

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Submission to the High-Level Political Forum
on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

2025





IMPACTS OF THE MULTIPLE AND INTERCONNECTED CRISES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 AND 17

Migration is as old as humanity itself. Throughout history, people have migrated in search of better lives, to flee conflict or seek safety, or simply to find new opportunities. Long-term research and analysis shows unequivocally that migration has been a driver of human development and brought benefits for migrants, their families, and countries and communities of origin and destination. For example, international remittances to low- and middle-income countries – projected to have reached a record USD 685 billion in 2024 – continue to be a premier source of external finance and surpass foreign direct investment and official development assistance combined ([World Bank](#), 2024). They are a lifeline for millions of families and communities, and for many countries represent a significant share of the gross domestic product.

Migration positively impacts progress across Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is linked to all three dimensions of sustainable development. Beyond remittances, human mobility benefits communities of origin, where it is linked to poverty reduction and investment in businesses and human capital. Migrants' contributions in terms of boosting skills, addressing labour shortages in countries with declining populations, investment, and driving innovation and entrepreneurship are well documented, and the migration of young workers to countries with ageing populations has been shown to lessen pressures on pension systems of high-income countries. Across the world, migrants are overrepresented in areas such as innovation and patents, start-ups, successful companies, and the arts and sciences, and provide a source of dynamism in destination countries ([IOM](#), 2024).

Human mobility is being profoundly reshaped by unprecedented global transformations and by an ever more complex interplay of factors and dynamics – including those related to geopolitics, demography, and technology. Global trends point to increasing migration ([UNDESA](#), 2025) and a greater necessity for it in the future, including to manage labour market imbalances, shifting demographics and technological changes. In 50 countries and areas, immigration is projected to attenuate the decline in population size caused by sustained low levels of fertility and an older age structure ([UNDESA](#), 2024). Geopolitical factors such as increasing and protracted conflicts within and between States have resulted in unprecedented displacement. In the last five years, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) globally has grown by a staggering 50 per cent, to a record 75.9 million people ([IDMC](#), 2024). In the Asia and Pacific region, it grew by 62% over the last three years only ([IOM](#), 2024). Meanwhile, economic inequality and environmental changes, including from climate change, are also having extensive impacts on migration ([IOM](#), 2024).

The benefits associated with migration are not a given. The success of migration, in terms of where, how, and with what outcomes people migrate, is heavily influenced by the options available to them. Over the last few decades, regular migration pathways for migrants from developing countries have narrowed significantly ([IOM](#), 2024). While most migration is orderly and regular, for a growing number of people on the move, irregular migration has become the only option. As a result, irregular immigration is at historic levels ([Foreign Affairs](#), 2025) and feeds a lucrative criminal industry. This places immense pressure on national migration systems and carries significant risk for migrants themselves. In 2024, IOM recorded more than 8,300 dead and missing migrants globally, the second highest such toll after 2023. Between 2014 and the end of 2024, over 72,000 migrants' deaths were recorded ([IOM](#), 2024).

In this context, political tensions around migration are growing. Misinformation and disinformation around migration have proliferated in political discourse, in the media and through digital technology platforms. Dominant narratives have strayed far away from balanced, accurate accounts of migration – both its simple truths and its complex situation-specific realities ([IOM](#), 2024). Across the world, a backlash to immigration is remaking politics. Anti-immigrant politicians and activists spread disinformation to suggest that countries are being invaded by waves of undocumented migrants with criminal intent. Images of migrant caravans, rickety boats at sea, and chaos at borders suggest that authorities have lost control of the migration system as a whole. These images are repeated on social media and fuel anti-migrant sentiments – leading to discrimination, violence and xenophobia ([Foreign Affairs](#), 2025).

Now, more than ever, properly governed migration must be preserved as a global strategic asset to meet the challenges of today and those of tomorrow. Migration should not be seen as a problem, but an opportunity for growth, diversity and stronger societies. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) recognizes migration as a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development that can be optimized by improving migration governance. As the world redoubles its efforts to implement the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration, and the outcomes of the Summit of the Future held in 2024; Member States and all relevant stakeholders must double down on global commitments collectively taken to ensure humane and orderly migration. This requires actioning all possible levers to harness the full promise of migration: significantly scaling up solutions that work already and, where needed, overhaul broken migration systems to ensure that regular pathways for migration remain effective, accessible, evidence-based and inclusive, and their dividends maximized for everyone.

* * *

This year's in depth-review of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17 underlines how, while migrants are often among the furthest left behind, they simultaneously push forward development, well-being and growth for people and planet. In doing so, it acknowledges the role of those that are a leading force – yet all too often are invisible – for the needed actions to save lives and protect people on the move; drive solutions to displacement; and facilitate pathways for regular migration: **women** and **youth**. In the year that marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and following the adoption of the landmark Declaration on Future Generations, this submission reiterates the **centrality of gender-responsive and data-driven perspectives in all aspects of migration governance, and of youth as crucial for transformative action**.



MORE CAN AND MUST BE DONE, NOW:

