An Introduction to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
The GCM consists of 23 objectives and dedicated sections to Implementation, and Follow-up and Review. Each Objective includes a specific commitment and a range of actions by which to achieve these commitments. The commitments address a wide-range of issues, for example:

- Minimize the drivers that compel people to move, including climate change and environmental degradation
- The need for better data to support evidence-based policies
- Enhance pathways for regular migration
- Save lives, and to reduce vulnerabilities throughout the migration cycle
- Combat trafficking and clamping down on smuggling
- Provide access to basic services for all migrants regardless of migration status
- Facilitate fair & ethical recruitment & conditions to ensure decent work
- Work towards alternatives to immigration detention, and to work to end the practice of child detention
- Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation
- Cooperate to facilitate safe and dignified returns

States commit to fulfill the objectives and commitments in the Compact, taking into account different national realities and capacities. They commit to do so in cooperation and partnership with migrants, civil society and other relevant stakeholders.
Civil society has expressed strong hopes that when properly implemented, the Compact will provide Member States with a sound framework for governing migration in a manner, which respects human rights and the rule of law.

As the first international document that demonstrates a globally-accepted blueprint for states to work together towards safe, orderly and regular migration, the Compact has the potential to result in real, concrete change with lasting impact for migrants and their communities.

An effective implementation could mean, for example:

**NO MORE CHILD DETENTION**
No more child detention and the principle of the best interest of the child upheld in all decisions affecting children

**ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES**
Better and more consistent access to basic services for all migrants

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
More investment in sustainable development at national and local levels in order to enable migrants to support their families in their countries of origin

**GENDER-RESPONSIVE**
Policies that are more gender-responsive and empowering, referring to women as agents rather than victims

**EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION COULD MEAN**

**PROTECTION TO MIGRANTS**
Enhanced cooperation to provide international protection to migrants in situations of vulnerability at borders

**EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**
Greater protection for migrants in situations of vulnerability, including those fleeing slow and sudden onset natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation

**DECENT WORK AND LABOUR RIGHTS**
Ensuring decent work and labour rights of all migrant workers

**ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION**
Greater use of community-based alternatives to detention, and an end to the promotion of detention as a deterrent to irregular migration

**WHAT ARE ITS SHORTFALLS?**

Despite these positive commitments, the Compact falls short in several important areas and in some aspects steps away from current international standards and regional practice. For example it does not ensure adequate safeguards on the issues of non-criminalization, firewalls, access to services and full labour rights for migrants regardless of their immigration status.

In addition to these issues, there are a number of challenges inherent in the document, which must be overcome to ensure an effective application of the Compact.

What include:

- The non-binding nature of the document, meaning that it does not impose any additional legal obligations on States to comply. Moreover, throughout the negotiations, several Member States have referred to the document as a ‘menu of options’, indicating that they plan to implement it according to their national priorities.

- The lack of commitment to develop indicators to measure progress on the implementation of commitments in the Compact.

- A general lack of clarity in relation to the implementation of the Compact, with consultations on-going to establish modalities for its implementation, follow-up and review; particularly in relation to the terms of reference for the UN Network and its capacity building mechanism as well as the process/es that will be responsible for the regional reviews.

**PHOTO:** Civil Society in Nepal called on the Government of Nepal to implement zero recruitment fees and for employers to shoulder the full cost of recruitment. The mobilization was organized as part of the regional campaign for recruitment reform. © Migrant Forum in Asia
**NEXT STEPS: IMPLEMENTATION, FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW**

With its wide scope and numerous actions, making the document a reality at the local, national, regional and global levels will require commitment and collaboration from all actors in the coming months and years. While not prescriptive, the text provides a general framework for Member States, the UN system and other stakeholders to work together to put the Compact in place and monitor its progress.

**ELEMENTS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

- **Member States are encouraged** to develop “ambitious national responses for the implementation of the Global Compact” in cooperation and partnership with relevant stakeholders, including civil society.

- **At the global level**, the Compact foresees the establishment of a Capacity Building Mechanism, in addition to a UN Network on Migration to support the implementation and follow-up of the Compact. The International Organization for Migration will be the coordinator and secretariat of this Network.

- **A range of processes** such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) are invited to provide platforms for exchange on the implementation of the Compact.

**ELEMENTS OF FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW**

- **Member States are encouraged** to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress made at the national level.

- **Subregional, regional and cross-regional processes** are invited to review the implementation of the Compact.

- **Every four years**, a global International Migration Review Forum will provide the opportunity for States and relevant stakeholders to discuss progress on the implementation of the Compact.

Examples of collective advocacy tools:

- Civil Society drafted multiple collective statements and inputs during the Compact negotiations. For example in the last round of the negotiations civil society presented a collective statement signed by over 150 organisations in just 2 days. It highlights seven areas that the Compact needs to address for it to protect the safety and human rights of all migrants. (For a complete overview of all collective statements, please refer to the MADE website.)

- **A COLLECTIVE VOICE DURING NEGOTIATIONS!**

- **SHARED VISION FOR A COMPACT WORTH AGREETING TO**

**THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

**What role has civil society played in the development of the Compact?**

Since the start of the process in 2016, Civil society networks, including labour rights groups, migrant-and diaspora led organisations, human rights NGOs etc. have mobilized both individually and collectively at all levels to advocate, share information, and provide input into the Global Compact.

**Examples** of collective organising include:

- The civil society Action Committee, facilitated by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), co-convened by the NGO Committee on Migration and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), to bridge civil society action across both the migration and refugee Compacts, and to foster joint advocacy strategies.

- Consultations in every region of the world organised by civil society, to ensure that regional perspectives were included in the negotiation process.

- The development of a framework for rights-based protection and assistance to children across six key priorities under the auspices of The Initiative on Child Rights in the Global Compact.

**What is the future role for civil society?**

The Global Compact is an agreement that has the potential to transform the way the international community cooperates in order to better harness the benefits of migration; it puts forward a strong vision for international cooperation to benefit everyone, including migrants, their communities, and governments themselves.

Civil society - often the only one with access to provide vital services to those migrants most in need of human rights protection and assistance - is uniquely placed to ensure that this Compact translates into comprehensive responses that place individuals at their core.

While governments prepare to implement the agreement, it will be key for civil society to remain engaged and connected to push for this ambitious and rights based implementation at all levels. It has a role as an important agenda-setter, at national and regional level, but also in the discussions around the UN Network, its working groups and the capacity building mechanism. Its voice will also be vital in all stocktaking, review and follow-up steps of the Global Compact.
About this publication:

This is a Civil Society Action Committee publication. This Committee is a platform for civil society organisations to bridge and connect on strategy and advocacy around the Commitments of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact for Refugees. For more information, please consult our website: madenetwork.org

The Action Committee is co-convened by:

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