

UNION OF THE COMOROS | PROFILE 2021

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS



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Publisher: International Organization for Migration
17 route des Morillons
1211 Geneva 19
P.O. Box 17
Switzerland
Tel.: +41.22.717 91 11
Fax: +41.22.798 61 50
Email: hq@iom.int
Internet: www.iom.int

With research and analysis by

**ECONOMIST
IMPACT**

Required citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2021. *Migration Governance Indicators Profile 2021 – Union of the Comoros*. IOM. Geneva.

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MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

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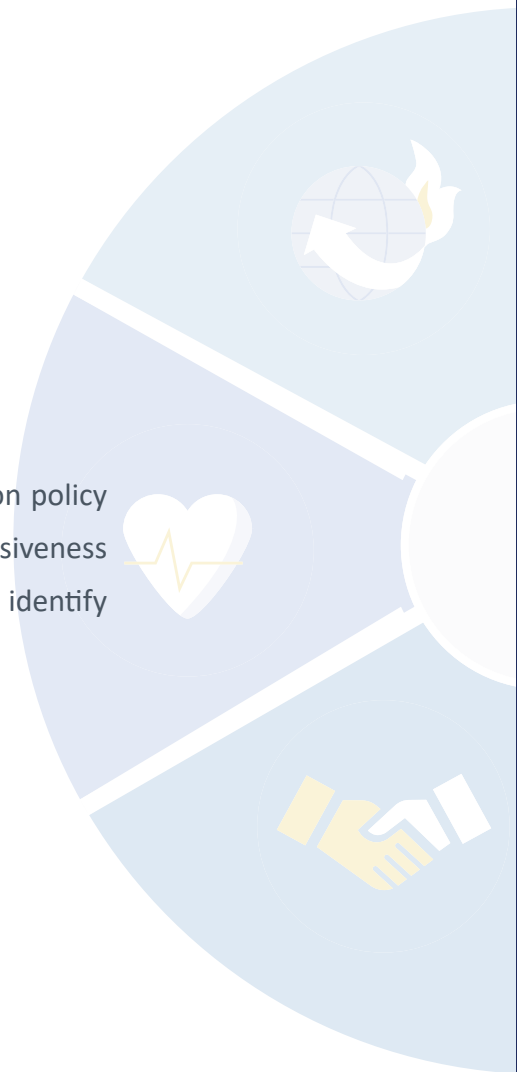
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OBJECTIVE

The MGI aims to support well-managed migration policy by helping countries assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures and identify priorities on the way forward.



The MGI can be used to spark a discussion within governments, with other relevant stakeholders in the country, on their migration policy structures. It can help assess whether these structures, which have often been in place for several years, still address the main challenges and opportunities of today's reality.

INTRODUCTION

This is an era of unprecedented mobility, and the need to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility is becoming increasingly relevant.¹ The need to face the challenges and to maximize the opportunities that this mobility brings has been recognized with the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which highlights the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and development. Migration is integrated in a number of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, such as ending modern slavery and addressing the vulnerability of migrant workers. However, the central reference to migration in the SDGs is Target 10.7 on facilitating “orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.²

The incorporation of Target 10.7 into the 2030 Agenda created the need to define “planned and well-managed migration policies”. This is why, in 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF). This Framework offers a concise view of an ideal approach that allows a State to determine what it might need to govern migration well and in a way that suits its circumstances.³ The Framework was welcomed by IOM Member States in the same year.

In an effort to operationalize the MiGOF, IOM worked with The Economist Intelligence Unit to develop the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI), a standard set of approximately 90 indicators to assist countries in assessing their migration policies and advance the conversation on what well-governed migration might look like in practice.

The MGI help countries identify good practices as well as areas with potential for further development and can offer insights on the policy levers that countries may need to develop their migration governance structures. However, the MGI recognizes that all countries have different realities, challenges and opportunities that relate to migration. Therefore, the MGI does not rank countries on the design or implementation of their migration policies. Finally, the MGI does not measure migration policy outcomes or institutional effectiveness. Instead, it takes stock of the migration-related policies in place and operates as a benchmarking framework that provides insights on policy measures that countries might want to consider as they progress towards good migration governance.

This country profile presents a summary of the well-developed areas of the migration governance structures of the Union of the Comoros (hereinafter referred to as the Comoros), as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGI.⁴

¹ IOM Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance, seventeenth session (S/17/4 of 29 September 2015), article 2.

