



Young internal displaced persons (IDP) wait for fresh water being delivered by IOM to an IDP camp near Banda Aceh © IOM 2005/Jonathan Perugia

The health and well-being of migrants, their families, and communities along the migration continuum are directly affected by the overall socioeconomic and political context, the specific conditions in which migration and displacement take place, and the very design of policy frameworks conceived to respond to current migration challenges. Positive health and migration outcomes require well-managed migration, equal rights for migrants in accessing health care and social services, and responsive systems geared to meet migrants' health needs within established policies. Being and staying healthy is a fundamental right of every human being, and is an essential precondition for migrants to work, be productive, and contribute to development. Yet health has often remained marginal in discussions on migration, and migrants are a frequently forgotten population in health strategies.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) features health as a cross-cutting priority with references to health and

healthcare access in several objectives. Together with the SDGs, the World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolutions on the health of migrants (WHA 61.17, 2008) and on promoting the health of refugees and migrants (WHA 70.15, 2017) and the forthcoming WHO Global Action Plan on promoting the health of refugees and migrants (2019), implementation and review of the GCM now provide a tremendous opportunity to promote the health of migrants and related multi-sectoral partnerships and policies.

This information sheet provides an overview of the key health-related GCM commitments and actions, as well as selected examples of IOM action to date in supporting Member States in implementation and capacity building for migration health programmes. Working in partnership with the UN Migration Network, including WHO and other key health partners, IOM can support Member States to develop integrated and project-oriented solutions to achieve health-related GCM actions.



**10.7** Facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and **well-managed migration policies**.

Well-managed migration policies imply that the health needs of migrants and host communities are met as a prerequisite for sustainable development. Additionally, Universal Health Coverage (UHC) can only be achieved when the health and equitable access to health services of all people, including migrants, are addressed. Therefore, the health of migrants must be mainstreamed in both health and migration policies.



**3.8** Achieve **universal health coverage**, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.



# TRACING MIGRATION HEALTH IN THE GCM\*

## OBJECTIVE 1

### Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence based policies

The action on developing country-specific migration profiles with disaggregated data in a national context should include health data to develop evidence-based migration policies. This can begin with practical platforms for connecting research experts, scholars, and policy makers globally to strengthen information systems to analyze trends in migrants' health, disaggregate health information, and facilitate the exchange of lessons learned.

## OBJECTIVE 7

### Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

The actions on addressing vulnerabilities in migration include provision of health care, psychological and other counselling services, in particular for migrant women, girls and boys, and for unaccompanied and separated children at all stages of migration. This would also require addressing migrant experiences including xenophobia, migration restrictions for migrants with health needs, and other policy gaps and inconsistencies, as well as efforts to enhance migrant resilience, through adequate information, education, and empowerment for self-help.

## OBJECTIVE 16

### Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion

The call for inclusion of migrants in societies with regards to health-related aspects will require capacity development of local and national health systems to provide people-centred and inclusive health services that are rights-based and participatory with migrants, civil society, private sector, and other stakeholders. This should be based on the extension of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Social Protection Floors to all migrants, irrespective of their migratory status.

## OBJECTIVE 15

### Provide access to basic services for migrants

This objective encourages governments to “incorporate the health needs of migrants in national and local health care policies and plans, [...] including by taking into consideration relevant recommendations from the *WHO Framework of Priorities and Guiding Principles* [...]”. These commitments are linked with governments' plans for health-related SDG results (SDGs 3 and others). The WHO country/region-specific good practices and situation analyses for promoting health of migrants in collaboration with IOM and other UN partners include valuable information on past and ongoing practices (<http://www.who.int/migrants/publications/situation-analysis-reports/en/>) to help governments strengthen migrant-inclusive health-care systems and support the achievement of objective 15 (c, e). The lessons learned can guide development of multisectoral and whole-of-society migration health policies and design of basic packages for health service provision with affordable and non-discriminatory access and reduced communication barriers, with related health provider trainings. In line with the 2008 and 2017 World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolutions on the health of migrants, IOM will continue working in close partnership (GCM Objective 23) with UN system partners, including WHO, to advise governments on and implement effective integrated solutions on migration health.

