

Policies and Practice: A Guide to Gender-Responsive Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration

Preliminary version

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and the Empowerment of Women

This Policies and Practice Guide has been developed by UN Women in consultation with the members of the Expert Working Group for Addressing Women’s Human Rights in the Global Compact for Migration (EWG). UN Women serves as the substantive secretariat of the EWG. The EWG is comprised of experts from the following human rights treaty bodies, Special Procedures mandate holders, UN agencies and civil society organizations:

- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW)
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants
- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance
- Working group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and practice
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Office of the United Nations High-Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Women in Migration Network (WIMN)
- NGO Committee on Migration
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)
- International Migration Research Centre (IMRC)
- Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)

This is a preliminary version of the Policies and Practice Guide, which will be further developed and made available as an online tool at: www.unwomen.org

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The Purpose of the Policies and Practice Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to provide clear, concrete and practical guidance to Member States and other key stakeholders for gender-responsive implementation of the GCM. Building on the gender-responsive approach outlined in the guiding principles of the GCM and the specific objectives which mainstream these principles, this Guide emphasizes the specific needs, challenges and situations of vulnerability faced by women at all stages of migration, while taking into consideration the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination they may face. This Guide also highlights the positive contributions that women make at all stages of migration.

This Guide draws on cross-cutting expertise from international human rights mechanisms, Special Procedures mandate holders, civil society organizations, academia and United Nations agencies to comprehensively address the linkages between gender equality and migration in all its dimensions. For each of the 23 objectives of the GCM, this Guide outlines the specific issues relating to migrant women and girls and provides specific measures on how to address them in policies and practice.

The Guide is intended to be a practical tool for policy makers and practitioners and includes a checklist of key actions for each of the GCM objectives to ensure that gender equality considerations have been met.

The Importance of a Gender Perspective in the Context of Migration

Women account for approximately 50 per cent of the world's migrants and send half of the estimated USD 601 billion in remittances. When migration is a choice, it can be an expression of women's agency and a vehicle for their empowerment. Migration has the potential to stimulate equitable, inclusive and sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination. Yet the experience of migration differs significantly for women and men: every aspect of migration, from those who remain behind, the decision to migrate, transiting across borders, to settling in the country of destination is influenced by gender equality considerations.

For many women, migration can be a positive experience leading to a better life and enhancing their livelihood opportunities, autonomy and empowerment. However, migration can also expose women and girls to serious violations of their human rights. Migrant women and girls often experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and find themselves in situations of vulnerability during migration. They may face greater risks of discrimination because laws and policies often reproduce or reinforce existing gender inequalities in countries of origin, transit and destination. Labour markets remain highly segregated and women, relative to men, often have limited access to information and lack decision-making power and control over resources.

Migrant women and girls may face heightened risks of:

- Sexual and gender-based violence

- Labour market and occupational segregation and unequal remuneration (including concentration in low paid, low skilled and informal employment, precarious jobs, and a higher risk of exploitation)
- Sexual harassment, including in the work place
- Discrimination in law and practice (including sex-specific bans, requiring permission from a male spouse or guardian to migrate)
- Poverty
- Trafficking in persons
- Forced labour, exploitation and abuse
- Discrimination in accessing services

What is Gender-Responsive Migration Governance?

Gender-responsive migration governance responds to the different realities faced by migrant women, men, girls and boys by promoting and protecting their human rights at all stages of migration. It aims to ensure that laws, policies, regulations, and programmes recognize and address the specific needs, challenges and situations of vulnerability of all migrants, while promoting gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Overview of the GCM from a Gender Perspective

The **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)**¹ is a milestone in migration governance as it is the first, inter-governmentally negotiated set of commitments to cover all dimensions of international migration. It reaffirms the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**² adopted in September 2016 to address large movements of refugees and migrants. In the Declaration, Member States committed to:

- Mainstream a gender perspective
- Promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
- Fully respect and protect the human rights of women and girls
- Combat sexual and gender-based violence

¹ Agreed outcome text of the Global Compact for Migration, to be adopted at an intergovernmental conference in December 2018: https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713_agreed_outcome_global_compact_for_migration.pdf

² General Assembly resolution 71/1. Available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1

- Tackle the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against refugee and migrant women and girls

The GCM incorporates a gender-responsive approach as a guiding principle. This is a unique opportunity for Member States to ensure that the rights, needs and situations of vulnerability of migrant women and girls are addressed by putting in place inclusive and gender-responsive migration laws, policies, regulations and programmes. The GCM seeks to:

- Ensure that the human rights of women, men, girls and boys are respected at all stages of migration
- Ensure their specific needs and contributions are properly understood and addressed
- Ensure that they are recognized and empowered as agents of change
- Mainstream a gender perspective and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls
- Recognize migrant women's independence, agency and leadership, and move away from addressing migrant women primarily through a lens of victimhood.

The GCM is rooted in the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**³ as well as in the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the **Addis Ababa Action Agenda**,⁴ which recognizes that sustainable development can only be achieved if the human rights of women are realized. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, world leaders underscored that realizing gender equality is crucial to achieve sustainable development and to make progress across all SDGs. In SDG 5, Member States of the United Nations committed to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, including to:

- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking in persons and sexual and other types of exploitation
- Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
- Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

³ Please see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

⁴ Available at: http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

- Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
- Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
- Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

The 2030 Agenda acknowledges that international migration is essential for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination. For example, under SDG 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries, target 10.7 aims to:

- Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

The 2030 Agenda also highlights the linkage between gender and migration. For example, in SDG 8.8 on decent work for all, world leaders committed to:

- Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment

Addressing Multiple and Intersecting Forms of Discrimination

The GCM rests on international human rights frameworks that contain specific international instruments to combat different forms of discrimination. To implement the GCM in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner, it is vital to recognise that migrant women may face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination not only as women and as migrants, but also based on any number of other interconnected characteristics, *inter alia*, age, income, race and ethnicity, nationality, religion, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, health status, HIV status, pregnancy, place of residence and economic and social situation.

This Guide proposes measures for policy makers and other practitioners for addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination migrant women and girls may face in countries of origin, transit and destination. These measures draw on existing tools and legal frameworks to ensure that the gender-responsive principle of the GCM is realized, in order that migration is safe, orderly and regular for all

women and girls while ensuring that their human rights are realized, protected and fulfilled at all stages of migration.