² IOM Council, 106th session, Migration Governance Framework (C/106/40 of 4 November 2015), page 1, footnote 1. Available at <https://governingbodies.iom.int/system/files/en/council/106/C-106-40-Migration-Governance-Framework.pdf>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The MGI initiative is a policy-benchmarking programme led by IOM and implemented with the support of The Economist Intelligence Unit. Funding is provided by IOM's Member States.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MiGOF

The IOM MiGOF sets out the essential elements to support planned and well-managed migration. It seeks to present, in a consolidated, coherent and comprehensive way, a set of three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane, orderly, and benefits migrants and society.

PRINCIPLES

1. **Adherence** to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights.
2. **Formulates** policy using evidence and "whole-of-government" approach.
3. **Engages** with partners to address migration and related issues.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Advance** the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.
2. **Effectively** address the mobility dimensions of crises.
3. **Ensure** that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

At the basis of

MGI

WHAT IT IS



A set of indicators that offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to strengthen their migration governance structures



A tool that identifies good practices and areas that could be further developed



A consultative process that advances dialogues on migration governance by clarifying what "well-governed migration" might look like in the context of SDG Target 10.7

Which supports the measurement of

WHAT IT IS NOT



Not a ranking of countries



Not assessing impacts of policies



Not prescriptive



TARGET 10.7

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



KEY

FINDINGS

The MGI is composed of around 90 indicators grouped under the 6 different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:



MIGRANTS'
RIGHTS
PAGE 12

Indicators in this domain look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. It also looks at family reunification, access to work, and access to residency and citizenship. The international conventions signed and ratified are also included.



WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT
APPROACH
PAGE 14

Indicators in this area assess countries' institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks related to migration policies. This area also looks at the existence of national migration strategies that are in line with development objectives and overseas development efforts, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in relation to migration management.



PARTNERSHIPS
PAGE 16

This category focuses on countries' efforts to cooperate on migration-related issues with other States and with relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.



WELL-BEING
OF MIGRANTS
PAGE 17

Indicators in this area assess countries' policies on the recognition of migrants' educational and professional qualifications, provisions regulating student migration and the existence of bilateral labour agreements between countries. Aspects of diaspora engagement in the country of origin and migrant remittances are also under this domain.



MOBILITY DIMENSION
OF CRISES
PAGE 19

This category looks at the type and level of preparedness of countries when they are faced with mobility dimensions of crises. The questions look at the processes in place for nationals and non-nationals both during and after disasters, including if humanitarian assistance is equally available to migrants as it is to citizens.



SAFE, ORDERLY
AND REGULAR
MIGRATION
PAGE 20

This area looks at countries' approach to migration management in terms of border control and enforcement policies, admission criteria for migrants, preparedness and resilience in the case of significant and unexpected migration flows, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons.



1

ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFILMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. International conventions ratified

Table 1. Signature and ratification of international conventions

| Convention name | Ratified |
|--|---------------------|
| International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) | Yes (2020)* |
| United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (also known as the Refugee Convention), 1951 | No |
| United Nations conventions on statelessness, 1954 and 1961 | No |
| ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) | Yes (2020)** |
| United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989 | Yes (1993) |
| United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990 | No |

* By Decree No. 20-168 on the promulgation of Law No. 20-21/AU (2020) authorizing the President of the Union of the Comoros to ratify the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97).

** By Decree No. 20-165 on the promulgation of Law No. 20-25/AU (2020) authorizing the President of the Union of the Comoros to ratify the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143).

1.2. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Migrants have the same access to Government-financed health care as citizens of the Comoros. The Constitution of the Union of the Comoros (2018) stipulates that it is incumbent on the State to ensure a general national health service and to encourage and support community participation in the different levels thereof. According to the National Solidarity Policy (2012) of the Ministry of Health, Solidarity, Social Cohesion and Gender Promotion, access to health services is not universal; the only consideration is that the person concerned (Comorian or foreigner) is able to pay the various costs incurred.

Regular migrants have access to Government-financed education and vocational training on the same basis as nationals. In the Comoros, school attendance is obligatory for all children between the ages of 3 and 16. According to Article 29 of the Constitution: "The State guarantees to all citizens the right to instruction, to education, to teaching, and to culture."