GOAL 3. ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

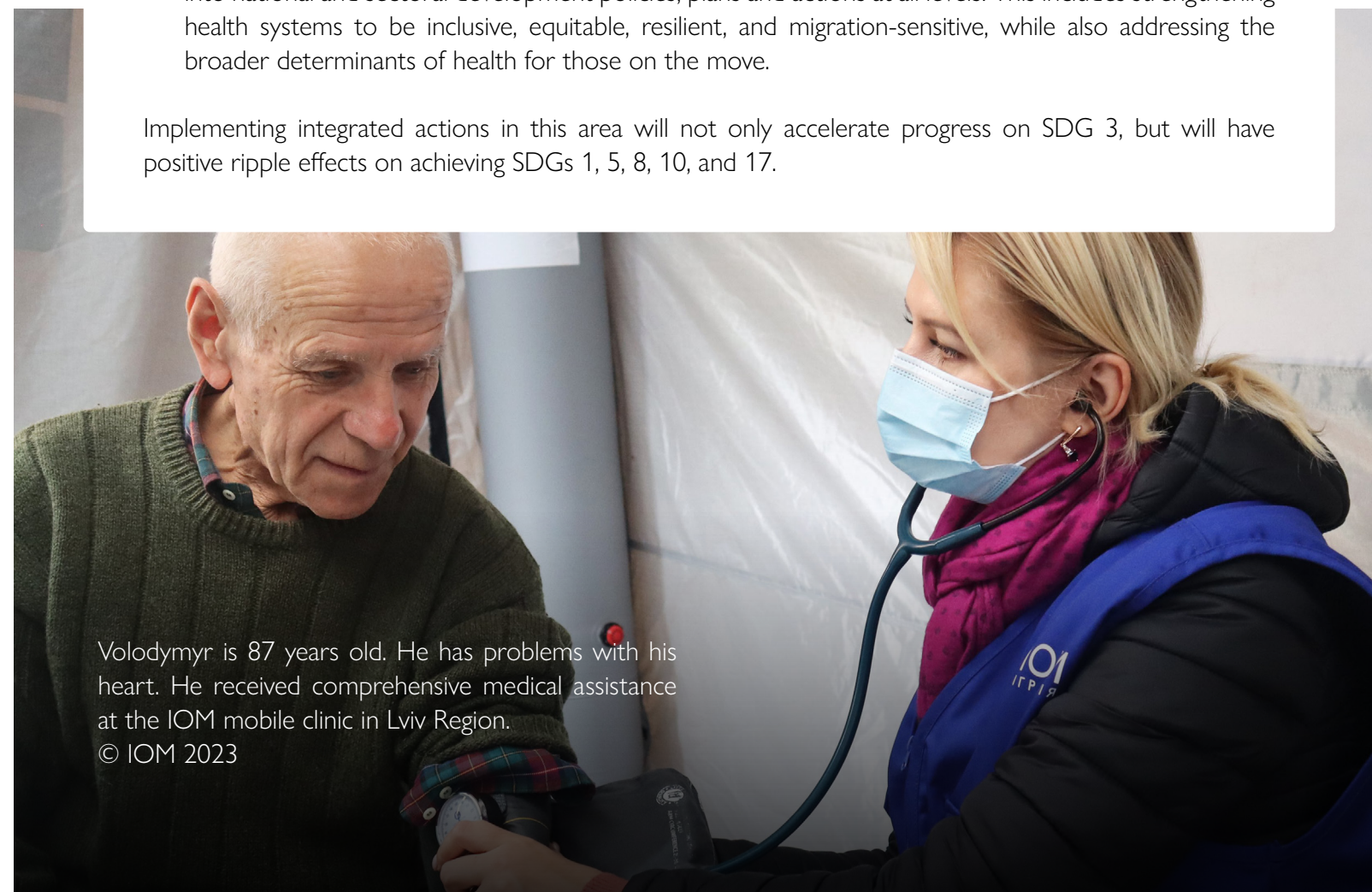
The experiences of migration and displacement are key determinants of health and well-being, for migrants and displaced persons, but also for people in communities along the migration continuum. Addressing the dynamic interconnections between human mobility and health and maximizing the contributions of migrants to health systems is critical to building healthier and more inclusive societies.

Migrants' remittances sent home enhance the socioeconomic status of family members, therefore promoting access to health care. Recent research has found that remittances improved health expenditures and outcomes in countries including Mexico, Ecuador, and Sri Lanka ([Exemplars](#), 2023). In many countries, migrants are part of the backbone of health systems, and future projections point to a continuing acceleration in the international migration of health workers. Over the last decade, the number of migrant doctors and nurses within OECD countries has increased by 60% ([WHO](#), 2024). The United Kingdom, for instance, admitted unprecedented numbers of overseas health and care workers in the year ending March 2023: almost 100,000 people, 99% of which were from non-EU countries, turning the health and care sector into the most important driver of overall increases in work-related migration ([COMPAS](#), 2023). There are abundant examples of the prominent role that highly skilled migrants play in advancing biomedical research, and in the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry, developing and producing vaccines and medicines that prevent infections, cure diseases, and save lives ([JEM](#), 2020).

While health is a universal human right, migrants and other mobile populations face obstacles in accessing essential health care services due to a number of factors including language barriers, discrimination, a lack of migrant-inclusive health policies and inaccessibility of services ([IOM](#), 2024). Due to different restrictions, many migrants have no access to social protection, leading to poorer health outcomes. Out of 109 countries surveyed, only 27% grant all regular migrants the same access to social protection as nationals ([IOM](#), 2024). Social, political and economic exclusion of migrants can result in poverty and exploitation, which can create a higher risk for communicable and non communicable diseases ([WHO](#), 2022; [IOM](#), 2021). IDPs, short-term migrants, informal workers and those in irregular situations face heightened challenges. Displacement often occurs in contexts where access to healthcare is already compromised and profoundly affects health and well-being ([WHO](#), 2022). An estimated 22.1% of people in conflict-affected populations experience mental disorders, including depression, anxiety, PTSD, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia – substantially higher than the global average ([The Lancet](#), 2019). Further, migrants are often excluded from global health security responses and national preparedness and response strategies ([WHO](#), 2022; [IOM](#), 2021). Gender is an additional factor. When migrating for domestic work, women have also faced challenges to accessing healthcare and ability to work, such as being required by recruitment agencies in some countries to undergo a pregnancy test before or after arrival ([IOM](#), 2024).

- Improve the well-being of all migrants and ensure in practice the right to health for all, by extending social protection and universal health coverage to all migrants, and ensure access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential health services, including health promotion activities, medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and health technologies to reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities and enable their active participation in and contribution to societies.
- Strengthen national health systems' capacity to analyze migration and health data, enabling evidence-based policies that address the needs of migrants and communities. This includes investing in disease surveillance throughout the migration continuum to enhance early warning, risk reduction, and effective prevention, preparedness, and response to health emergencies, as well as to strengthen global health security.
- Develop balanced programmes and initiatives that support migrant health and care workers in sustaining and strengthening destination health systems while strengthening workforce development in countries of origin through ethical recruitment, skills transfer, mobility schemes, diaspora partnerships and remote mentorship.
- Invest in transnational and intersectoral partnerships, engaging civil society, migrant organizations, the private sector, academia, youth, and other key actors to embed the health needs of people on the move into national and sectoral development policies, plans and actions at all levels. This includes strengthening health systems to be inclusive, equitable, resilient, and migration-sensitive, while also addressing the broader determinants of health for those on the move.

Implementing integrated actions in this area will not only accelerate progress on SDG 3, but will have positive ripple effects on achieving SDGs 1, 5, 8, 10, and 17.



Volodymyr is 87 years old. He has problems with his heart. He received comprehensive medical assistance at the IOM mobile clinic in Lviv Region.
© IOM 2023



MORE CAN AND MUST BE DONE, NOW:

GOAL 5. ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Gender influences the reasons for migrating, who migrates and to where, how one migrates, the opportunities available at destination, and the relations with the country of origin. Achieving gender equality and empowering migrant women and girls must remain a central concern, both as a human rights issue and as a prerequisite to development, peace, and security that leaves no one behind.

The 146 million female migrants make up just under half (48.8%) of the global international migrant stock ([UNDESA](#), 2025). Women migrant worker's contributions to development are significant: 100 million migrant women send remittances annually, and while they typically earn less than men, the average amount of remittance that women send are the same as or even greater amounts than those sent by men ([UN WOMEN](#), 2020). Women are more likely to spend the remittances they receive on supporting their household with food, education, and health expenses, each of which aligns with a SDG and these remittances empower women in receiving countries as well. In some Latin American countries, women in rural areas were able to reduce the number of hours spent in informal and nonpaid work thanks to remittances ([World Bank](#), 2023). Migration provides an opportunity for upskilling and empowering women, as well as for challenging harmful gender roles and relations. Although the labour force participation of migrant women is lower than that of migrant men (59.8% vs. 77.5%), the rate of migrant women labour force participation is higher than that of non-migrant women ([ILO](#), 2021). The active – yet largely untapped – role that internally displaced women can play in conflict transformation and peacebuilding processes, thereby contributing to durable solutions to displacement ([IDMC](#), 2020)

is evidenced in recent studies, and for instance, in Georgia ([UN WOMEN](#), 2024).

