

IMRF Roundtable 1

Local and Regional Governments' Progress & Recommendations

This paper has been prepared by the [Mayors Mechanism](#) of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) for the 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). It illustrates the contributions and progress of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) toward the implementation objectives of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) under discussion at Roundtable 1 of the IMRF. It proposes recommendations to national governments and international organizations for joint action to advance future progress.



1. WHY CITIES ARE IMPORTANT FOR BETTER MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) are on the frontlines of managing migration and are therefore key allies in implementing the GCM. It is through the partnership with LRGs that national governments can root policies in local realities and make migration governance more effective.ⁱ

Today 55% of the world's population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is estimated to rise to 68% by 2050.ⁱⁱ Migration is mostly an urban phenomenon and local governments are at the forefront of managing the impact and ceasing the benefits of migration.

As the level of government closest to the population, LRGs often take pragmatic action and find new solutions to emerging issues.ⁱⁱⁱ For example, cities are first responders to the mobility challenges generated by conflicts, climate change, economic instability, and have been most impacted by the pandemic, with 95% of COVID-19 cases reported in urban areas. They have spearheaded innovative and people-centered actions to ensure inclusive pandemic recovery and advance GCM implementation.

While LRGs are increasingly asked to do more with less, they face difficulties to access finance and have limited legal mandates.^{iv} For example, only 4% of the 500 largest cities in developing countries are deemed creditworthy in international financial markets^v and according to the World Bank, local governments have also lost up to 25% of their annual revenues in 2021 due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic.^{vi} Yet they must respond with pragmatic solutions to increasing demands to reach all their residents, regardless of their migration status.

LRGs are at the core of sustainable development efforts at the local level and are central partners in advancing all objectives of the GCM. This paper illustrates how LRGs have contributed to the GCM objectives within Cluster 1 and formulates recommendations for the future — so that local action turns into global success.

2. CITIES PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE GLOBAL COMPACT: CLUSTER 1

This section highlights 4 key areas in which LRGs have spearheaded GCM implementation within cluster 1. It is not exhaustive of all LRG action under cluster 1, but rather serves to illustrate and showcase the potential of LRGs to accelerate GCM implementation.

1. **LRGs lead the way for inclusive pandemic recovery and create conditions for receiving communities and migrants to lead prosperous lives.** During COVID-19, LRGs spearheaded action that respond to the needs of their residents regardless of status.^{vii} Many mayors launched dedicated initiatives to provide access to basic services - including health, sanitation and housing - boost local employment opportunities and proactively counter the economic downturn generated by the pandemic, supporting the social and economic inclusion of migrants, including returnees and displaced populations (objective 2 a, c, d, e, g; 6 d, g, i; objective 12 c, d; 18 e, g, h, i).
2. **LRGs respond in solidarity with those compelled to flee.**^{viii} The conflict in Ukraine has displaced over twelve million people in few weeks. LRGs across Europe are at the

- forefront of the response, providing immediate lifesaving aid and welcoming Ukrainians. Where national and international actors were often slow to act, LRGs have showcased swift, principled and pragmatic action. Municipalities in Ukraine facilitate humanitarian convoys to guarantee safe passage and protect population from violence; mayors across Europe have set in place reception facilities in record time, such as hubs for registration to allow access to health and basic services, including COVID-19 testing, housing, education and the issuance of the necessary documents to obtain residence and labour permits through fast and simplified procedures (objective 5 f, g).
3. **Climate displacement affects cities, impacting infrastructures and services and needs to be factored in to make sure that cities can continue to respond effectively to the needs of the resident population without compromising pandemic recovery. LRGs accelerate local and global action on climate migration.** In June 2021, C40 Cities and the Mayors Migration Council MMC established the Global Mayors Task Force on Climate and Migration, led by the mayors of Barcelona,

Bristol, Dakar, Dhaka North, Freetown, Houston, Los Angeles, Lima, and Milan. In November 2021 at COP26, this group issued a [Global Mayors Action Agenda on Climate and Migration](#), identifying three priority areas for global action — Urban Resilience, Urban Inclusion, and Urban Transformation. Each priority area aligns with the GCM and LRGs are leading by example (objective 2 b, c, i, k).

4. Labour is one of the key drivers of global migration and cities are the main recipients of

labour migrants. LRGs promote regular pathways in cooperation with the private sector for instance by generating opportunities for regular employment, facilitating the regularization of undocumented migrants, and through skilling training programs, placement services, and city-to-city partnerships that foster labour mobility (objectives 6, 18).