There are no generally applicable social protection measures in the Comoros. Under Article 139 of Law No. 84-108 on the Labour Code (1984), however, migrant workers enjoy the same rights as nationals when it comes to access to basic social protection. More specifically, all workers in the public and private sectors, including migrant workers, benefit from a pension scheme and health insurance. Employees must be affiliated with the Comoros Pension Fund by their employer and contribute for at least 15 years in order to benefit. The Government, acting through the Ministry of Health, Solidarity, Social Cohesion and Gender Promotion, started work in August 2021 on a social protection policy in the form of a universal health

insurance project intended to provide all of the country's inhabitants with free access to health care. As part of that initiative, the Comoros signed a framework agreement (2019) with France for the funding of a number of projects, including in the field of health.

Permanent residents and migrants holding a special foreign worker permit may accept any job in the private sector on the same conditions as citizens of the Comoros. According to the employment conditions for foreigners set out in Law No. 88-025, on the conditions for entering and residing in the Comoros (1988), permanent residents in possession of the special foreign worker permit can hold a job. Article 10 of the Law provides that a foreigner with a permit to remain in the country (*carte de séjour*) and wishing to seek employment must obtain a residence permit (*carte de résident*), which cancels the permit to remain and is issued for 10 years.⁵ In addition, the following is stated under Article 18 of the Constitution of the Union of the Comoros (2018): "Foreigners residing or sojourning on the national territory enjoy the same rights, the same freedoms, the same guarantees and have the same duties as the Comorian citizens, with the exception of the political rights and the rights and duties reserved for national citizens by law or by the Constitution." The same principle is reflected in Article 139 of Law No. 84-108 on the Labour Code (1984), according to which all foreign workers enjoy the same rights as citizens if they live in the Comoros.

Foreign residents can become citizens of the Comoros after having continuously resided in the country for 5 to 10 years. According to Article 29 of Law No. 79-12 on the Comorian Code of Nationality (1979), foreigners may be naturalized after 10 years of continuous residence in the Comoros. Article 30 of the same Law reduces that period to five years for persons born in the Comoros, for women married to a Comorian citizen and for persons having received a national distinction (artistic, scientific or literary talents). Lastly, according to Law No. 08-014 on economic citizenship of the Union of the Comoros (2008), there is no minimum period of residence for "any migrant with the status of economic partner of the Government of the Comoros".⁶

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

The Comoros has not concluded any agreements with other countries on the portability of social security and acquired benefits, including pension funds.

Although Comorians living abroad are entitled to vote in national elections, this has never happened in practice. Article 16 of the Constitution stipulates that Comorians living abroad have the same rights and duties as citizens living in the Comoros, but it does not explicitly refer to the right to vote. The Government has initiated discussions with the stakeholders concerned to develop a system for registering its citizens abroad, with a view to implementing a remote voting system.

The Comoros does not have a policy or strategy for combating hate crimes, xenophobia, violence and discrimination against migrants. The Law of 27 June 2006 on the National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms of the Union of the Comoros does not specifically refer to the protection of migrants from hate crimes, violence or discrimination.

Family reunification is possible only for migrants holding diplomatic or service visas. Article 3 of Law No. 88-025 modifying Law No. 82-026, on the conditions of entry and stay for foreigners in the Comoros (1988), provides that "the members of diplomatic and consular missions accredited to the Comoros and bearing a diplomatic passport, their spouses, their ascendants and their minor descendants – whether married or not – living under the same roof benefit, for the duration of their stay in the Comoros, from a diplomatic visa". The same applies for the bearers of military visas. These visas exempt them from needing the residence permit (*permis de séjour*) if they wish to remain in the Comoros for longer than three months.

⁵ In practice, the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration has decided not to issue *cartes de résident* that are valid for 10 years any longer. It only renews the 10-year permits of those who had one before the decision. Other migrants have to settle for an annual renewable permit that enables them to work.

⁶ Economic citizenship is open to any adult considered to be an economic partner of the Government of the Comoros and therefore willing to invest at least KFM 1,000,000 (around USD 2,421) in the country.



2

FORMULATES POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Multisectoral Monitoring and Steering Commission for Migration Issues in the Union of the Comoros, which was established in 2018 at the initiative of the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration in collaboration with IOM, is in charge of interministerial coordination on migration issues. In accordance with Decision No. 19/07 on the appointment of the Commission's members and its mission, the Commission collects and analyses any law or decree pertaining to migration with a view to formulating recommendations for the Government and, in the long run, drawing up a national migration policy framework. The Commission, which is chaired by the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration, is made up of representatives of various ministries and organizations.⁷