Still, existing inequalities can be exacerbated, and migrant women can be exposed to new vulnerabilities throughout the migration cycle. During transit and at destination, migrant women and girls are at major risk of gender-based violence and human trafficking; accounting for 68% of the 156,000 victims of trafficking identified since 2012 ([IOM](#), 2024). Migrant women and girls face heightened risks of violence and discrimination. In Australia, for instance, 65% of hate incidents were reported by East Asian women ([UN WOMEN](#), 2022). In destination countries, women migrants are more likely than men to hold low-paid, low-skilled jobs ([UN](#), 2024); and more likely to encounter precarious work environments. In Africa, 89.7% of women are in informal employment, in jobs generally excluded from contributory social insurance schemes, such as those providing maternity protection ([ILO](#), 2018). Migrant women face barriers to accessing regular migration pathways, which increases vulnerability to exploitation in recruitment processes ([EIGE](#), 2020). Only less than one in four countries assessed incorporated a gender perspective into their national migration strategy ([IOM](#), 2024); and the priorities and needs of women and girls left behind when family member migrate continue to be overlooked. Women and girls experience the greatest impacts of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to their livelihoods, health, and safety, compelling many to migrate; and the 35.8 million women and girls estimated living in displacement face greater challenges than men and boys in staying safe, securing work, accessing education and healthcare ([IDMC](#), 2021).

- Enhance migration pathways to enable women migrants to fully contribute and achieve development outcomes in both origin and destination countries, as both a moral imperative and a strategic investment that yields benefits for all; including by supporting financial and digital inclusion for women migrants to access cheaper remittance channels.
- Apply a gender lens to the migration journey, migration policy making and programming in order to promote and promulgate gender equality through structural, cultural and normative change across borders, including in the places of origin, transit and destination; with targeted actions to support meaningful participation of women and girls in all their diversity in leadership and decision-making processes.
- Support relevant public and private stakeholders, including governments, trade unions, diaspora migrant and women associations, NGOs, employers, and migrant women, to create and implement market-driven skills development policies that improve employability of migrant women.
- Ensure that policymaking and programming invest in targeted actions to empower the most marginalized migrant women and girls, to address gender-based violence, trafficking and exploitation; including by implementing gender-responsive climate financing strategies and policies that address the specific challenges faced by migrant women in the context of climate change and environmental degradation
- Change the narrative of migrant women from victimhood to agency, working with the media, private sector, educational institutions and the diversity of migrant, displaced and diaspora women and their organizations, including for women's roles in peacebuilding and conflict resolution and combat harmful gender stereotypes in anti-migrant and racist discourses.

Implementing integrated actions in this area will not only accelerate progress on SDG 5, but will have positive ripple effects on achieving SDGs 1, 8, 10, 16 and 17.



Vilma is a participant in the IOM empowerment program for women and girls in Santa Apolonia, Chimaltenango, Guatemala.
© IOM 2024 / Muse Mohammed



MORE CAN AND MUST BE DONE, NOW:

GOAL 8. PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

A majority of international migrants move for purpose of work. Their contributions in both countries of origin and destination highlight the importance of inclusive migration policies that protect migrant workers' rights, supports their integration, and utilization of migrant skills. Such policies are essential to achieve sustainable economic outcomes.

As many migrants are moving for economic reasons and to seek better job opportunities and higher wages, this often translates into higher labour force participation for migrants compared to non-migrants, at 65.8% and 60.1%, respectively ([ILO](#), 2024). In the OECD countries, labour market outcomes shows historically high levels of immigrants employment and low levels of unemployment, at 71.8% and 7.3%, respectively ([OECD](#), 2024). Labor migrants significantly contribute to innovation and economic growth globally. Immigrant researchers and academics play a crucial role in research and development. Non-nationals make up a disproportionate share of patent submissions – 40.2% in the Netherlands, 55.7% in the United States, and 87.3% in Canada ([IOM](#), 2023). It is estimated that across 24 OECD countries, migrant entrepreneurship contributed to as many as 4 million jobs from 2011 to 2021, and that each working-age immigrant creates an average of 0.2 additional jobs in the economy ([OECD](#), 2024). Improving recognition of qualifications decreases skills wastage and attracts skilled migrants. After qualification recognition reforms in Australia, the rate of migrant nurses employed in their field rose from 41% to 66% from 1996 to 2011 ([IOM](#), 2023). The transition to energy sustainability is projected to lead to the creation of 25 million jobs by 2030, and the loss of 7 million jobs, of which 5 million jobs are re-

allocatable ([ILO](#), 2021). Labour migration, including skills training, reskilling, upskilling of labour migrants contributes to a green economy.

Yet, migrant workers face discrimination, inequalities and are vulnerable to human rights abuses. In several countries, migrant workers earn 25% less than nationals, and they are three times more at risk of forced labour than non-migrants ([ILO](#), 2024). Victims of forced labour account for the biggest share of all victims of trafficking around the world ([UNODC](#), 2024). Migrant workers are also overrepresented in informal employment and found to have less ability to exercise workers' rights to safe and healthy working conditions, and have a higher risk of fatal occupational injury than local workers ([Lancet](#), 2024). Migrants' skills and qualifications are often not formally recognized. The average overqualification rate is 21% for native-born workers in the European Union, and 33% for the foreign-born ([IOM](#), 2023). Labour migration policies often perpetuate societal gender biases, with women working in traditionally feminized occupations, such as in the fields of health or education, being less likely to obtain a working permit than men in male-dominated skilled occupations ([IOM](#), 2024). As the overall labour market situation in developing countries remains challenging, particularly in Africa with labour markets under immense pressure due to the rapid growth of the youth population ([UNDESA](#), 2025), youth unemployment remains a major driver of migration, as evidenced for instance in Ghana ([Afrobarometer](#), 2024). Digital inequalities also hold migrants' entrepreneurship back, and skilled migration pathways are generally very difficult to access for refugees and displaced persons, despite many of them have skills that are in high demand in potential destination countries ([OECD](#), 2023).