## OBJECTIVE 6

### Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work

Mainstreaming migration health issues within bilateral and regional labour agreements and dialogues will be critical to ensure that migrant workers engaged in remunerated and contractual labour have the rights and protections to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. This should also consider enhancing skills recognition and mobility, as well as diaspora engagement for migrant health workers.

## OBJECTIVE 10

### Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration

Protection and assistance for trafficked persons will require integration of measures for physical and psychological health, including service delivery and capacity development. This will also require cross-border cooperation and partnerships to harmonize intersectoral policies and practices, and ensure continuity of care and health responses to particular health needs of women, men, girls and boys.

## OBJECTIVE 22

### Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

Inclusion of health-related actions in this objective will require assessment and enhancement of financial risk protection in health services, to reduce the burden of catastrophic health expenditures on migrants. Social protection in health should be an integral component of reciprocal social security agreements on the portability of earned benefits for migrant workers at all skill levels, for both long-term and temporary migration.

\*This is a non-exhaustive overview of GCM objectives with direct or indirect health-related actions and commitments, and will be regularly updated.

Photo: © IOM 2017/Benjamin Suomela



## SELECTED GOOD PRACTICES IN ADVANCING MIGRATION HEALTH ACTIONS

### Providing health-related protection & assistance for trafficked persons

In 2016, the Azerbaijani government collaborated with IOM to organize trainings for healthcare professionals aimed at building capacities in identifying, referring, and caring for trafficked persons.

Source: Migration Health Annual Report, 2016  
[http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mhd\\_ar\\_2016.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mhd_ar_2016.pdf)

### Ensuring safe access to basic health services for all migrants

IOM's Equi-Health project has focused on improving the equity and access to health care services, health promotion, and prevention to meet the needs of migrants. Within this project, the report of the Migrant Integration Policy Index health strand was designed and reported to monitor policies affecting health as a component of migrant integration in 38 countries.

Source: <http://equi-health.eea.iom.int/>

### Strengthening migration health-related international cooperation and global partnerships

In 2017, the Government of Sri Lanka, in partnership with IOM and WHO, hosted the 2nd Global Consultation on Migrant Health, in which governments as well as non-governmental actors identified priority areas and key policy strategies to reach a unified agenda on the health of migrants, and engage multi-sectoral partners at policy level. At this consultation, governments adopted the Colombo Statement, which has since been considered by GCM co-facilitators as an input to the development of the GCM.

Source: [www.iom.int/migration-health/second-global-consultation](http://www.iom.int/migration-health/second-global-consultation)

### Tackling health risks throughout the migration process through regional coordination

The Partnership on Health and Mobility in East and Southern Africa (PHAMESA), a regional initiative, has supported governments of the region in reducing migrants' vulnerability to HIV by responding to their health needs throughout all phases of the migration process. Multi-sectoral and intergovernmental partnerships and networks have been strengthened with the help of PHAMESA in order to ensure a sustainable response to migration health challenges in East and Southern Africa.

Source: <http://southafrica.iom.int/programmes/partnership-on-health-and-mobility-in-east-and-southern-africa-phamesa>



A healthcare provider with a beneficiary in IOM's health facilities in Jowle IDP Settlement, Somalia. © IOM 2014/ Mary-Sanyu Osire

### Incorporating health needs of migrants in national health policies and plans

Central American governments have come together, in collaboration with IOM, to develop the Joint Health Initiative for Migrants in Central America and Mexico, which aims to strengthen the migration health network through development of a knowledge management platform and technical multi-sectoral meetings in Central American countries.

Source: [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration\\_health\\_research\\_to\\_transform\\_policy\\_and\\_practice.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration_health_research_to_transform_policy_and_practice.pdf);  
<http://saludymigracion.org/>

### Access to knowledge & sharing of solutions

IOM has launched a Migration Health Research Portal, a global repository of IOM's migration health-related projects and publications. The Portal is a platform for connecting research experts and scholars learning about global migration health research initiatives and improving evidence-based policy and practice. It is publicly available and contains a range of publications on migration and health, including peer-reviewed scientific papers, technical reports, training guides, policy briefs, discussion papers, fact sheets, newsletters, and research reviews.

Source:

<https://migrationhealthresearch.iom.int/>



For more information on the above activities please contact the Migration Health Division (MHD) at [mhdopt@iom.int](mailto:mhdopt@iom.int)