The Central Department for Immigration and Emigration (Département Central de l'Immigration et l'Émigration, DCIE), which is under the Directorate General for Police and National Security, is in charge of the implementation of Law No. 88-025 modifying Law No. 82-026, on the conditions of entry and stay for foreigners in the Comoros (1988), which sets down the conditions for visiting or moving to the Comoros, for remaining as a resident or to work, and for deportation by four services: the Central Border Police, the Central Service for the Production and Issuance of Biometric Documents, the Visa Service in charge of issuing visas on arrival in the Comoros, and the Central Domestic Surveillance Service.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is in charge of all emigration-related matters and of policies for engaging with the diaspora. It acts through its Office for Comorians Abroad (Commissariat des Comoriens à l'Étranger), which was established by Decree No. 11-234 on the Office's creation (2011). The Office is mandated to identify members of the diaspora and uphold their rights as citizens of the Comoros, in particular with regard to the right to vote and to investment in the Comoros. One of its priorities is to create a database of information on Comorians living abroad and to compile all the resources generated by members of the diaspora, such as in literature, research and the arts.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Multisectoral Monitoring and Steering Commission for Migration Issues has yet to draw up a national migration policy, but this is being discussed as of August 2021. In addition, the Emerging Comoros Plan 2030 (2019) refers to the need for migration governance, in particular with regard to the diaspora and the call to improve the transfer of financial resources and their use.

The National Gender Equity and Equality Policy (2007) aims to influence policies and strategies relating to gender inequality but does not contain specific measures for migrants.

There is no specific national legislation governing emigration from the Comoros. There is no reference to emigration in the legislative framework governing immigration – namely Law No. 88-025 modifying Law No. 82-026, on the conditions of entry and stay for foreigners in the Comoros; and Law No. 79-12 of 12 December 1979 on the Comorian Code of Nationality.

⁷ The Commission met for the first time in March 2020. Its members include the President of the Comoros; the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs, Public Administration and Human Rights; the Ministry of Youth, Employment, Labour, Training and Occupational Integration, Sports, Arts and Culture; the Ministry of Health, Solidarity, Social Cohesion and Gender Promotion; the Ministry of Maritime and Air Transport; the General Planning Commission; the National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms; and the Comoros Red Crescent Society.

The National Institute of Statistics and Economic and Demographic Studies does not collect or publish migration data. However, the census – which is conducted about every 10 years by the Institute and the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Banking Sector – asks migration-related questions, namely the respondent's place of birth, nationality and resident status.

3

ENGAGES WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS
MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Comoros is a member of the Pan-African Forum on Migration, a continent-wide consultative process enabling its members “to network and share information, experiences and good practices on migration and mobility governance issues in the continent”.

The country participates in the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa, which aims to facilitate coordination of regional migration governance. It also participates in the Migration Dialogue for the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), a forum for discussion of migration management and the harmonization of migration data collection systems, policies and laws. Furthermore, the Comoros takes part in the Migration Dialogue for Indian Ocean Commission Countries (MiDIOCC), in which the countries of the Indian Ocean discuss migration issues with a view to adopting best migration practices and facilitating human mobility in the region.

The Comoros has concluded bilateral visa-exemption agreements with Mauritius (2017), Senegal (2019) and Tunisia (2019). In October 2020, it also signed five memorandums of understanding with Morocco, on diplomatic training, management of the two countries’ respective communities established abroad, agriculture and health, and the establishment of a political consultative mechanism. The memorandum of understanding on the management of the two respective communities established abroad and migration issues aims to introduce a permanent framework for cooperation enabling the two countries to share experiences, with a view to improving the living conditions of foreign communities, in particular with regard to the educational, cultural and social spheres.

The Comoros cooperates with civil society organizations on migration-related matters. The Comoros Red Crescent Society, for example, is a member of the Multisectoral Monitoring and Steering Commission for Migration Issues in the Union of the Comoros, which is in charge of drawing up a national migration strategy, and representatives of civil society organizations have been mobilized for specific project activities to combat trafficking in persons.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Comoros has not engaged formally with the private sector on the establishment of a programme on migration-related issues and its implementation.

The Comoros has not engaged formally with members of the diaspora on development matters. Remittances account for approximately 14 per cent of the national GDP (World Bank, 2021), but there is no official register of Comorians living abroad to promote engagement with the diaspora.

One of the aims of the COMESA Migration Dialogue is to achieve full implementation of the COMESA Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Labour, Services, the Right of Establishment and Residence (2001), which aims to liberalize labour migration and eliminate visa requirements for member States. Although the Comoros is one of the rare countries to apply part of the Protocol, granting three-month visas to COMESA citizens on arrival, the ratification process is yet to be completed as of August 2021.