Examples of practices are available in the Annex.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS TO NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

To advance the implementation of GCM Objectives 2, 5, 6, 12, 18, national and local governments must work in partnership. This section presents recommendations and ideas for action that meet the whole-of-government principle of the GCM and help build a more cohesive and effective governance of migration for the benefit of all.

CROSS CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Forge improved coordination with LRGs at all levels to help achieve better, more efficient, and people-centred migration policies.** Such coordination mechanisms make it easier for national governments and cities to manage migration together, especially when faced with a crisis like COVID-19. While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, LRGs call on national governments for increased, better and sustained coordination and communication structures. This can bring benefits not only to local communities but also at national level, contributing to achieve the GCM objectives and the SDGs.
2. **Review legal mandates to decentralize competences to LRGs in areas that can lead to more effective implementation of the**

GCM objectives. This can help overcome existing obstacles in key policy areas related to GCM implementation across all objectives, finding more effective solutions, eliminating inconsistencies, and ultimately improving the local-national governance of migration.

3. **Increase municipal access to international funding.** As LRGs are asked to do more with less, there is a need for increased LRG access to international funding. Innovative funding schemes, including the MMC led Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response and the important precedent of the UN Migration Multi Partner Trust Fund, which includes city-led organizations as part of its Steering Committee are key examples to be replicated and scaled.

RECOMMENDATIONS SPECIFIC TO CLUSTER 1

1. **Directly support climate action at local level and include LRGs in climate adaptation strategies and funding schemes.** This will help address the root causes and adverse drivers of forced migration and will build resilience of cities in the face of climate hazards and climate displacement. It will also encourage the development of disaster preparedness strategies that are rooted in local realities and that effectively address the vulnerabilities of affected populations, including migrants and displaced populations.
2. **Expand flexibility and availability of pathways, in consultation with LRGs.** Regular pathways are important and smart policy tools, which help ensure safe access to services and humanitarian assistance. Local governments play an essential role when it comes to welcoming migrants. Consulting LRGs will improve the capacity of all levels of government to set in place policies that meet humanitarian needs in emergencies and promote long-term socio-economic inclusion of migrants in their communities.
3. **Partner with cities to promote the economic inclusion of migrants as an important driver of sustainable development.** This can help policies be rooted in local realities and benefit from existing expertise and networks. Cities are key partners in building effective labour migration policies and skills matching, in particular when it comes to protecting migrants in the informal sector and enabling migrant entrepreneurship and inclusion. Cities can also help gather local data and are well placed to connect different stakeholders.

ANNEX

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICES

City	Description	GCM objectives
Barranquilla, Colombia - Todos Somos Barranquilla	Through Todos Somos Barranquilla , the city of Barranquilla has expanded its social services offering to over 100 clients a comprehensive set of services including specialized vocational training, psychosocial support, legal documentation support, and direct access to over ninety of Barranquilla’s employers. Focused on serving Venezuelans, clients include women, youth, victims of armed conflict, and persons living with disabilities. ^{ix} It is funded by the Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response , a global-local partnership implemented with the EU, IOM, and MMC.	2, 5, 6, 18 (4)
Dhaka, Bangladesh in partnership with Bangladesh national government	An estimated 2000 people arrive daily in Dhaka from other cities along a coastline that is increasingly affected by storms and rising sea levels. The Dhaka North City Corporation partnered with the national government and utility providers to improve living conditions in informal settlements, where most newcomers settle, including the provision of a more reliable water supply. The Dhaka South City Corporation also developed a six-story shelter for	2 (15)

