatives, including on international travel restrictions, mobility and points of entry, and impacts on migrants, IDPs, and mobility flows. This information has supported the response at global, regional and country level, promoted joint analysis across humanitarian, development and peace actors and allowed to visualize key challenges to international mobility during COVID-19, such as the needs of IDPs, stranded migrants and returnees.

IOM continues to implement several data- and research-related initiatives responding to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, aiming to provide timely, quality evidence to migration policymakers to help adjust to evolving pandemic dynamics. For example, a dedicated Global Migration Data Portal [page](#) on migration data relevant for the COVID-19 pandemic, several analytical [snapshots](#) and several other [products](#) have been released. IOM recently released a [guide to help policymakers disaggregate sectoral data by migratory status](#), supporting sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Work continues to explore the potential of using alternative data sources, in particular by using big data from social media. Good practices on promoting fact-based and data-driven migration discourse, policy and planning have also been shared by the UN Network on Migration.<sup>35</sup>

### **UN Network on Migration**

As Coordinator and Secretariat for the UN Network on Migration, IOM is working to ensure that migration is effectively integrated into UN Development System planning. As co-lead of the Network's [Core Working Group 2.1: Stronger UN System for GCM Implementation](#), IOM, together with its co-lead UNDP and other partners, have developed comprehensive training for UN Country Teams on *Integrating Migration into Common Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks*. The training presents migration as a cross-cutting issue in the 2030 Agenda, aligning implementation of the GCM with the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. By systematically articulating connections between the GCM and the 2030 Agenda across all thematic areas, the training establishes migration as

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<sup>35</sup> United Nations Network on Migration (2020). [The Global Compact for Migration \(GCM\): Well Governed Migration as an Essential Element of Effective COVID-19 Response](#).

a core consideration and component of UNCTs' work. COVID-19 data, resources and considerations have been woven throughout the training material to support UNCTs to develop inclusive, people-centred responses that mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19 and help communities to build back better. Through these efforts, IOM, in collaboration with its partners across the Network, promotes migration as an important accelerator to reaching the global goals during the Decade of Action.