4

ADVANCES THE SOCIOECONOMIC
WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Comoros has adopted measures to promote gender equality for all workers, including migrants. The National Gender Equity and Equality Policy (2007) stresses the need to attach greater value to women's work and to improve the schooling levels of girls, for example. The National Labour Code (1984), which applies to all workers, including migrants, refers to gender equality as well. Article 2 prohibits all employers from discriminating on the basis of sex when hiring an employee, and Article 81 guarantees women equal pay for equal work. Article 99 provides that women and girls not living with their families should receive housing and protection. Chapter 3 of the Code is entirely dedicated to women's work and provides a framework protecting women in the event of pregnancy and maternity leave, a husband's death, or forced labour.

International students can have access to university education in the Comoros on the same conditions as citizens in terms of admission criteria and tuition, provided that they have a long-term resident visa. They are also authorized to work while studying in the Comoros.⁸

The Comoros has adopted the European LMD system (Bachelor–Master–Doctorate),⁹ which standardizes levels of education and facilitates recognition of the diplomas presented in all the countries that have adopted the system. The diplomas are obtained by completing the number of semesters indicated by the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; the semesters are validated and can be transferred to other countries.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Comoros does not have a system to assess the national labour market demand for migrant workers. The Government also does not collect data on the labour market disaggregated by migratory status or sex. The Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector (2014) carried out by the Directorate General of Planning did not include questions on migratory status. Migrant workers are not one of the key variables when collecting labour market data.

The Comoros does not have different types of visas to attract specific skills. However, Law No. 88-025, on the conditions for entering and residing in the Comoros (1988), is being revised as of August 2021. Thus, as proposed by the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration, new types of visas – such as student, health and artistic visas – will be provided for.

The Directorate General of Higher Education and Research is in charge of validating the foreign qualifications of students in the Comoros but has no formalized criteria for the recognition of such qualifications, other than the LMD system. No national standard has been established for the recognition of foreign skills and qualifications. This frequently gives rise to issues in regulated professions such as medicine and pharmacy, with recognition of the foreign diplomas concerned varying from one administration to another. Furthermore, the Comoros has no agencies able to assist migrants in obtaining recognition of their skills and qualifications certificates.

The Comoros has not adopted specific measures aimed at promoting the ethical recruitment of migrant workers or protecting Comorian workers abroad. Also, it has not concluded bilateral labour agreements.

⁸ The Comoros does not have a student visa. Foreign students wishing to seek employment must submit an application for a 10-year resident permit and a special foreign worker permit.

⁹ The Licence–Maîtrise–Doctorat (LMD) system, established in 2002, is a three-level post-secondary system of education adopted by most countries of the European Union.

The Comoros is a signatory to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, but it has not established formal remittance schemes. While there are no specific policies to promote formal remittance transfer schemes, in 2020 the Government, acting through the State-owned enterprise Comores Telecom, set up a mobile money transfer system. Huri Money can be used to make transfers without a bank account and was yet to be launched as of August 2021.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSES THE
MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Decree No. 12-054/PR (2012) relating to the Directorate General for Civil Security (Direction Générale de la Sécurité Civile, DGSC) instituted the DGSC, which is under the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration and is in charge of protecting the population, property and the environment in the event of a crisis or natural disaster. The Government coordinates DGSC resources and evaluates the level of risk-preparedness. In times of crisis, the Government does not make any distinction between migrants and nationals.

The National Emergency Response and Preparedness Plan (2007) covers disaster-related displacements and stipulates measures to prevent and address them. Those measures relate to meeting the basic needs of displaced persons, such as health care, food, clothing, education and temporary accommodation. The Plan provides for the establishment of a coordination mechanism in an emergency or disaster. The coordination mechanism is composed of the Ministry of Defence, the Chief of Staff, the DGSC Director General, representatives of the sectors concerned, a representative of the President's Office, a representative of each island and a representative of the national media.

The Comoros has set up communication systems to inform the public on the evolving nature of crises and the availability of aid and assistance services; it has set up a means for the public to communicate its needs to the Government as well. The DGSC is in charge of communication with the population in times of crisis, via media communication campaigns that are generally conducted in Comoran, French and Arabic, but they are available in several other languages too, such as Swahili and English. The DGSC also deploys its officials in the field so that they can communicate directly with the residents. Furthermore, the Government makes a hotline available to the public in times of crisis.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

There are no measures aimed at allowing exceptions in immigration procedures for migrants whose countries of origin are facing crises. Law No. 88-025, on the conditions for entering and residing in the Comoros (1988), does not allow exceptions to the visa procedure, not even for migrants from countries in crisis.

