1) Context and background

International and regional labour mobility may contribute to growth and development in countries of origin and destination, as well as for the human development and well-being of migrants themselves. Importantly, there need to be opportunities for labour mobility at all skill levels, according to real labour market needs. In view of demographic trends and the growing demand for care work, “global care chains” are becoming a significant feature of global migration patterns, with impacts especially on women migrant workers and families in countries of origin. Temporary labour migration programmes can be effective where labour needs are genuinely temporary, with specific provisions to protect the rights of temporary labour migrants, for example by not tying permits to a single employer. A different set of solutions is needed however, for more structural, long-term labour needs. With increasing south-south migration, the development of intra-regional labour migration frameworks to promote freedom of movement and the protection of workers is now a priority in many regions. Ideally, approaches should lead to the harmonization of labour migration policies, labour market needs, and development priorities of both countries of origin and destination.

Developing policies on international and regional labour mobility should be grounded in relevant international and regional labour standards, in particular the principle of non-discrimination in labour standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue. The exploitation of migrant workers is often linked to their vulnerability at the recruitment stage of the labour migration process. The promotion of ethical recruitment practices and the creation of a global framework need to be considered to address the unscrupulous practices of third party intermediaries. In the same vein, migration only improves development outcomes for individuals and societies if migrants are employed at a level that corresponds to their skills. Action may be required against “brain waste” and de-skilling – which affect female migrants in particular – including through better systems to recognize foreign qualifications and targeted initiatives to support and empower working women migrants. Lastly, it is important to note that 21st century mobility means that individuals can be connected to more than one country. Governments can respond to this reality through multiple entry visas, portable social security and welfare benefits, measures to promote family unity, and laws permitting multiple nationalities - thus fostering fruitful transnational links that can translate into circular migration, trade and cultural exchange.

Arguably, RCPs can play a key role in promoting regional labour mobility, including in the context of regional integration. By providing informal dialogue platforms they can assist governments in developing legislation, policies, and mechanisms to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by international and regional labour mobility.
2) **Guiding questions**

   a) *What is the experience of RCPs in addressing global and regional labour mobility issues? Have any changes in policy and/or practice in this domain happened as a result of RCP deliberations?*

   b) *What are some of the key challenges encountered in implementing regional labour mobility programs? How can RCPs provide a useful platform for discussion aimed at addressing these?*

**Specific issues for consideration:**
- Protection of migrant workers and addressing exploitation at the recruitment stage
- Matching labour supply with demand and addressing de-skilling
- Developing intra-regional labour mobility frameworks