Policies and Practice: A Guide to Gender-Responsive Implementation of the GCM

GCM Objective 1: Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The GCM recognizes that migration policies need better evidence on international migration, including data on sex, age, migration status, and other characteristics. Policies, laws and programmes that aim to address the specific needs and priorities of all migrant women and girls require comprehensive disaggregated data that reflects their experiences. Sex-disaggregated data on remittances is needed to capture the contributions of women migrant workers to economic growth and sustainable development.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Strengthened capacity of national statistics offices, ministries responsible for labour migration and immigration, and other relevant stakeholders to collect, use and disseminate sex-and gender-disaggregated data and gender statistics on migration, including labour migration, while guaranteeing the privacy of personal data. This data should include information on regular and irregular migration, the economic impacts of migration and refugee movements, trafficking in persons, and the needs of refugees, migrants, and host communities and other issues
- Adequate tools and human and financial resources to collect, use and disseminate sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics
- Collection, use and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and gender, age, migration status, disability and other characteristics, and gender statistics on migration, and of qualitative data on migrant women's experiences on a periodic basis
- Data sharing and management across countries to close protection gaps. Data should not be shared without prior permission
- Prohibition of the use of personal data for immigration enforcement that was collected for other purposes, such as protection, remedy, civil registration and access to services

GCM Objective 2: Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

For migration to be a choice and not a necessity, it means reducing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin, including economic, environmental, and social crises, armed conflict, poverty, and forms of unsustainable development that displace communities and people. For migrant women and girls, deeply entrenched gender inequalities, income inequality, lack of employment opportunities, and sexual and gender-based violence can influence their decision to migrate. Women human rights defenders and community activists may also have to flee when they are targeted

for retaliation. To achieve SDG 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, migration governance needs to promote gender equality and eliminate all forms of gender-based violence.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Gender equality in national laws, policies, and practice, and equal access to legal redress
- National laws, policies and action plans that prevent and address all forms of gender-based violence, including gender-based violence in the work place
- Equal and inclusive access to gender-responsive education, vocational training, skills development and recognition programmes
- Employment laws and policies that promote decent work, equality of opportunity and treatment for women in the labour market, linked with opportunities for training
- Policies and laws guaranteeing equal access to natural and economic resources, including access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, productive assets, financial services, bank accounts and insurance, and inheritance
- Gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and climate resilience strategies that reduce the disproportionate impact of natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation on women and girls

Case Study 2: Minimizing the adverse drivers and structural factors leading to migration

Background

In Kachin State in Myanmar, political instability, protracted conflict and internal displacement are key drivers of migration and heighten the risk of trafficking. Over 97,000⁵ people in Kachin remain displaced in camp settings, of which approximately 75 per cent⁶ are women and children. Many of these women displaced in camps make the decision to cross into China in search of employment, increasing their risk of being trafficked into forced marriage or into commercial surrogacy. UN Women and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), partnered with Htoi Gender and Development Foundation, a Kachin State-based NGO, to strengthen efforts to reduce the risks these women face to trafficking.

Enhancing skills and opportunities

UN Women carried out a series of consultations with internally displaced women and local women's networks. The consultations revealed that women are heavily affected by the loss of livelihoods and limited economic opportunities owing to the confiscation of their original farm and orchard lands, abundant landmines in farming areas, and protracted conflicts in the region. This has left many women without a sustainable income, many with no choice but to migrate.

Through the provision of more long-term targeted livelihood programmes, women can strengthen their skills and increase their opportunities. Htoi, with the support of UN Women, provided training on entrepreneurship and development, including marketing, financial literacy, savings, and financial management. Further, Htoi worked to connect women entrepreneurs with markets through which they could sell their products. To date, 129 women have been trained in agriculture, animal husbandry, weaving, and other livelihood opportunities, and have subsequently received cash and in-kind support to establish businesses.

Strengthening community mobilisation and awareness raising to prevent trafficking

Htoi also provided awareness raising sessions on safe migration to the women participating in these activities. In the community, Htoi established women's support groups providing peer to peer learning, mentoring and coaching support, with the goal of increasing women's participation and leadership in trafficking prevention and response. These women received training on how to lead monitoring, complaint and feedback mechanisms – such as watchdog committees – and victim referral mechanisms. Advocacy campaigns were conducted in the community to ensure women were aware of their rights, of the dangers of trafficking, and the available services for victims. To date, 236 community members have received the training, and approximately 708 have been trained on the trafficking awareness programme.

⁵ 2019 Myanmar Humanitarian Needs Overview (December 2018), Humanitarian Country Team. Available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2019%20Myanmar%20HNO_FINAL.PDF

⁶ Ibid.

GCM Objective 3: Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Accurate and timely information is essential for safe, orderly and regular migration for all migrants. Such information is essential for migrants to make informed decisions on whether or not to migrate and how to do so safely. Migrant women and girls often lack information about their rights or entitlements under the law and the risks they face. Women and girls at all stages of migration need information that is culturally sensitive, accessible and easy to understand. This information should discuss possible risks that migrant women and girls may face, such as trafficking in persons, labour exploitation, unethical recruitment practices, and sexual and gender-based violence. It should also underscore that anyone caught committing such crimes during migration will be held accountable.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Clear and accessible information from credible sources for migrant women to understand their rights and obligations at all stages of migration
- Free or affordable pre-departure information and training programmes for migrant women that are gender-responsive, human-rights based and accessible, outlining the risks and realities of regular and irregular migration channels, and orientation on culture and laws in countries of destination
- Trained staff to provide information to all migrant women and girls including those with low literacy and sensory and intellectual disabilities
- Information should include: options for legal status (including through the asylum system and obtaining residence and working permits), education, decent work, justice and due process, and health services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare services
- Information on sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response services and referral pathways, and staff trained to identify women and girls who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence

GCM Objective 4: Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Migrant women and girls should have individual and independent documentation. Documentation that is tied to a male spouse or guardian inhibits women's freedom of movement and may increase their exposure to sexual or gender-based violence and other human rights violations. Holding legal identity documentation facilitates access to key services, but lack of documentation should not preclude migrant women and girls from accessing services, such as health services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare services.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Equal and independent access to identity and travel documents, and prohibit and sanction the retention or destruction of travel or identity documents by employers and recruiters
- Equal rights for all migrants to acquire, change or retain their nationality and to confer their nationality to their children
- Information about municipal or citywide identification schemes for migrants that is clear, accessible and gender-responsive

GCM Objective 5: Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Options and pathways for regular migration that uphold the principle of equality and non-discrimination are necessary. This helps migrant women access labour mobility schemes and decent work without discrimination. Providing equality of access to safe migration pathways can help prevent irregular migration and trafficking in persons, as well as prevent exploitation linked to unscrupulous brokers and intermediaries. Pathways for regular migration should include family reunification, equal for all migrants, in line with the right to family life and the best interests of the child, recognizing the various forms of families that exist. In certain employment sectors, such as domestic work, workers are often not covered by national labour legislation and face serious protection gaps. Bilateral and multilateral labour arrangements can help address these gaps for migrant workers.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Policy options and legislation expanding regular migration that uphold the principles of equality and non-discrimination
- Elimination of gender discriminatory provisions, restrictions, bans or exclusions in law and practice that limit opportunities for women and girls to migrate
- Elimination of discrimination against persons with disabilities to migrate
- Employment policies and labour mobility schemes with equality of opportunity and treatment, including equal pay for work of equal value, for all migrant women at all skill levels
- Elimination of gender discriminatory laws or policies relating to family reunification schemes. All migrants should be able to exercise their right to have their immediate family members join them in the country of destination without discrimination
- Bilateral and multilateral labour migration arrangements which draw on relevant ILO standards and principles, including key ILO Conventions which promote the rights of women migrant workers at all skills levels

Case Study 5: Enhance the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration

Background

Women tend to have more limited options for jobs and migration pathways available to them compared to men owing to pervasive gender-based discrimination in migration policies and laws. Discrimination may be direct, through gender-specific recruitment quotas, or indirect, for example when women are segregated into ‘feminized’ occupations characterised by lower wages and poorer working conditions, in particular domestic work. In 2015, 80 per cent of the world’s 67 million domestic workers worldwide were women. Each year, over 3 million South Asian women travel to the Middle East, the majority of whom do so in search of employment in the domestic work sector.