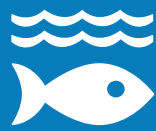
- Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications, to meet the needs of changing labour markets and divergent demographic trends; and support relevant public and private stakeholders to implement market-driven skills development policies that improve employability while meeting aspirations of people on the move. Take into consideration the emerging labour needs in green skills and explore the nexus between labour migration and green and just transition.
- Establish comprehensive and innovative data collection, sharing and integration systems and methodologies for monitoring labour market imbalances and forecasting future labour shortages, to inform the design and evaluation of labour mobility pathways; and scale up innovative regular migration pathway models such as the Skills Mobility Partnerships as forward-looking solutions that focus on maximizing the benefits of labour migration for all.
- Develop and implement targeted initiatives that harness the transformative power and agency of migrants – and in particular youth and women, as well as talented refugees and other migrants in need of protections – to boost efforts towards sustainable economic growth through their engagement in productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.
- Intensify international, regional, and national efforts, and take urgent and comprehensive measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking; and approach labour migration from a perspective of human rights, aligned with the principles of social justice and decent work.

Implementing integrated actions in this area will not only accelerate progress on SDG 8, but will have positive ripple effects on achieving SDGs 1, 3, 5, 9, 10 and 17.



The aim of the MITSA project, implemented in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire by IOM between (2021-2023) and supported by the French Republic, is to contribute to the recognition of the positive role of agricultural labor migration.

© IOM 2023 / Mohamed Aly Diabatae



MORE CAN AND MUST BE DONE, NOW:

GOAL 14. CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Rising temperatures of the oceans, ocean acidification, and its deoxygenation, are impacting marine ecosystems and the lives of coastal communities. In this context, the movement of people requires specific attention, as its relationship to the oceans and its ongoing changes create protection needs and challenges, but also opportunities.

Healthy oceans are vital for human well-being. Currently, more than three billion people worldwide rely directly on oceans for their livelihoods, the vast majority in developing countries (OECD, 2022). By taking into account how stresses affecting the oceans impact human mobility dynamics, stakeholders can be empowered to leverage mobility solutions to mitigate the ocean-related impacts of the climate crisis, enhance resilience, and diversify economies sustainably. Notably, mobility solutions provide innovative financing for development: over the years 2000 to 2022, remittances were by far the predominant source of external financing to Small Island Developing States (OECD, 2024), and the new Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS underlines how diaspora remittances and investment in research, economic development and diversification can be leveraged to promote sustainable ocean-based economies (UNOHRLLS, 2024). Safe, orderly and regular migration pathways can facilitate communities' access to safer environments and alternative livelihoods. Through their diverse experiences, migrants bring new perspectives and skills that spur innovation, contributing to the protection of marine ecosystems and to address the challenges faced by coastal communities. As a measure of last resort, carefully planned and rights-based relocation

initiatives can reduce the exposure of vulnerable populations to the impacts of environmental change in areas exposed to sea level rise.

Island and coastal populations are exposed to rapid- and slow-onset hazards, ranging from cyclones and storm surges to sea level rise and coastal erosion. In Asia and Oceania, 30.4% of the population in regions affected by weather-related internal displacement live in coastal areas (IOM, 2024). For example, through 2023, disasters led to displacement of more than 2.5 million people, many of them in coastal communities (IDMC, 2024). In Africa, these challenges are compounded by urbanization of coastal areas. In Senegal – where more than half of the population lives in coastal areas – the sea is encroaching at a rate of 1.6 meter a year (IOM, 2021). Sea level rise impacts, compounded by storm surge, and other factors including water availability and crop productivity could lead by 2050 to up to 206,000 coastal internal migrants in Senegal, second only in scale to Nigeria which could see close to 1 million internal migrants from its coastal belt (World Bank, 2021). Other events, such as droughts and floods, induce agricultural damages and reduce agricultural production which can in turn, as evidenced in Kenya, intensify pressure on fishery resources due to overfishing (IOM, 2022). Migration is not, however, an option accessible or desirable to everyone. Numerous factors, such as family ties, attachment to the land, financial constraints, or the lack of networks and relocation opportunities, can hinder individuals' movements, leaving them trapped in the face of climate change.

- Implement tailored solutions for people to make informed decisions to stay through integrated innovative investment solutions and approaches to ocean-related climate change in-situ adaptation and mitigation, early warning and disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development.
- Scale up solutions for people to move by enhancing and diversifying the availability of pathways for safe, orderly, and regular migration for those affected by disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation in coastal areas.
- Provide solutions for people on the move, by assisting and protecting migrants and IDPs through social cohesion and rights-based, child-sensitive and gender-responsive approaches; and by facilitating the participation of migrants, IDPs, diasporas, and communities in action addressing losses and damage to ecosystems and livelihoods.
- Empower diaspora members and migrants as investors in the blue economy in their communities of origin and to transfer knowledge and skills for innovation and entrepreneurship for the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources.

Implementing integrated actions in this area will not only accelerate progress on SDG 14, but will have positive ripple effects on achieving SDGs 1, 2, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 17.



The Macambira Association is a group of five fishers in Paquitequete, Pemba, led by twin brothers Amade and Bange Tassilima.
© IOM 2024 / Amanda Nero



MORE CAN AND MUST BE DONE, NOW:

GOAL 17. STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Effective international cooperation requires strong partnerships. This means bringing together all levels of government, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, and academia, as well as migrants and their communities – to provide viable solutions across the migration cycle that harness the benefits of regular migration, build the resilience of communities and reduce the resulting vulnerabilities faced by migrants.

Strong partnerships boost capacities to address gaps in the quantity, accuracy, timeliness, comparability and accessibility of migration data, which in turn supports better programming and policies to help reduce vulnerabilities, and empowers people and communities impacted by migration ([IOM, 2024](#)). Multi-level partnerships advance and operationalize policy coherence in practice to leverage migration for sustainable development: empowering local leaders and working directly with affected communities as well as local and regional governments creates development solutions that work on the ground in real time. This is especially true in urban areas, since cities are at the front line of mobility dynamics and responses. 65% of SDG targets are linked to local government actions ([OECD, 2020](#)). With a broader contribution to financing for development, and through remittances and other forms of migrants' savings and investments, human mobility is part of the solution to mobilize financial resources necessary to drive recovery, a just transition, and enhance macro-economic stability. Migration today remains in great part a South-South affair. Between 2000 and 2017, the proportion of international migrants born in the South grew from 67% to 72% ([UNDESA, 2017](#)). Advancing and enabling tailored

South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TC) solutions for safe, orderly and regular migration contributes to progress towards the SSC and TC targets. The positive role and contributions of migrant remittances in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), as well as the needs for enhancing digitalization and financial inclusion in these countries are widely recognized.

Yet, mobile population groups are often excluded from official statistics and therefore from development policies. In 2022, the global SDG database disaggregated only one indicator by migratory status – and on average, only 55% of countries report on SDG migration indicators ([IOM, 2022](#)). Migrants are often underrepresented in health data and research. Only less than half of the countries in the WHO European Region were able to collect or properly analyze health data based on migratory or refugee status by 2019 ([Lancet, 2023](#)). Furthermore, and while building migration systems that work for all demands a sense of mutuality, more and more governments are embracing restrictive migration policies that risk feeding the problems at hand rather than solving them ([Foreign Affairs, 2025](#)). Meanwhile, remittance transfer costs remain excessively high. While these private funds cannot replace public spending, reducing remittance costs would increase their volume to directly help finance development in origin countries. Notably, LDCs and LLDCs face some of the highest remittances sending costs in the world at 9.5% on average for LLDCs, which is more than two times the global average (6.35%) and more than three times the SDG target of 3% ([IOM, 2025](#)).

