

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Africa regional review conference

26 August 2021 (Virtual)

Call for proposals for Side Events

I. Context

The Africa regional conference to review the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) is taking place at a time of growing acknowledgment for the need to collectively work to improve the governance of migration, as well as empower migrants to become positive engines for sustainable development. The African continent comprises of a number of migratory routes, with important migratory corridors within the continent. Displacement and migration are major phenomena on the continent, with many people traveling and moving for a variety of reasons between countries and subregions of the continent, in addition to leaving the continent. In the period between 2000 and 2019, the number of international migrants in Africa increased by 76 per cent, from 15.1 million to 26.6 million, representing about 10 per cent of all international migrants.¹ At the same time, there were about 40 million African migrants worldwide, of which 21 million lived in another African country. This indicates that about 50 per cent of African migrants stay in Africa, and that 79 per cent of international migrants in Africa are citizens of African countries.²

Looking at the demographic outlook of the continent as a determinant of migration, Africa is young continent with a median age of 19.7 years. Between 1980 and 2020, Africa's working-age population (i.e., 15–64 years of age) grew from 52.1 per cent to 56.1 per cent of the total population. The working-age population increased by three-fold during that period, from 248.3 million to 752.7 million, and will continue to increase over the next 40 years.³

These figures highlight the importance of deepening the understanding of the migration situation in Africa to further promote the ambitions set out in the GCM. The African Migration Observatory aims to provide the continent with evidence-based migration policies through data collection, analysis and sharing. In addition, the potential of international migration to contribute significantly to economic growth and human development in Africa is well recognized. At the same time, diaspora populations play a significant role in social development, poverty reduction and economic growth. Consequently, the leveraging of human and financial resources from the diaspora is attracting considerable interest in African policymaking circles.

International migration, in particular labour migration, is an important enabler and beneficiary of regional integration and economic development in Africa. It has a positive impact

¹ International Organization for Migration. *World Migration Report 2020*. Geneva, 2019.

² Ibid.

³ Department for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. "World population prospects (2019 revision). Available at <https://population.un.org/wpp/>.

on economic growth and generates additional employment opportunities. When international migrants are employed in the formal economy, they have a positive effect on public finance.

In addition to pre-existing challenges and vulnerabilities experienced by migrant populations, the COVID-19 pandemic is also expected to have a significant impact on population mobility globally and in Africa. The Committee on Migrant Workers and the Special Rapporteur on the Human rights of Migrants have warned “that the COVID-19 pandemic is having serious and disproportionate effects on migrants and their families”.⁴

Notwithstanding the challenges, many promising practices have also emerged. For example, some countries have provided free health screening and testing to migrants, while others have increased flexibility regarding immigration requirements to ensure that migrants have regular status and are eligible for formal employment. African countries have also demonstrated their commitment to leaving no one behind by promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which the Global Compact is rooted, and mainstreaming migration in their development efforts. Several countries across the continent have also engaged in ambitious plans to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact through the enactment of migration-related policies, strategies and plans.

II. Continental review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular migration in Africa

While being a State-led process, the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM brings together various stakeholders, including migrants, civil society organizations, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, academic institutions, media entities and other relevant stakeholders.⁵ This first regional review in Africa provides a unique opportunity to build knowledge and foster dialogue among participants on key issues, as well as outline the challenges that hinder good migration governance in Africa. The regional review will provide participants with a platform to share good practices, key achievements and challenges to date in the implementation of the GCM on the continent.

The regional review conference will be held in a hybrid format on 31 August and 1 September 2021 and will be hosted by the Government of Morocco. It will be preceded by multi-stakeholder consultations on 27 August 2021. In addition, African member States and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to host side events on **26 August 2021**.

III. Submission of side event proposals

As an open space for the exchange of cutting-edge ideas, experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the GCM in Africa, the review conference will allow various stakeholders to organize side events in alignment with the themes and objectives of the GCM and will feed into the deliberations of the review conference.

⁴ Committee on Migrant Workers and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, 2020. “Joint guidance note on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the human rights of migrants”. 26 May 2020.