Policymakers have access to information on international standards and best practices

Domestic workers are often partially or fully excluded from national labour laws and related protections, meaning employment contracts play a critical role in protecting their rights. Women migrant domestic workers moving to the Middle East come from various states across Asia as well as Africa. The current process of determining employment standards primarily through bilateral processes means women work under inconsistent protections, based on their country of origin, means of recruitment and other variables.

UN Women has been working with governments, recruitment agencies, CSOs and intergovernmental bodies since 2013 to progress towards agreed standards for domestic workers’ employment contracts. UN Women’s [Gender-responsive guidance on employment contracts for migrant domestic workers from South Asia](#) is a reference tool for anyone seeking to develop, negotiate or review employment contracts for migrant domestic workers. Workers, employers, recruitment agencies, and countries of origin and destination can use the guidance to make informed decisions about the content of employment contracts, as they design, evaluate or agree to them. By taking the Guidance forward together, governments can work to ensure all women migrant workers benefit from decent work.

Harmonizing policy approaches to decent work and safe migration pathways for women migrant domestic workers

The complex dynamics of labour migration requires a multi-stakeholder approach to international cooperation. Using the Gender-responsive Guidance on Employment Contracts as a basis, UN Women convened governments, CSOs, recruitment agencies and experts from across South Asia for a regional dialogue to establish agreed priorities to protect and promote the rights of women migrant workers. Governments in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka have requested technical support to implement UN Women’s [Empowering Women Migrant Workers from South Asia: Toolkit for Gender-Responsive Employment and Recruitment](#), including the Gender-responsive Guidance on Employment Contracts. Among the applications of the Toolkit identified by stakeholders was a request to develop a gender-responsive, human rights-based checklist for the assessment, development and negotiation of labour mobility agreements including sector-specific standard terms of employment for domestic workers.

GCM Objective 6: Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Women's labour is often undervalued, underpaid, de-skilled and exploited due to deeply-rooted gender inequalities and gender-based discrimination. Fair and ethical recruitment is essential to protect migrant workers against abuse and exploitation. Recruitment agencies play a crucial role in facilitating access to decent work, and in providing information to migrant women regarding their rights in countries of destination. Ratification and implementation of international instruments related to international labour migration, labour rights, and decent work contribute to promoting fair recruitment. Migrant women are overrepresented in informal work and in care and domestic work. Hence, the ratification of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) is critical to prevent abuse, harassment and violence and promote fair terms of employment and decent working conditions. The transition from the informal to formal economy is important to reduce women migrant workers' exposure to precarious work conditions and to increase their access to social protection. While some private recruitment agents provide information about living and working conditions, many unscrupulous agents take advantage of migrants. Due to unethical recruitment practices, migrants may be charged unauthorized fees and deceived about working and living conditions. Migrant women may be exposed to a heightened risk of abuse, sexual and gender-based violence, including in the work place, debt bondage, domestic servitude, and labour exploitation.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Regular migration pathways and options for both skilled and low skilled women migrant workers, and access to decent jobs with social protection
- Mandatory gender sensitivity training for public and private recruitment agencies, labour attaches, consular staff and others on the rights of women migrant workers
- Regulations and monitoring for recruitment agents regarding fair and equal treatment of all women migrant workers, and prohibiting recruitment fees and related costs to be charged to migrant workers
- Social protection coverage across sectors for women migrant workers, whether in the formal or informal economy, including domestic work
- Laws and policies that mandate decent work and prohibit gender-based discrimination, occupational segregation, violence, and harassment in employment and occupation
- Promotion and protection of women migrant workers' rights to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly, to participate in workers' and migrant workers' organizations and to form their own organizations
- Standard employment contracts based on free and fair consent that are accessible and understandable to workers, clearly explaining the terms and conditions of employment in a language that the migrant worker understands

- Provision of a free hotline to provide impartial legal advice on work contracts and terms of employment in country of destination
- Laws and policies that prohibit and sanction the practices of contract substitution, retaining documentation and forced seclusion or locking in homes of women migrant workers, particularly domestic workers
- Ratification and implementation of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)
- Inclusive and gender-responsive training, in collaboration with concerned civil society organizations and employers' and workers' organizations, for labour inspection services, police, and other competent bodies to protect women migrant workers from abuse
- Access to justice for migrant women for labour related claims, including specific complaints mechanisms for harassment and discrimination to assist women to seek redress

Case Study 6: Reducing the risks facing women migrant workers

Rubia migrated to Abu Dhabi in 2011, looking for a decent life for herself and her family. As soon as she arrived at her destination, she realized that it was not the job that she was promised. For six months she worked as a domestic worker in different homes, with insufficient pay, no time to rest and no amenities. Eventually, she found another job, where she could use her skills as a garment worker, but her passport had been retained by her former employer, yet her visa status permitted only domestic work. Consequently, she was deported to Bangladesh with no savings and few prospects.

The story of Rubia is one of the many stories collected by UN Women's Regional Office in Bangkok. While migration offered Rubia potential opportunities, it wasn't without its risks. She did not speak the local language, had no family or friends in Abu Dhabi, and there were limited options for migrants seeking legal recourse in the case of abuse or human rights violations.

UN Women seeks to protect and promote the rights of women migrant workers by facilitating safe and regular migration and support the reintegration of returnees, including by ensuring that women have access to accurate and timely information at all stages of migration. To support this process, UN Women's Bangladesh Country Office conducted a situation analysis entitled, '[Country Overview: Women and Migration in Bangladesh](#)'. This analysis provides concrete recommendations on improving the living and working conditions of women migrant workers through strengthened labour policies including increasing opportunities for women to migrate into decent work in higher wage sectors, as well as developing and implementing gender-responsive recruitment procedures and strengthening employment contracts.

In line with the recommendation on gender-responsive recruitment procedures, UN Women together with IOM, developed an operational checklist and reference guide on international standards and best practices to protect and promote the labour rights of women migrant workers at all stages of migration, '[Gender-Responsive Self-Assessment Tool for Recruitment Agencies](#)'. In order to support the integration of these tools into recruitment practices, they were translated into Bangla and presented to selected recruitment agencies during a capacity building workshop. Subsequently, the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) – comprised of more than 1000 agencies in Bangladesh – agreed to use this tool as the basis to implement ethical and gender-responsive recruitment practices in Bangladesh.

UN Women's engagement with BAIRA has led to initiatives aimed at ensuring ethical recruitment of women migrant workers. These include an online recruitment system seeking to mitigate risks by lowering recruitment costs and restricting recruitment opportunities only to licensed recruitment agencies. BAIRA has also strengthened guidelines on supporting women migrant workers during their time in the countries of destination, including through a system of monthly check-ins with employees regarding their working conditions. Through its work with BAIRA, UN Women has reached over 500 recruitment agencies in Bangladesh and prompted the development of gender-responsive codes of conduct.