- Strengthen capacities of institutions to collect and analyze disaggregated migration data at local, national, regional and global levels, to better understand the situation of migrants and identify their needs, capacities and risks, as well as to develop foresight and strengthen evidence-based migration governance; specifically by operationalizing the limited list of indicators to monitor implementation of the GCM and related data disaggregation strategy, as well as the newly revised UN recommendations on statistics on migration and temporary mobility.
- Renew efforts to reduce remittance sending costs and leverage different types of diaspora contributions, in order to meet the target of mobilizing additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.
- Bring the voices of all stakeholders and partners, including at the 2026 International Migration Review Forum, and reenergize multilateral, regional and cross regional cooperation to ensure that migration systems work to mitigate the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st Century, and ensure that all parties – migrants, their countries of origin, and their host countries – can benefit.
- Build on IOM's role as Coordinator as the UN Network on Migration, and on IOM's existing collaboration with UN partners, including the Local 2030 Coalition, which brings together the UN system to mobilize, empower and support local actors in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Implementing integrated actions in this area will not only accelerate progress on SDG 17 but will have a positive ripple effect on achieving all other SDGs.



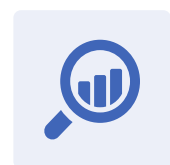
In Malakal, South Sudan, IOM is actively engaged in peacebuilding initiatives to foster social cohesion and support long-term stability.
© IOM 2024 / Muse Mohammed

B

THREE KEY AREAS WHERE SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE, SCIENCE- AND EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR ACHIEVING THE SDGS AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND ARE BEING EFFECTIVELY DELIVERED, ESPECIALLY RELATED TO THE CLUSTER OF SDGs UNDER REVIEW IN 2025

IOM firmly believes in the power of science, technology and innovation to serve humanity better. Data and evidence is a critical enabler of the [IOM Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028](#). IOM advises governments and other stakeholders, leveraging its extensive experience and expertise in connecting evidence and data with impactful practice. This includes compiling, analyzing and presenting data related to migration pathways using innovations in machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), along with foresight to look to future trends and mobility patterns.

IOM is committed to continue investing in responsible data collection and sharing as a public good to support evidence-based decision-making. This section presents three areas where IOM is implementing inclusive, science- and evidence solutions that harness data and innovative technologies, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review at the HLPF this year.



Key area 1. Leveraging data and technology to combat forced labour and modern slavery, and protect vulnerable migrants:

IOM works with partners to harness the tremendous potential of data and technological innovations to improve services, streamline processes and deliver solutions with speed and precision to protect migrants in vulnerable situations, and to reduce exposure to situations of forced labour and exploitation – risks that are heightened, amongst other factors, by migration status, lack of rights awareness, or fear of deportation. Notably, counter-trafficking has been a key activity for IOM since the late 1980s, and IOM collaborates with partners on enhancing data generation and knowledge sharing through innovative, evidence-based solutions. Led by IOM, the [Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative](#) (CTDC) is the first global repository of case data on counter-trafficking. It publishes harmonized data from organizations worldwide on a central, accessible online platform. Through the partnership with Microsoft Research, CTDC uses a synthetic algorithm to protect data privacy while maintaining its statistical integrity. It applies

differential privacy techniques to release the [Global Synthetic Dataset](#) and the [Global Victim-Perpetrator Synthetic Dataset](#), allowing CTDC to share more data and conduct more comprehensive research while protecting the privacy of trafficked individuals. IOM is also spearheading a groundbreaking initiative: the Data Exchange Solution for Counter-smuggling (DESC), a web-based global platform facilitates the real-time, secure exchange of non-sensitive data on irregular migration trends and the modus operandi of migrant smugglers. In partnership with Microsoft, DESC features a suite of AI-powered dashboards, designed to provide instant, real-time trend analysis for government law enforcement agencies and policymakers to counter organized crime involved in irregular migration and provide timely assistance to migrants in vulnerable situations.



Key area 2: Equipping the humanitarian and development community to better resolve, prevent and address internal displacement worldwide:

It is estimated that the global economic impact of one year of internal displacement is approximately USD 21 billion ([ADB](#), 2023). In the context of dwindling humanitarian funding, it is essential that the social and economic impact of displacement be addressed through development-focused investments and solutions. IOM's ability to bring together the foremost migration experts and the technological capacity is central to efforts to develop data driven capacity to foresee migration and displacement patterns. It enhances the ability to co-create with and empower governments, communities and displaced people to avoid and minimize the negative impacts of displacement. To this end, IOM works with stakeholders, such as governments, academia and the private sector, to develop innovative data sources and methods and regularly scan, assess and evaluate the data to identify potential changes in the magnitude of displacement.

Notably, IOM's Periodic Global Report on the State of Solutions to Internal Displacement ([PROGRESS](#)), published in partnership with Georgetown University, offers a comprehensive analysis of the global state of solutions to internal displacement worldwide, and supports decision-makers - from policy to operational partners – with a fresh evidence base to improve outcomes for internally displaced persons. By combining IOM's unparalleled data collection capacity in the field with Georgetown's academic expertise, it allows for a rich blend of quantitative and qualitative analysis and responds to a longstanding gap in understanding what displaced people themselves want and need. With over 116,000 household surveys and 463 qualitative consultations across 12 countries, it provides an in-depth assessment of the factors shaping displaced persons' choices. As such, the PROGRESS initiative and IOM's 2025 chairing of the Solutions Hub, is an essential resource to advance the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, equipping the humanitarian and development community to better resolve, prevent and address internal displacement worldwide.

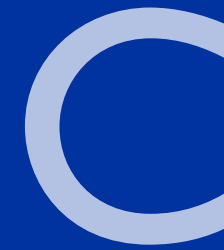


Key area 3: Enabling governments to take stock of and design evidence-based migration policies:

The [Migration Governance Indicators](#) (MGI) is the flagship IOM initiative that helps governments to take stock of their migration policies and strategies and to identify good practices as well as areas of potential growth. While SDG 10.7 sets a specific target to make migration safer, more orderly and more regular, this target should also be considered in relation to all other migration-related aspects of the SDGs. For instance, governments wishing to develop well-managed migration policies would have to consider the links between migration and development in a number of contexts, such as whether and to what extent: migrants are included in their health policies (SDG 3); gender considerations are included in migration policies (SDG 5); or migration and displacement are included in disaster risk reduction strategies, amongst other linkages. The relationship between the MGI and the SDGs is therefore twofold: (a) the MGI is a tool that can help countries assess their progress on SDG target 10.7 and (b) it can help assess whether countries are also meeting other goals across the SDGs, such as access to education, healthcare, peace and security, etc. To date, 112 governments and 106 local authorities have used the MGI to review their migration policies, identify good practices and gaps, and set priorities for the future. Governments have recognized the versatility of the tool and have used it for many purposes, including to evaluate their migration policies, as a basis for new evidence-based policies, to form a baseline to track progress on their national and international commitments towards the 2030 Agenda and the GCM, and to assess common and pressing challenges with neighboring countries.