⁵ See General Assembly resolution 73/195.

The side events will provide an opportunity for high-level dignitaries and various stakeholders in Africa to discuss the progress achieved in the implementation of the GCM, to highlight key national and regional trajectories, share best practices and innovative perspectives, and strengthen partnerships and the means of implementation on the continent. Through interactive discussions, participants will strive to identify key priority areas for action and policy recommendations to improve migration governance in accordance with the GCM objectives.

African member States, United Nations agencies, Regional Economic Communities, specialized offices and agencies of the African Union, and relevant stakeholders are invited to submit their proposals to organize and lead side events for consideration, using the event request form, by **25 July 2021**. To allow for wider representation, organizers are kindly requested to limit their proposals to one side event, to this end, co-led side events are encouraged. A strong moderator for each side event is also needed to ensure that the event maintains an action-oriented focus.

The proposal must be submitted on the event request form and include a detailed description of the event. The entire submission should not exceed **1 page** in length. It should specify the organizers, partners, panelists and speakers, and how the event would contribute to the discussion in one or more of the thematic areas of the review conference, namely:

- Thematic area 1: Ensuring that migration is voluntary, orderly and regular (addressing Global Compact objectives 2, 5, 6, 12 and 18)
- Thematic area 2: Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance measures (addressing Global Compact objectives 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 21)
- Thematic area 3: Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development (addressing Global Compact objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22)
- Thematic area 4: Improving value-driven and evidence-based policymaking and public debate and enhancing cooperation on migration (addressing Global Compact objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23)

IV. Selection criteria

The criteria for selection are as follows:

- The theme of the side event should relate to **at least one of the four thematic areas of the Global Compact objectives** provided above or be cross-cutting in nature, and the outcome of the side event should inform the overall outcome of the continental review conference
- Consideration should be given to **gender balance** and **geographic (including local) contexts** in the choice of speakers and panelists
- The format of the side event should ensure **broad stakeholder participation**, and actively involve the audience
- The side event should not be longer than an **hour and a half (1h30)**

Event organizers will be informed of the results of the selection process, and a list of all registered pre-events and side events will be published.

V. Template for submissions (ONE PAGE)

1. Title
2. Brief background (2–5 sentences)
3. Side event objective
4. Contributions to which thematic area(s)
5. Topics (questions) to be addressed
6. Target audience
7. Tentative list of speakers
8. Does the session engage new stakeholders or less visible stakeholders in the implementation, follow-up to and review of the Global Compact?
9. Organizing partner(s)
10. Main focal point (only one)
11. Online meeting platform to be used (must allow for live interpretation)

VI. Timeline and next steps

- **25 July:** Deadline for receipt of all proposals
- **28 July:** Conference organizers will notify the side events focal point of their selection; they will also publish the list of side vents and the participants registration process
- **13 August:** Deadline for receiving confirmed agenda, dissemination of flyers and information on the side events
- **26 August:** Side events will be held between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. (Morocco local time [GMT+1])

VII. Responsibility of the organizers

The logistics of the side events, such as virtual platform allocation, need to be arranged in collaboration with the side events coordinator. The organizers of the side events will be responsible for the following:

- Inviting speakers and panelists
- Inviting participants from African member States, major groups and other stakeholders
- Providing a short biography (one paragraph only) in English for each of the speakers and the moderator
- Coordinating with speakers regarding their interventions

- Producing a handout/flyer for the side event, which should include the objective, topics of discussion, names of speakers and the moderator, and the logos of the organizing entities
- Preparing a summary report on the event and sharing it with the secretariat of the review conference;
- Publicity, reproduction of materials and media coverage;
- Arranging simultaneous interpretation in English and French (required), and for other languages, e.g., Arabic and Portuguese (optional)
- Any other costs related to the side event

VIII. Communication

Please submit proposals and address all queries relating to side events to: gcmafrica@iom.int and eca-gpspd-communications@un.org specifying in the email subject line: ‘Side Event Concept Note Submission’