GCM Objective 7: Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The GCM aims to address and reduce vulnerabilities for all migrants. This requires understanding the specific situations of vulnerability that migrant women and girls face. Policies must promote the human rights of migrant women and girls when addressing gender-specific forms of vulnerability, including sexual and gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation. Policies must also address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by migrant women and girls, on the basis of sex, age, disability, nationality, HIV-status, race and ethnicity, marital and family status, migration status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status, pregnancy, place of residence and economic and social situation.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls at all stages of migration by any person, organization or enterprise in line with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and fundamental ILO conventions
- Elimination of laws and policies that place restrictions on women's and girls' regular migration
- Elimination of laws, regulations and practices that require mandatory pre-departure and post-arrival pregnancy testing and HIV-status screening
- Safe, confidential and accessible reporting and response services for migrant women and girls who experience human rights abuses
- Laws and policies that guarantee equal access to the full spectrum of physical and mental healthcare, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, housing, education and justice, for all migrant women and girls, regardless of migration status
- Regularization of the status of migrants leading to permanent residence, with specific attention to migrant women and girls with irregular migration status or who are stateless in countries of transit or destination, or victims of crime, abuse or exploitation including sexual and gender-based violence
- Laws and policies to combat sexual and gender-based violence and punish perpetrators
- Gender-based violence prevention and protection services, including hotlines and accessible shelters, the provision of legal advice, interpretation as necessary, psychosocial support, and trauma counselling
- Laws and regulations that guarantee migrant women's access to justice, legal standing, due process, the right to defence, and the provision of legal aid when necessary
- Monitoring systems and trained officials that help identify migrant women and girls at heightened risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and discrimination and address these risks

Case Study: Addressing and reducing the vulnerabilities faced by women migrant workers

Safe and Fair is an innovative programme which aims to create a space for discussion and a coordinated approach on ending violence, abuse and exploitation faced by women migrant workers. The programme, “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region” (2018-2022) is part of the multi-year EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls and is jointly implemented by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UN Women, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Safe and Fair programme mainstreams three cross-cutting topics: women’s voice and agency, human rights-based approaches, and broad engagement of stakeholders.

The programme brings together stakeholders working in the fields of anti-trafficking, ending violence against women and labour migration, delivering technical assistance and support with the overall aim of making migration safe and fair for all women in the ASEAN region. Safe and Fair closely engages with civil society organizations, community-based organizations, grassroots women’s organizations and trade unions strengthening their ability to serve the needs of women migrant workers in the region. The programme seeks to address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women on the move, helping to reduce their vulnerabilities, thus contributing to the priorities of the Global Compact for across all objectives.

Safe and Fair contributes to build a harmonised response to women’s needs by building and fostering the capacity of public officials, labour attachés, front-line service providers, NGOs, CSOs and migration resource centre’s personnel to better respond to the specific needs of women on the move. The goal of the programme is to ensure that survivors of violence are able to receive support and assistance, including access to essential services, regardless of their migration status and the type of violence to which they have been subjected.

The programme supports interventions aimed at increasing women’s access to safe labour migration (free from violence and exploitation) and fair (increasing access to regular migration and decent work in line with [ILO’s Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment](#)). To do so, Safe and Fair advocates for gender-responsive labour migration governance frameworks as well as eliminating discriminatory restrictions on women’s regular migration. The programme also aims to reduce the vulnerabilities of women migrant workers to violence and trafficking through improved access to information and coordinated responsive services for victims. Through public campaigns and capacity building activities targeting front-line service providers, Safe and Fair challenges pervasive cultural stereotypes and victim-blaming related to violence against women.

GCM Objective 8: Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts of missing migrants

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The lack of information about the dangers in the migration journey exacerbates migrant women's and girls' risk of sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation, injury and death. This is even more critical for migrant women and adolescent girls who are pregnant or the main care giver of young children, and those with a disability. During sea crossings women and girls are at increased risk of drowning as they are less likely than men and boys to be able to swim and their clothes may impede their movement. Women and girls often succumb to hyperthermia sooner than men. This highlights the need for effective gender-responsive systems for search and rescue, particularly at sea.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Identification and assessment of gender-specific risks of all regular and irregular migration channels used by migrant women and girls
- System to collect sex-disaggregated data at the regional level for those reported as dead or missing along specific migration routes and to share information with families regarding the status of missing migrants, with the participation of governments and non-State actors, including migrant women's organizations
- Gender-responsive systems with trained women and men staff for effective search and rescue at sea, including victim identification

GCM Objective 9: Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Smuggling of migrants has specific implications for women and girls. Migrant women and girls who do not have the opportunity to access regular migration routes are at heightened risk of exploitation and abuse, including sexual abuse by smugglers, such as being forced into sex for their survival. Many criminal gangs preying on migrant women and girls use sexual violence as part of the 'price' they demand of migrants. Appropriate protection and assistance must be provided to smuggled migrant women and girls upon arrival and registration in a country of transit or destination, recognizing that they may have been victims of psychological or physical abuse, intimidation and/or sexual and gender-based violence.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Elimination of discriminatory provisions in laws or policies that restrict or exclude opportunities for women and girls to migrate through safe and regular channels
- Accessible services with trained women and men case workers at ports of entry or processing facilities to respond to and treat possible trauma and emotional distress of migrant women and girls who may have been smuggled, in particular victims of sexual or other forms of violence

- Reporting and referral services for migrant women who have experienced human rights abuses by smugglers during their journey irrespective of their migration status
- Efforts to curtail and combat transnational organized crime, including the criminal conduct of smuggling, must protect and promote the human rights and dignity of women and girls and promote the application of the broader protection framework
- Non-criminalization of migrants who are or have been smuggled

GCM Objective 10: Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Women and girls account for approximately three quarters of victims of trafficking in persons, the majority of whom are trafficked through migration. Nearly three out of every four trafficked women and girls are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Rooted in pervasive gender inequalities, it is critical to address the increased vulnerability of women and girls to being trafficked and to criminalize all forms of trafficking in persons. Women and girls who are victims of trafficking may be misidentified as migrants in an irregular situation by State officials, which may affect the support they receive or result in their detention and deportation. Distinguishing between victims of trafficking in persons and smuggled migrants must not be at the expense of a human rights-based and victim-centred approach.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Laws and policies to combat trafficking and exploitation of women and girls in line with international human rights frameworks, specifically the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and its 2014 Protocol, and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Training of officials in gender-sensitive approaches to identify and provide support to trafficked migrant women and girls
- Accessible care facilities for trafficked migrant women and girls with staff trained in gender-responsive and culturally appropriate approaches. Victims of trafficking should not be held in any form of immigration detention
- Protection of the human rights and dignity of trafficked women and girls without criminalizing and detaining them in an effort to combat trafficking in persons
- Targeted services for victims of trafficking in countries of origin, transit and destination, including physical protection, psychosocial support, trauma counselling, access to justice, legal advice, comprehensive healthcare, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, and information in accessible formats

- Targeted long-term reintegration and rehabilitation support, including through income-generating activities, training and financial compensation
- Regularization of the status of trafficked migrants leading to permanent residence
- Gender-responsive awareness-raising activities that seek to discourage migration that may heighten the risk of trafficking in persons; promote safe migration alternatives; and promote reporting and self-reporting of trafficking cases to, for example, a hotline
- Information in accessible formats for migrant women and girls on preventing and reporting trafficking activities

Case Study 10: Anti-human trafficking programme in India

Prevention and pre-emptive vigilance formed the basis of UN Women's Anti-Human Trafficking programme in India, which ran between 2011-2014. The programme addressed the vulnerabilities of women and girls by enhancing the accountability of local state actors, through community mobilization and capacity building. The programme had four main components:

Livelihood opportunities and income enhancement

Gendered poverty continues to heighten women's and girls' vulnerability to sexual and economic exploitation and to trafficking. UN Women's anti-trafficking programme worked on providing sustainable livelihood options through income enhancement activities such as vocational training, the establishment of self-help groups to support women's micro-businesses and enhancing women's access to relevant government schemes for income and livelihood security. The programme led to a marked change in the workforce participation of women and an increase in the number of women saving money. In Nayagarh, for example, the numbers of women saving increased from 58.3 per cent to 82.2 per cent.