* * *

Furthermore, IOM's Constitution recognizes migration research as integral to its functions, reflecting its commitment to supporting Member States formulate evidence-based policies for good migration governance that boost sustainable development outcomes. The [World Migration Report series](#), IOM's flagship biennial report, plays a crucial role in this effort.



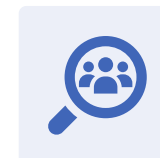
THREE EXAMPLES OF MEASURES TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS TOWARDS SDGS THROUGH WELL-COORDINATED ACTIONS IN KEY TRANSITIONS

TO BRING PROGRESS TO SCALE, BUILDING ON INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN SDGS TO ENSURE COHESIVE PROGRESS

The thinking behind the concept of key transitions is one of radical improvements in the ways the UN System nurtures and enables SDG acceleration, across the board, but particularly at the country level – where it needs to be contextualized. It implies a change of mindset into how the UN conceptualizes its work and how it delivers this work at scale.

IOM fully supports and aligns itself to this shift. It is clear that human mobility – given its significance as a historical phenomenon and its prominence as a contemporary reality, is inherently linked to all key transitions. To put it simply, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including the commitment to leave no one behind, will not be achieved without due consideration of migrants and displaced persons.

This section presents three examples of rights-based initiatives implemented at country, regional, or global level that accelerate progress towards the SDGs through well-coordinated actions for safe, orderly and regular migration; and that connect with- and advance one or multiple of the key transitions for progress at scale.



Example 1: Facilitating fair and ethical recruitment of migrant workers as a building block of the key transition on decent jobs and social protection:

Cross-border recruitment of workers is a vital part of facilitating international labour mobility that meets the challenges of demographic shifts and the profound transformations affecting the world of work. But unethical recruitment is a widespread phenomenon. [IRIS: Ethical Recruitment](#) is IOM's flagship initiative to promote ethical recruitment of migrant workers, which contributes to upholding their rights as migrants

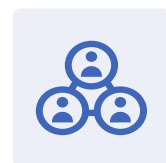
workers without discrimination. IRIS is a global multi-stakeholder initiative that supports governments, civil society, the private sector and recruiters to establish ethical recruitment as a norm in cross-border labour migration. IRIS is referred to under Objective 6 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and a number of other inter-governmental frameworks. The goal of IRIS is to make international recruitment fair and beneficial for everyone involved: migrant workers, employers, recruiters and countries of origin and destination. Amongst other achievements, and recognizing the need for dialogue, exchange, and guidance related to recruitment regulation and migrant protection in the context of labour migration governance, a capacity building programme and guidance utilizing a whole-of-government approach have been developed. More than 1700 government officials representing 40 countries have been trained by the programme since its creation. The need for policy dialogue as an essential mechanism for achieving positive development outcomes served as the impetus for the establishment of the now 62-member Global Policy Network on Recruitment representing Member States, as well sub-national authorities and regional bodies. As the Secretariat of the network, IOM facilitates dialogue among government authorities with a focus on driving long-term improvements and harmonization in cross-border recruitment standards for migrant workers, as a building block for social protection systems and decent job creation that generates shared prosperity and develop trust in institutions.



Example 2: Facilitating the mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competencies of migrants as an element of the key transition on education:

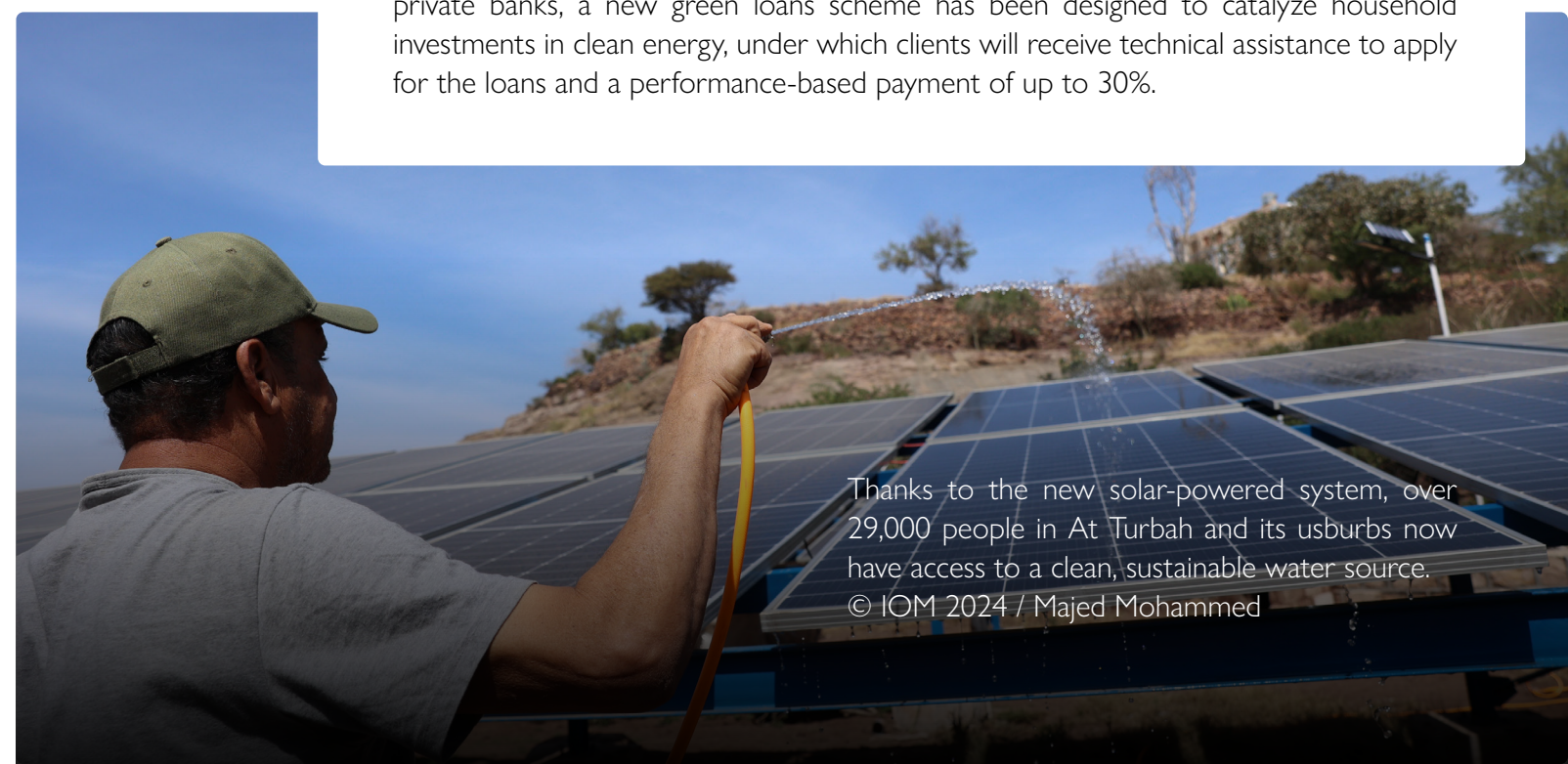
Mainstreaming human mobility considerations throughout the repositioning of education systems, and in the rethinking and transforming of the “what” (curricula) and “how” (pedagogy) of education – is indispensable. It can help advance the transformational objectives of improving social and economic well-being, reducing inequality, strengthening social cohesion and preparing societies for the green and digital economies of the future. Improving and expanding the right to education of migrants is a strategic long-term investment as it is linked to improving migrants’ health, income and integration – which benefits all. Investing in skills development and facilitating mutual recognition of qualifications of migrants in a manner that boosts employability while meeting aspirations of people on the move. [Skills Mobility Partnerships](#) (SMPs) are an innovative and highly adaptive IOM tool to maximize the development benefits of labour mobility by focusing on human capital and skills development. SMPs offer an efficient, equitable and sustainable approach to labour mobility that responds to stakeholders’ needs and interests. Underpinned by a whole-of-government and whole-of society approach, SMPs build robust collaboration within and across countries, strengthen institutional capacities, thereby driving sustainable development outcomes for a host of actors and individuals at the intersection of migration, training, employment and development. IOM is the first and only UN Agency with operational tools to implement skills partnerships to deliver on the developmental promise of labour migration. Testament to this collaborative approach, SMP operational tools incorporated contributions from other UN Agencies, such as the