	climate migrants in collaboration with several non-profit organizations.	
Freetown, Sierra Leone – Waste Management Micro-Enterprise Program	The Waste Management Micro-Enterprise Program creates green livelihood opportunities for migrant, refugee and marginalized youth living in informal settlements while improving waste management in Freetown. It provides entrepreneurship training and creates jobs, offering concrete opportunities for rural-to-urban migrant youth and an alternative to onward migration from Sierra Leone. The program has supported the establishment of small enterprises and the creation of sustainable jobs for 800 youth. It is funded by the Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response , a global-local partnership implemented with the EU, IOM, and MMC. ^x	2, 6, 18
Kazakh national and local/regional governments - Mainstreaming Evidence-Based Migration and Climate Change Policies into the Development Agenda of Kazakhstan	Through this initiative, the Kazakh national and local governments have gathered the data and evidence necessary to engage in a national dialogue on migration and climate change with a special focus on water security, a key issue in many communities. The project led to the integration of the migration, environment and climate change nexus into the development agenda of Kazakhstan at national and local level. This was facilitated through a COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery Seed Funding Initiative by IOM and UNDP. This initiative supports local communities in 17 countries and allows LRGs and local communities to find sustainable solutions to the needs of their residents.	1, 2, 6 (7 and 16)
Lima, Peru – Municipal Office of Service to Migrant Neighbors	The Municipal Office of Service to Migrant Neighbors (OMA) is a pilot model of social service delivery within the Cercado de Lima, a gateway for newcomers into the city of Lima. It offers the district residents and workers a suite of services on employability, health, and case management for women at risk of gender-based violence, also connecting them to other existing social service centers. It promotes interaction between long-standing residents of Lima and their new neighbors through intercultural activities within public urban spaces. It is funded by the Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response , a global-local partnership implemented with the EU, IOM, and MMC.	6, 12, 18 (15, 16, 17)
Los Angeles, USA	The Angeleno Card is an innovative cash assistance program for residents falling below the poverty line, including undocumented migrants and informal sector workers excluded from federal Covid-19 relief. Eligible families receive fee-free, prepaid debit cards based on income and household size. The city's first step inspired the State of California to replicate their action and expand Covid-19 relief to undocumented migrants.	2

<p>San José, Costa Rica Strengthening Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion of Women in La Carpio, San Jose</p>	<p>A training centre has been created in the community of La Carpio, an informal settlement near the capital of San José, hosting Costa Ricans and Nicaraguan migrants, to train and empower women with entrepreneurial skills. This vocational training centre was established through a COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery Seed Funding Initiative by IOM and UNDP. The initiative supports local communities in 17 countries and allows LRGs and local communities to find sustainable solutions to the needs of their residents.^{xi}</p>	<p>2, 18 (16)</p>
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

C40-MMC, [Global Mayors Action Agenda on Climate and Migration](#), November 2021.

IOM, [IOM-UNDP Seed Funding to Advance Joint Programming for the Response and Recovery from COVID-19 and the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

IOM-UN Habitat, [Integrating Migration into Urban Development Interventions](#), 2021.

Mayors Mechanism, [GFMD Mayors Mechanism Resources](#), January 2021.

MMC, [Brief: Municipal Finance for Migrants and Refugees: The State of Play](#), April 2022.

MMC, [Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response Progress Report](#), December 2021.

MMC, [Climate Migration in Mexican and Central American Cities](#), February 2022.

UCLG, [Migration and Displacement in Context of Crises: What are LRGs doing to save and protect lives?](#) April 2022.

SOURCES

ⁱ UN Secretary General Report on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, A/76/642, paragraph 16.

ⁱⁱ UN DESA, World Urbanisation Prospects, 2018 edition.

ⁱⁱⁱ Countries including Madagascar, Morocco, Nepal and Tonga have mainstreamed migration into their development or sector plans at national and local levels, or developed specific migration and development approaches, policies or mechanisms. IMRF 2022, Background Note for Roundtable 1.

^{iv} The mandate, competencies, and prerogatives of local and regional governments (LRGs) on migration vary across countries based on legislation and governance systems of each Member State.

^v MMC, Brief: Municipal Finance for Migrants and Refugees: The State of Play, 28 April 2022.

<https://www.mayorsmigrationcouncil.org/news/muni-fi-report>

^{vi} UN Habitat, UNCDF, UCLG-Africa, UNECA COVID-19 in African cities: Impacts, Responses and Policies, 2020. <https://unhabitat.org/covid-19-in-africa-cities-impacts-responses-and-policies>.

^{vii} See the background papers for the GFMD Roundtables held at the XIII Summit hosted by the UAE as online event in January 2021. https://www.gfmd.org/docs/uae-2020#thirteenth_gfmd_summit

^{viii} This is among the commitments endorsed by 150 cities through the [Marrakesh Mayors Declaration](#) to implement the two Global Compacts in unison. The declaration was signed in December 2018.

^{ix} Global Cities Fund, Progress Report, December 2021. <https://www.mayorsmigrationcouncil.org/news/gcf-progress-report>

^x ODI, Mayors Dialogue Report, IOM. [2019 Press Release](#).

^{xi} Info-Brief: IOM-UNDP Seed Funding to Advance Joint Programming for the Response and Recovery from COVID-19 and the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, <https://migration4development.org/en/resources/info-brief-iom-undp-seed-funding-advance-joint-programming-response-and-recovery-covid-19>.