Awareness raising on human trafficking, rights and entitlements

While pervasive gender inequalities increase women's and girls' vulnerability to being trafficked so does a lack of awareness of the risks of unsafe migration, particularly through irregular channels. As such, UN Women's programme worked to provide women and girls with information on safe migration. This included providing training to women and girls on steps that could be taken to safeguard themselves during migration and survivors of trafficking were invited to talk about the risks they may face to be trafficked. In West Bengal, the programme successfully pioneered a model of adolescent peer educators, who were themselves survivors of sex trafficking.

Responsibility of communities in countries of origin

UN Women's programme worked with village councils to establish Vigilance Committees, providing a strong link between the community and the judicial machinery to improve the coordination of responses to trafficking. The programme worked on building the capacity of local officials, including the local justice system 'the *panchayats*', and frontline workers, to develop a more gender-responsive approach in the prevention of human trafficking. It focused on strengthening the Civil Registration Systems and comprehensive protection of vulnerable women and girls by promoting convergence of government programmes, using existing government resources to build Centre of Actions (CoA) in programme sites.

Community mobilization and participation

Empowering women and girls to be active partners in their communities and promoting their human rights are important factors in reducing women's and girls' vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking. Building the capacity of community-based organizations, especially village councils, helps promote gender-mainstreaming in their operations in order to empower women and girls to voice their concerns and play an active role in decision-making in the community.

GCM Objective 11: Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Managing borders must be done in a manner that is gender-responsive, child-sensitive, disability-sensitive and culturally sensitive, upholding the principle of non-discrimination, ensuring that all migrants are treated with dignity and respect. Integrating a gender perspective into border management policies and processes can help create more representative and diverse border management institutions and improve the prevention and detection of trafficking in persons and smuggling. Border management policies must respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all migrant women and girls, ensuring that measures aimed at addressing irregular migration and combating transnational organized crime do not adversely affect the human rights and dignity of women and girls.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Border management policies that respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all migrant women and girls, paying particular attention to women and adolescent girls who are pregnant, older persons, those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, and those with medical conditions and disabilities
- Elimination of discriminatory entry restrictions, including HIV status, pregnancy, disability, or sexual orientation and gender identities
- Border police and other officials trained in gender-sensitive, child-sensitive, disability-sensitive and non-discriminatory practices with adequate supervision and monitoring, and the capacity to detect victims of trauma, including trafficking in persons and sexual and gender-based violence
- Referral systems to ensure adequate detection of and appropriate assistance for victims of trauma, including trafficking in persons and sexual and gender-based violence
- Direct communication with women and girls and not exclusively through a male spouse, relative or guardian
- Reception and assistance facilities at borders that are gender-responsive, accessible and meet human rights and humanitarian standards, including the provision of adequately trained women case workers, lawyers, interviewers and independent interpreters, as well as childcare during interviews

Case Study 11: Capacity development of border officials in Southeast Asia

Background

A Border Liaison Office (BLO) is a coordinating office for national law enforcement agencies to facilitate cross-border cooperation. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supports over 70 BLOs in Southeast Asia. Located near recognized border crossings, BLOs are a centralized hub for information received in border areas and a place for law enforcement officials from both countries to coordinate action. BLO officers patrol neighbouring border areas and serve as focal points for relaying important information and intelligence to counterparts. In 2018, UN Women and UNODC implemented a regional programme aimed at delivering gender-responsive interventions to prevent and mitigate the impact of trafficking in persons, with a particular focus on at-risk border communities.

Joining forces to transform border management

The collaboration between UNODC and UN Women built on the comparative advantages of both organizations. While UNODC has expertise on improving the professionalism and building the capacities of law enforcement personnel, UN Women brings gender expertise and trust building within communities, including women's organizations. Taken together, law enforcement officers can better meet the needs of the communities in which they work, and that communities, especially women, are more empowered and aware of how to prevent trafficking.

Improving the understanding of the true scope and impact of cross-border crime on women and their communities

Estimates indicate that women and girls make up to 80 per cent of persons trafficked globally, with more than 60 per cent of those trafficked coming from Asia. However, robust disaggregated data continues to be lacking, and data collection methods at many border crossings in Southeast Asia are insufficient. Sex-disaggregated data is desperately needed to inform prevention and response strategies. Within the framework of the joint UNODC – UN Women partnership, UNODC developed data disaggregation standards based on the Sustainable Development Goals, which will eventually be used by all relevant authorities across the region and has so far included the training of 94 officers (58 men and 36 women) on the collection of sex-disaggregated data.

Training on how to manage trafficking from a victim-centered and gender-responsive approach

UNODC and UN Women have developed modules on community-based policing techniques and a gender-responsive approach to addressing human trafficking. Front-line officers who are interacting in the communities have been trained to better identify signs of human trafficking, the specific needs of survivors and the referral networks that exist to support them. To date, 383 law enforcement officers (222 men and 161 women) have been trained to address the needs of women and girls in cross-border situations.

GCM Objective 12: Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Screening measures and individual assessments at borders must be human rights-based, gender-responsive and conducted in a manner that is disability- and culturally sensitive, to ensure that all migrants are treated with due process and dignity. Officials conducting screening assessments must be trained to recognize victims of trauma, particularly women and girls, who have been victims of trafficking and/or sexual and gender-based violence during or prior to their journey. Assessments must be conducted in safe, dedicated spaces.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Clear and accessible information on options for safe and regular migration, the risks and realities of migration (in line with objective 3 of the GCM), and necessary entry requirements, such as for obtaining visas and work permits. Such information should be provided in partnership with non-governmental stakeholders, including women's and migrant women's organizations, to ensure large scale dissemination
- Gender-responsive trainings for officials at borders and ports of entry on recognizing and responding to cases of trauma and abuse, including victims of trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence
- Regularization of status for migrant women who have experienced trauma and women in danger of irreparable harm in accordance with the principle of non-refoulement
- Staff trained in human-rights and gender-responsive approaches, in order to recognize factors that may cause people to fear disclosing vulnerable situations during individual assessments, such as interrogation of a woman in the presence of her partner

GCM Objective 13: Use immigration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The GCM refers to detention only as a measure of last resort and that non-custodial alternatives should be provided. Women in detention are at greater risk of discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence and should always be detained separately from men who do not form part of the same family unit. In any detention or detention-like facility, women's specific needs must be met, including access to safe and private water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. Detention should be legal and never arbitrary. Non-custodial alternatives to detention are a priority for all migrants. Women or adolescent girls who are pregnant or the main caregiver of infant children must never be detained. Family units must

always be kept together to mitigate as much as possible the negative and traumatic impact of immigration detention, and children should never be detained.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Laws, policies and procedures that safeguard family life, including recognition of the various forms of families that exist, keeping families together, and prioritizing non-custodial alternatives to detention
- Alternatives to detention for all migrants, particularly those with special protection needs, including but not limited to pregnant women, children and adolescents, elderly migrants, trans migrants, migrants with disabilities, survivors of torture or trauma, migrants with physical or mental health needs, trafficked persons, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, stateless persons and refugees
- Oversight and care by women staff in situations where women and girls are detained
- Safe, accessible and private water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, menstrual hygiene materials, and access to sexual and reproductive health services and mental health services
- Access to due process and independent judicial review of detention
- Facilitate and provide access to consular assistance and legal representation