International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organization of Employers (IOE), in the context of the Global Skills Partnership on Migration, and beyond.



Example 3: Harnessing migration to promote green entrepreneurship as a lever of the key transition on energy access and affordability:

Lack of access to affordable and clean energy is deeply relevant to the capacity and motivation of people to move, among other factors related to the climate and the environment. There are various ways through which well-managed human mobility can enable the needed global transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy and to make this transition just and equitable for all. Empowered diaspora groups, migrants and displaced persons, returning migrants and others can foster the transfer of skills, know-how, technology and investments that can boost local, sustainable development practices around energy consumption, clean energy development and renewable energy production. In North Macedonia, the project [“Utilizing A Systems Approach to Assess the Nexus between Air Pollution and Human Mobility and Mainstream the Nexus into Policy Development”](#) works to reduce air pollution levels and carbon emissions by catalyzing small and medium-sized enterprises’ (SMEs) and households’ investments into renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) solutions that support the country to advance implementation of the SDGs. The project proposes a green financing facility that provides loans, performance-based payments, and technical assistance to trigger SMEs’ and households’ investments into RE and EE solutions. The green financing facility specifically targets marketable but underserved clients such as the female-headed households, single-parents, households that have persons with disabilities, Roma, employees affected by COVID19, remittance recipients and returning migrants. In collaboration with three private banks, a new green loans scheme has been designed to catalyze household investments in clean energy, under which clients will receive technical assistance to apply for the loans and a performance-based payment of up to 30%.



Thanks to the new solar-powered system, over 29,000 people in At Turbah and its suburbs now have access to a clean, sustainable water source.
© IOM 2024 / Majed Mohammed

D FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS AND MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDG SUMMIT POLITICAL DECLARATION AND THE OUTCOMES OF THE SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE, TO ADVANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA

The adoption of the Pact for the Future and its two annexed documents – the Declaration on Future Generations and the Global Digital Compact – a year after the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration was a powerful statement of countries' commitment to a reinvigorated multilateral system, to the values of the UN Charter, and to international law.

World leaders pledged action for peace, sustainable development and for transforming global governance, and – noting that challenges are deeply interconnected and far exceed the capacity of any single State alone – underlined that addressing those through strong and sustained international cooperation guided by trust and solidarity is not an option but a necessity. Cross-cutting to this bold vision is the need to forge stronger partnerships with civil society, the private sector, local and regional authorities and more; as well as the forceful commitment to more meaningful opportunities for young people to participate in the decisions that shape their lives.

This section presents three areas where IOM actions and measures already put to practice the vision set forth by Member States, as it relates to IOM's mandate of saving lives and protecting people on the move in vulnerable situations, and to ensuring that regular migration pathways remain effective and their benefits harnessed to build an inclusive and prosperous future for all.



Key area 1: Scaling up private sector's unique skills, knowledge and expertise for impactful migration and displacement solutions:

Building partnerships with the private sector is key to saving lives and protecting people on the move, driving solutions to displacement, supporting pathways for regular migration – and to be able to do so at scale. With significant investment in 2024, IOM was able to develop and strengthen relationships with major global businesses, welcoming 33 new partnerships and bringing the total number of private sector partnerships to 56. These

partnerships span the broad mandate of the Organization, harnessing migration's potential as a catalyst for sustainable development. By fostering key relationships with private sector partners, IOM can provide a more efficient and strengthened response to situations of crisis. For instance, through the collaboration with [Amazon](#), IOM is able to respond quickly to emergencies and provide vital support for people in need as well as empower community members to actively engage in disaster relief efforts. Partnerships with the private sector allow to explore innovative, scalable solutions to address challenges faced by internally displaced communities, as was done for instance in Lagos, Nigeria during an event on [Unlocking Private Sector Partnerships for Durable Solutions to Internal Displacement in Africa](#). Furthermore, IOM works on a range of initiatives that contribute to shaping up balanced regular migration pathways that meet the challenges of today and those of tomorrow. IOM works with companies such as [IKEA](#) to improve ethical recruitment, foster decent and meaningful work, and strengthen avenues to effective remedy for migrant workers; and with companies such as Microsoft to address climate-induced displacement by harnessing artificial intelligence and data insights. Additionally, IOM is committed to partner with the private sector to build the workforce for the future and advancing the green transition through regular labour mobility pathways and skills mobility partnerships. For instance, IOM is a founding member of the [Coalition for Green Skills Pathways](#), an initiative that aims to train approximately 10,000 displaced workers in high-demand green-transition occupations, link them to employment, and facilitate their movement on safe pathways to durable solutions. These initiatives demonstrate how innovation and regular migration pathways can drive development and create economic opportunities for people on the move – ultimately benefiting societies at large.



Key area 2: Amplifying the voices of young people and empowering youth as agents of change:

Provided with the opportunities to reach their potential, young people will help drive innovation, development, peace and security. To do so, it is critical to include supporting young people's well-being and empowerment through access to decent work, skills development, and services, and including migrant youth throughout these efforts. Echoing the commitments made in the Summit of the Future and through the Declaration on Future Generations to listen to young people and include them in decision-making, at the national and global levels; IOM actively engages young people in shaping solutions to global challenges, through leadership programmes, skills development, and policy advocacy. The [IOM Youth Changemakers Initiative](#), launched in 2024, engages young people from across the world who are committed to working on migration issues. The initiative is designed to provide youth with the support they need to boost their impact on the ground and is organized around four pillars: capacity development, advocacy, peer learning, and support to youth action. The [Youth Leadership and Innovation Award](#) supports groundbreaking youth-led projects, and the Youth Innovation for Social Change training, equips young people with the skills to lead impactful initiatives. By facilitating youth participation in global discussions, such as the Migration Youth Forum, the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the HLPPF, the International Dialogue on Migration, the High-Level

Week of the UN General Assembly, or COP29 – to which IOM sponsored 24 youth delegates – ensures that young migrants' voices influence policy and decision-making. Furthermore, IOM champions youth engagement through a range of programmes implemented by country offices worldwide. For example, the “[Think Twice](#)” regional campaign in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama, was co-designed with youth to leverage information in preventing human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.



Key area 3: Fostering dialogue for long-lasting beneficial policy changes and strengthened systems in the migration context:

The needs of countries are more likely to be met if they are considered together and IOM has a track record in convening Governments and all relevant stakeholders around important migration governance issues and fostering a spirit of international cooperation guided by trust and solidarity. In 2024, IOM promoted State-led dialogue through the sessions of the International Dialogue on Migration aligned to the core themes of the SDG Summit and the Summit of the Future. These brought together migration stakeholders from all levels for open discussions on [Facilitating Regular Pathways to a Better Future: Harnessing the Power of Migration](#) in March 2024, and on [Finding Balance in Regular Migration Pathways Solutions: Driving Sustainable Development and Green Transitions](#) in November 2024. More generally, IOM continued to support inter-State consultation mechanisms on migration, notably the Global Forum on Migration and Sustainable Development, and significant contributions were made by IOM to UN-led global policy dialogues, including the 2024 HLPF, the Summit of the Future, and COP29. As part of the UN system's support for the implementation of the Pact for the Future, IOM is leading the sub-action on strengthening international partnerships and global cooperation for safe, orderly and regular migration, through various fora and processes including the Global Skill Partnerships on Migration, the Local 2030 Coalition, and the Second World Summit for Social Development. Leveraging IOM's role as Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration, IOM is also co-organizing the regional reviews of the GCM which pave the way for the 2026 International Migration Review Forum – the primary intergovernmental global platform to review the progress made at the local, national, regional and global levels in implementing the GCM. As such, regional reviews present an opportunity for State-led discussions and stocktaking of the GCM in support of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda; as well as to chart a bold and ambitious path for migration governance through fostered regional collaboration. The second Regional Reviews of the GCM were held for the [Economic Commission for Europe Region](#), for the [Arab Region](#), and for [Africa](#), respectively in March, July and October 2024. Meanwhile, the second Regional Review for [Asia and the Pacific](#) took place in February this year and will be held for the [Latin America and the Caribbean Region](#) in March.



SPOTLIGHT: IOM's role as Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration:

The [United Nations Network on Migration](#), coordinated by IOM, plays a vital role in advancing the GCM, adopted in 2018 by the UN General Assembly. As the coordinator of the Network, IOM works with Network members to facilitate effective and cohesive system-wide support for the implementation of the Compact, including through capacity-building initiatives and follow-up mechanisms that respond to the needs of Member States.

The Network contributes to multiple SDGs, including those under review in 2025, for example: **SDG 3**: the Network's workstream on *preparing for future health emergencies by mainstreaming public health considerations into migration policies and services, at national and local levels*; **SDG 5**: the workstream on gender-responsive GCM implementation has developed the GRIT tool to support governments and stakeholders to better integrate gender into migration policies and programmes; **SDG 8**: the workstream on enhancing pathways for regular migration through bilateral labour migration agreements has developed UN system-wide guidance for developing BLMAs.

In addition, due to its focus on maximizing partnerships for collective outcomes, the Network contributes to several **SDG 17** targets, such as: **17.3**: The Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund has mobilized approximately 70m USD financing for developing countries to strengthen migration governance; **17.14**: The GCM Demand-driven Facility supports eight governments and one sub-regional body to align their GCM implementation planning and policy frameworks with other international frameworks; **17.16**: several regional migration multi-stakeholder platforms have been established, facilitating participation of civil society, migrant representatives, and trades unions in migration governance cooperation; in addition; **17.18**: the Network coordinated the highly consultative process of developing a GCM indicator framework, which was launched in December 2024 attached to the biennial secretary-general's report on GCM implementation; their rollout is being supported through the GCM Capacity Building Mechanism, to enhance high-quality, disaggregated data on migration; **17.9**: The GCM follow-up and review system and Champion countries Initiative promotes international cooperation on migration, with a focus on South-South, North-South, and triangular cooperation.

Through these actions, the United Nations Network on Migration, with IOM at the helm, is helping to advance the global migration agenda while ensuring that migration is recognized as a key enabler for achieving sustainable development. Its ongoing work is crucial to achieving the SDGs under review in 2025, fostering global partnerships and strengthening support for developing countries.



E

RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY MESSAGES FOR INCLUSION INTO THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION OF THE 2025 HLPF:

Migration positively impacts and accelerates progress across SDGs. At the same time, human mobility is being profoundly reshaped by unprecedented global transformations and by an ever more complex interplay of factors and dynamics, and political tensions around migration are growing. All these factors will continue to shape and drive the movement of people, while putting unprecedented pressure on States, societies and individuals around the world.

A major shift in how migration is approached is critical. As the world redoubles efforts to implement the SDG Summit Political Declaration and to deliver on the outcomes of the Summit for the Future, we can and must do better for solutions at scale that ensure positive outcomes for migrants and societies. Now, more than ever, properly managed migration must be preserved as a global strategic asset to meet the challenges of today and those of tomorrow.

The 2025 HLPF Ministerial Declaration should underline that:

- Well-governed migration can boost progress across SDGs, enriching societies through human, socio-economic and cultural capacities; and that migrants are key contributors to sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination, often act as agents of change driving innovation, entrepreneurship, international trade and foreign direct investment.
- To realize the 2030 Agenda, States must cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration in the spirit of international cooperation; and the human rights, including the right to health, and well-being of all migrants, refugees and displaced persons, must be respected at all times, regardless of their migration status and across all stages of the migration cycle.
- Expanding safe, regular and orderly pathways for migration, underpinned by a better understanding of both the drivers and structural factors that compel and will compel people to move, can help reduce irregular migration, accelerate inclusive growth, improve public health outcomes, strengthen decent work, bridge labour gaps and foster sustainable development while adapting to the increasingly complex human mobility dynamics.
- The 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, together with the Secretary General Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, and other relevant international and regional instruments, including the core human rights treaties, guide how to ensure and amplify the positive impacts of human mobility and address its challenges in a data-driven, rights-based and evidence-based manner.