GCM Objective 14: Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Consular services must be provided in a gender-responsive manner, taking into account the particular needs of migrant women and girls irrespective of their migration status. Many migrant women and girls lack information about the services provided by consulates and may fear repercussions should they lack the necessary documentation for entry or residency in a country of destination. Special attention should be given to victims of trafficking and women and girls who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment in the work place.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Clear, accessible and gender-responsive information on the consular services available at all stages of migration
- Partnerships between consulates and non-governmental organizations, in particular migrant women's organizations and workers' organizations, to share information and facilitate collaboration
- Trained and supervised diplomatic and consular staff that protect the rights of migrant women and girls abroad, including to identify, protect and assist possible victims of trauma, trafficking,

sexual and gender-based violence, labour exploitation, and provide assistance to women in detention or due to be returned

- Consular support services for migrant women and girls, including timely provision of interpreters, medical care, counselling, legal aid and shelter when needed
- Consular information on rights, obligations, norms and customs in countries of transit and destination, including information on course of action if a migrant woman, regardless of migration status, has been a victim of a crime

GCM Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The GCM articulates the importance of basic services for all migrants irrespective of migration status. Every individual is entitled to healthcare, housing, education and justice under international human rights instruments. The right of migrants to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including access to sexual and reproductive health services should be ensured. Access to healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare such as quality family planning services, prenatal and postnatal care, and education and information on sexual and reproductive health, in countries of transit and destination, is an essential human right, in line with SDG target 3.7 on ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services and family planning. All migrant women and girls must be guaranteed access to gender-responsive services and justice without fear of deportation or other retribution.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Laws and policies that guarantee access to gender-responsive and inclusive services, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare services, for all migrant women and girls irrespective of migration status
- Policies that guarantee the independence of service providers and the confidentiality of service users by ensuring a separation between immigration enforcement activities and public service provision
- Safe, independent, confidential and accessible reporting services for all migrant women and girls who experience human rights abuses, crime and violations of labour rights, irrespective of migration status
- Clear information in accessible formats at the municipal and national level on available remedies, access to justice, and complaints mechanisms in cases of human rights violations
- Gender-responsive curricula in primary and secondary school education

Case Study 15: The ‘Step-Up Migrant Women’ campaign

The ‘Step-Up Migrant Women’ campaign was designed and led by a feminist, migrant women’s rights organisation in the UK called the Latin American Women’s Rights Service (LAWRS). LAWRS is a user-led women’s organization that directly supports more than 5000 migrant women per year in the UK with a focus on women at risk and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Through its work LAWRS was aware that many migrant women do not report SGBV for fear of detention and deportation. The reason women with irregular migration status often don’t report violence and abuse is owing to fear that this would lead to their detention and possible deportation. As a result, women are often forced to stay in violent relationships and are not able to access justice and services.

The Campaign

The ‘Step-Up Migrant Women campaign’ was developed to respond to the negative impact that the hostile environment policy has had on migrant women who have been victims of crime over the past decade. It was launched in 2017 with the aim of creating a firewall to ensure women are safe to report SGBV without their migration status being shared with officials. LAWRS started the campaign and many other organizations in the UK subsequently joined. A key part of the campaign strategy focused on promoting the voices of migrant women survivors of SGBV including those with irregular migration status.

The Achievements

The campaign has been supported by 36 migrant, women’s and human rights organizations and has influenced decision making at local level in London and at national level in the UK. As of December 2018, the British Police no longer automatically share information related to the migration status of any victims of crimes with the Home Office. The London Mayor is a supporter of the campaign and has written to the Home Secretary asking for full protection for migrants who are victims of crime. Furthermore, in June 2019 the Joint Scrutiny Committee for the Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill, a cross-party Parliamentary Committee from the House of Commons and the House of Lords, published a report with a full section explaining the precarious situation of migrant women survivors of SGBV and produced a clear recommendation to establish a full firewall for migrant women survivors of SGBV in the UK.

The Approach

The campaign has had a number of policy victories, largely as a result of undocumented migrant women speaking up about the fact that violence against women is a crime and that safe reporting and access to justice are rights, regardless of the migration status of the victim. It also highlights how migrant women and feminist organisations should be properly funded and promoted because they have the evidence, potential and leadership to achieve change.

GCM Objective 16: Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The integration of migrant women and girls into host societies is critical to support their economic autonomy and strengthen social cohesion. This requires removing gender-based restrictions on formal employment to enable migrant women's economic and social participation. Transitioning from the informal to the formal economy reduces women migrant workers' exposure to precarious work conditions, violence and harassment. Women's and migrant women's organizations, as well as trade unions, play a key role in channelling information, acting as a bridge to the wider community, and supporting migrant women to be leaders and agents of change, helping to foster mutual respect and understanding in their communities.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Inclusive policies and programmes that help migrant women and girls integrate into countries of transit and destination, while respecting their cultural identity and human rights, in compliance with international human rights standards and international labour standards
- Laws and policies that promote gender equality in employment and occupation, equal pay for work of equal value, and access to decent work for all women
- Inclusive policies and programmes that foster migrant women's access to labour market integration and social inclusion in countries of origin, transit and destination
- Community engagement and dialogue between migrants and community members, with the support of non-governmental organizations, in particular migrant women's organizations
- Adequate funding to support migrant women's organizations
- Engagement of civil society organizations, in particular migrant women's organizations and workers' organizations, in designing and implementing policies and programmes aimed at labour market integration of migrant women

Case Study 16: Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion

Xenia⁷ is a women-run civil society organization building more inclusive and connected local communities. Xenia brings together migrant and British women to create positive intercultural connections, fostering social integration and reduce social isolation. It achieves this in four main ways:

Increased opportunities for English language learning

English proficiency is widely recognized as a barrier to integration and economic success, particularly for migrant women who are often responsible for the largest share of unpaid domestic and care work in the home and face barriers to accessing adult education. Xenia is complementary to formal language learning provision, enabling women to continue learning in addition to classes, or as an alternative where access to formal provision is not possible. This is done by facilitating themed discussions and providing women with the tools to express themselves to the extent that their level of English allows. Xenia supports English speaking, which is crucial in enabling meaningful interactions and connection with others.

Reduced social isolation amongst migrant women

Research shows that most migrants view isolation and loneliness as the biggest challenge in everyday life. Xenia creates spaces where women build trust through diverse friendships, developing supportive social networks made up of women outside their community they can rely on.

Community cohesion to challenge negative perceptions of migrants

The need for safe intercultural spaces is reflected by Xenia participants who are diverse in terms of religious beliefs, political views, age and life experiences. Our activities promote two-way cultural understanding, promoting a sense of community. Through themed conversations, story-telling, and craft projects migrant and British women connect, gaining an understanding of other cultures and identifying common interests, experiences and values that help to break down stereotypes and foster a greater sense of belonging.

Access to civic and democratic processes and local services for migrant women

Xenia invites service providers along to sessions to share information, advice and guidance on a variety of topics. Xenia also involve participants in local and national policy consultations, increasing political participation and awareness of events and activities such as elections. By carrying out these activities in the welcoming intercultural space of Xenia, it helps to increase trust in and understanding of local service providers and democratic processes.

⁷ Xenia offers resources and training on delivering this model in different local contexts. More information available at: www.xenia.org.uk

GCM Objective 17: Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

For migrant women and girls, the eradication of all forms of gender-based discrimination is paramount, including labour market segregation, gender pay gaps, lack of political participation, restrictions on travel, sexual and gender-based violence, and lack of access to education and further learning. Evidence-based discourse on migration is needed to shape public perceptions about migrant women and girls, based on reality and not on deeply entrenched stereotypes. Media outlets, including social media, should be encouraged to produce gender-responsive, disability-sensitive and non-discriminatory reporting on migrants that fosters tolerance and mutual respect. Use of gender-sensitive language, airing women's and girls' voices and stories, portraying migrant women as actors rather than victims, and gender balance on editorial boards, are all important.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Access to high-quality, confidential, integrated multi-sector services, including but not limited to medical, psychosocial and legal services for all migrant survivors and at risk of gender-based violence
- Gender-responsive research and analysis based on sex- and gender-disaggregated data to highlight the contributions of migrant women and girls as well as violations of their rights
- Awareness raising by the media, information and communication sectors on the contributions of migrant women make to the economy and society, and their heightened vulnerability to gender-based discrimination, violence, and sexual harassment
- Community awareness-raising about the financial and social costs and benefits of migration for women and the families they leave behind, in conjunction with non-governmental partners, including women's organizations
- Public awareness campaigns that seek to change gender stereotypes about women migrant workers
- Policies that prohibit hate speech based on negative gender and cultural stereotypes about migrants

Case Study 17: Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration

An estimated 13 per cent of all migrant women find employment in domestic service,⁸ and women represent 73 per cent of all migrant domestic workers.⁹ *Open Doors* is an IOM X produced three-part video series set in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, which uses a behaviour change communication approach to raise awareness of live-in domestic worker exploitation and encourage employers of domestic workers to adopt practices to reduce exploitation. The videos are also intended to educate audiences more broadly, on the experiences and treatment of domestic workers, encouraging them to learn, share and take action. The three stories follow the challenges of busy families, as they balance demanding work schedules, household duties and raising children, with the help of their domestic workers. In each story, the family goes through a moment of reflection, where they realize that not meeting their domestic worker's needs has a negative impact on both the family and their employee.

Increasing knowledge

Open Doors was successful at increasing knowledge (average increase of 27 per cent) of respondents. The lowest knowledge increase amongst respondents was 17 per cent in Thailand. The biggest increase was amongst Malaysian respondents with an increase of 32 per cent, followed closely with a 31 per cent increase in Indonesia. Knowledge around 'one day off' and 'paid rest days' for migrant domestic workers levels rose significantly among respondents (more than 85 per cent).

Reducing negative and increasing positive attitudes

Generally positive attitudes, such as not discriminating between domestic workers' pay whether they are migrants or nationals, increased by 8 per cent amongst respondents in Thailand, by 23 per cent in Malaysia and by 32 per cent in Indonesia. Negative attitudes were initially high overall in Malaysia but decreased significantly after watching *Open Doors*. Whereas in Thailand and Indonesia the belief that domestic workers should be available at any time, remained unchanged.

Addressing behaviour

In Indonesia and Malaysia, the films were successful in strengthening the employers' behavioural intent to adopt positive practices to reduce exploitation of domestic workers. After watching, an average of 76 per cent of all respondents indicated high behavioural intent.¹⁰

Impacting gender-responsive migration governance

This approach demonstrates an effective tool to promote domestic worker rights and positively impact knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of individuals towards migrant domestic workers. This in turn can impact behaviour change at a community and societal level, ultimately leading to more gender-responsive migration governance.

⁸ 1 ILO, ILO Global Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology – Special Focus on Migrant Domestic Workers (Geneva, 2015)

⁹ Maria Gallotti, "Migrant domestic workers across the world: global and regional estimates", ILO, 2015.

¹⁰ IOM X. 2017. IOM X *Open Doors* Impact Assessment: Comparative Assessment from Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, available at: <https://iomx.iom.int/media/102>

GCM Objective 18: Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Women migrant workers are often concentrated in informal, low paid and unregulated sectors, and are at heightened risk of exploitation, servitude and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. To address these pervasive gender inequalities, migrant women's work should be formalized and professionalized, including the care and domestic work they undertake. Options for visas and work permits should reflect migrant women's wealth of skills and experiences. The digital gender gap needs to be addressed for migrant women and girls, particularly for the poorest, those with little education, those with disabilities, and those living in rural and remote areas.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Options for visas and work permits that give all migrants equal opportunities and access to the formal labour market
- Inclusive employment policies that provide equal opportunity and equal treatment for migrant women in the labour market, including through recognition of existing skills and targeted vocational training and skills development
- Policies and programmes that help returnee migrant women use their newly acquired skills and knowledge
- Comprehensive assessment of labour market realities and opportunities for women; recognizing where migrant women work, identifying barriers to access a broader range of sectors, and addressing these barriers through inclusive skills development and private sector engagement
- Formalization, professionalization, and adequate remuneration of migrant women's care and domestic work
- Full and equal access to education, continuous learning and vocational training for all migrant women and girls
- Access to information technology and the Internet, including free or affordable training

Case Study 18: Investing in skills development to enhance the well being and economic prospects of women migrant domestic workers in Singapore

Background

HOME (Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics) is a Singapore-based charity dedicated to supporting migrant workers in crisis situations. A part of HOME's long-term support programmes, the HOME Academy empowers women migrant domestic workers in Singapore through educational and vocational training courses. The HOME Academy aims to *enhance the wellbeing and economic prospects of domestic workers* through sustainable skills-development courses. While providing new valuable skills to domestic workers, the HOME Academy fosters a spirit of learning and a community of support among its students.

Skill and capacity development

The HOME Academy helps domestic workers strengthen their workplace skills and enhance their career paths. The wide range of courses is suited to domestic workers' vocational, personal and educational goals. In 2018, almost 2000 students graduated from 21 different courses. The Academy's educational programmes – including English language, computer literacy and financial literacy – foster skills that will accompany domestic workers in all areas of life. Vocational courses such as dressmaking, cosmetology and baking develop specialised skills allowing domestic workers to grow professionally.

A community of teaching and learning

The HOME Academy creates a supportive and collaborative learning space. Many of HOME Academy's courses are taught by volunteer domestic workers, approximately 40 of whom are past programme alumnae. After graduating, domestic workers can elect to become trainees and ultimately volunteer teachers for the HOME Academy. This creates a sisterhood of support and mutual skill-building, empowering domestic workers with leadership and teaching skills.

Over 70 regular volunteers carry forward the Academy's administrative and educational programming. Additionally, the HOME Academy collaborates with external partners in teaching and learning exchanges. To broaden its outreach, it shares its teachers with other domestic worker groups. While developing their personal skills, domestic workers are also provided with a wide and sustainable support network.

Self-empowerment and confidence

The HOME Academy seeks to instil a spirit of learning and self-empowerment in its students. This spirit is built and strengthened through the community of support. As domestic workers upgrade their skills, they grow more confident in the workplace which helps to build self-esteem. They are encouraged to 'give back' through the mentoring of others and sharing their own skills. This creates a supportive sisterhood that fosters a desire to learn and grow for domestic workers.

GCM Objective 19: Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The positive contributions of migrant women to sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination merit recognition. These contributions include financial remittances as well as social remittances – the ideas, norms, values, knowledge, behaviour, practices and skills that migrants bring home. Partnerships with migrant women’s organizations are key to engage migrant women and the diaspora in knowledge and skills transfer. Migrants can play a key role in peace and reconciliation processes in their countries of origin, especially women in peace building.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Policies that facilitate the consultation or participation of migrant workers and their families in decisions concerning the life and administration of local communities
- Policies that enable migrant women to fully participate in society, including in political decision-making, peace-building, and community dialogue in countries of origin, transit and destination
- Research and outreach on the financial and social contributions of migrant women to sustainable development
- Partnerships with migrant women’s organizations to support the political and civil participation of all migrant women and members of the diaspora

GCM Objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

The GCM calls for gender-responsive programmes and instruments that enhance the financial inclusion of migrants and their families but does not refer to sex-disaggregated data collection to capture the gender dimensions of remittances. A gender-responsive approach to remittances would take into account the barriers to migrant women’s financial inclusion and lack of access to formal remittance service providers. Promoting digital remittance transfer systems and mobile payments could increase women’s participation in formal remittance transfer systems, particularly for women living in areas without direct access to regular channels.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Access to free or low-cost training on financial inclusion, financial literacy and remittance transfer systems for all migrant women, regardless of migration status or informal employment status
- Clear and accessible information and access for migrant women to formal financial institutions to send money to their countries of origin and to participate in savings schemes

- Collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics on remittances

GCM Objective 21: Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Migrant women face gender-specific risks of return and reintegration. Any decision to return a woman to her country of origin must be based on a gender-responsive assessment of the risks she may face, including gender-based violence, domestic abuse or risks of re-trafficking. To ensure the sustainable reintegration of returnee migrant women in their countries of origin, gender-based stereotypes of migrant women – particularly women migrant workers, including sex workers – must be addressed and women’s access to services, including healthcare and justice, must be secured. Returnee migrant women may face different reintegration problems than men. For reintegration to be sustainable, countries of origin must ensure that equal opportunities exist for remunerative employment and sustainable livelihoods, adequate job creation, and productive use of acquired skills and knowledge, and full non-discriminatory access to the labour market.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Policies which mandate that judicial options must be exhausted before involuntary returns, deportations, removals and readmissions are ordered. Each case must be treated individually, with due process and access to justice in accordance with international law, and awareness of the gender-specific risks that woman may face upon return
- Pre-departure training and provision of information that allows migrant women to return, including on repatriation, remittances, and training opportunities
- Clear rules and regulations regarding responsibilities for migrant returns, including assistance in specific cases where migrant women have been abandoned by their employers, have faced abuse, or have medical issues
- Comprehensive socio-economic, psychological, legal, and orientation services for returning women and girls
- Elimination of discriminatory policies and programmes, including compulsory HIV/AIDS testing for returnee migrant women and moral ‘rehabilitation’ of young women returnees who may be stigmatised as a result of negative perceptions of their behaviour abroad
- Support for returnee migrant women in accessing the labour market, through jobs fairs, online job postings, and skills matching programmes, recognizing the skills and qualifications earned abroad
- Legal aid for returnee migrant women who wish to take action against employers or recruitment agencies for abusive or discriminatory conditions and practices

Case Study 21: Empowering returnee migrant women through e-Rickshaws

UN Women's Nepal Country Office implements the "Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment (AWEE)" Programme which provides training and financial support to returnee migrant women as part of an eco-friendly electric rickshaw (e-rickshaw) programme.

One of the beneficiaries is Tilsara Pun Magar, a 39-year old, mother of four. Before participating in the programme, she was a migrant domestic worker in Kuwait. Tilsara had migrated in order to make some money after her husband had abandoned her and her four young children. While in Kuwait, she suffered serious physical and psychological abuse from her employer, and it was not until she got help from the Nepalese Embassy that she was able to return home.

However, she returned to Nepal penniless after her employer refused to pay her wages. Back in Nepal she worked briefly as a daily wage labourer, and subsequently left to work in the capital, Kathmandu, as a hotel cleaner. Working in a hotel, she did not have to pay for rent and food and was finally able to save some money. However, after one year she was finding it hard living away from home without her children, and she decided to return to her community to once again work as daily wage labourer, but life was difficult, and her income was hardly enough to meet the family's basic needs.

In June 2017, she met the POURAKHI Nepal team, a project partner of UN Women in Nepal, which informed her about the e-rickshaw project. As part of the programme she was provided with 15-day e-rickshaw driving and entrepreneurship skills training and was able to pass both the written and practical tests after her first attempt.

As part of the project, Tilsara received some seed money to get her started as well as her first e-rickshaw. She now earns approximately USD 14 per day and with this income has been able to buy a fare-meter box, pathed the road leading to her garage in which she stores her rickshaw, paid off some of her debts, and has opened a savings account.

GCM Objective 22: Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

What are the main issues for migrant women and girls?

Equality of treatment and non-discrimination between migrants and nationals with respect to social protection are key principles enshrined in ILO standards. They are particularly important given the difficulties that migrants, and especially migrant women, face in accessing social protection in both countries of origin and destination. Access to social protection benefits and ensuring the portability of social security entitlements are essential for migrants who may work in many different countries

throughout their life. Migrant welfare funds – unilateral mechanisms established by countries of origin to provide some benefits to their migrant workers in countries of destination – may act as a short-term lifeline for migrants and their families. Any mechanism for facilitating access to social protection for migrants and their families and the portability of social security benefits needs to consider that migrants, may be legally excluded due to eligibility requirements and other obstacles, such as disability, language barriers, lack of clear and accessible information, or administrative procedures. Migrant women are disproportionately represented in informal, low-paid employment with limited or no childcare arrangements, which further undermines their access to social protection.

What measures need to be put in place?

- Access to social security, in line with CEDAW and relevant ILO standards on social protection
- Inclusive, gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory social security systems, including social protection floors for all in line with the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), which cover all returning migrants, dependents of migrant workers who remain in the country of origin, and all migrant children irrespective of their migration status
- Policies that address and respond to migrant women’s needs and the difficulties they face in accessing social protection
- Social security agreements that coordinate social security schemes across two or more countries, which include provisions on equality of treatment between nationals and non-nationals, and the payment of applicable benefits while abroad
- Social protection provisions stipulated in bilateral labour arrangements and model employment contracts
- Policies that provide migrant women with equal access to social protection, including healthcare, maternity protection and sick leave
- Clear and accessible information on migrant women’s social security entitlements, including portability of social security benefits, and collaboration with non-governmental organizations, including trade unions and women’s organizations

Case Study 22: Extending social protection to all domestic workers, including migrants

Domestic workers are expressly recognized as a specific category of workers in Chile’s Labour Code, and its regulations also apply to migrant domestic workers, regardless of nationality. In addition, the more recent legal reform under Law No. 20.786 in 2014 requires employers to submit a copy of the employment contract to the Labour Inspectorate and pay their contributory social security obligations. Chile ratified the ILO Domestic Workers Convention 2011, (No 189) in 2015 and has signed several bilateral agreements on social protection, as well as the Ibero-American Multilateral Agreement on Social Protection, which seeks to improve social protection coverage for migrant domestic workers in participating countries.

GCM Objective 23: Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

What measures need to be put in place?

- Ratification and implementation of international conventions (and withdrawing all reservations) that promote and protect the rights of women and girls at all stages of migration and incorporation of their provisions into national law
- Engagement of migrants and civil society organizations, particularly women migrants' organizations, as well as employers' and workers' organizations, in the implementation and monitoring of the GCM at international, regional and national levels in line with the whole of society approach