Post-disaster recovery strategies in the Comoros do not consider migration issues, nor do the country's national development strategies contain measures for the reintegration of returning migrants. The Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (2015–2019) does not mention climate change-related population displacement. The Emerging Comoros Plan 2030 (2019) does not mention the reintegration of returning migrants either.



6

ENSURES THAT MIGRATION TAKES PLACE IN A SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MANNER

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Central Department for Immigration and Emigration (DCIE), under the Directorate General for Police and National Security, is the government agency in charge of border management. Law No. 83-014, on the creation and organization of the Federal Police (1983), defines the Department's mission and divides it into four services: the Central Border Police, which is in charge of monitoring arrivals in the national territory; the Central Service for the Production and Issuance of Biometric Documents, which is in charge of issuing all biometric identity documents, long-term visas and residence permits; the Visa Service, which issues visas on arrival in the Comoros; and the Central Domestic Surveillance Service, the intelligence service monitoring foreigners entering or residing in the Comoros. The Central Domestic Surveillance Service is also in charge of carrying out deportations and repatriations.

Law No. 14-034/AU, on the fight against child labour and trafficking (2014), aims to define, prevent, and punish all forms of child labour and the smuggling and trafficking of children. It also stipulates measures against forced labour and in favour of the victims of trafficking in persons. Article 13 criminalizes all forms of smuggling of children and forced labour, the penalties for which are 10 to 20 years in prison and a hefty fine. In addition, Article 2 of Law No. 84-108, on the Labour Code (1984), prohibits forced labour and applies to all workers, including migrant workers. Articles 20 and 25 of the Constitution of the Union of the Comoros (2018), which is applicable to all citizens and covers migrants as well, establish that the mental and physical integrity of people may not be violated and that no one can be forced to work. In addition, the Comoros has introduced measures aimed at combating labour exploitation, which apply to migrants. Article 2 of Law No. 12-/AU, which abrogates, modifies and supplements certain provisions of Law No. 84-108 on the Labour Code (2012), stipulates that forced labour is prohibited.

As part of the effort to improve referral and assistance capacities with regard to trafficking in persons in the Comoros, a technical working group coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration was established in 2021 by Service Note No. 21-181. The working group is made up of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs, Public Administration and Human Rights; the National Assembly; civil society; the National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms; and the Juvenile Squad.

The Comoros has concluded two agreements with France to combat migrant smuggling. The first one, signed in 2019, concerns the fight against "uncontrolled" population movements, the saving of human lives at sea, and development. Under this framework agreement, the Comorian authorities are to set up a structure dedicated to fighting against human traffickers, and it is in charge of coordinating action on land and at sea as well as sharing information and interacting with France. The second agreement concerns a defence partnership concluded in 2010 and covers border management and maritime security.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

The DCIE does not have an integrated border management system. There are only paper records of all passengers on international flights landing at the airport. There is no formalized central system for monitoring expired visas. However, visas can be requested from the Comorian consular authorities abroad.

The DCIE generally uses two procedures for the detention of migrants awaiting trial or deportation. If there is a possibility of deportation within 48 hours, persons intercepted at the airport are held on site in the police locker room until the time of departure. If the deportation time exceeds 48 hours, the migrants are handed over to the DCIE which, following an inquiry, refers them to the Central Domestic Surveillance

Service. At no point are the migrants brought before a judge. They are held in the conference room of the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralization and Territorial Administration. Migrants with sufficient financial resources may rent a hotel room.

Border management staff are trained on an ad hoc basis. For example, border police are trained by the DCIE on identity documents, but they receive no special language training or training on the identification of and providing assistance to victims of trafficking. Border personnel also receive ad hoc training in collaboration with international organizations, essentially on prevention of trafficking in persons and security.

Information on the conditions for entering and staying on the territory, and on the procedures for requesting a visa before arrival, is not readily available to the public. Some information concerning certain types of visas and the documents needed to request a temporary visa or a long-term resident visa on arrival is available online.

While there is some legislation to counter child trafficking, the Comoros does not have a national counter-trafficking strategy and does not publish information on its counter-trafficking activities.

MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE
INDICATORSPREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS
ON THE RISKS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS
(COVID-19)

This page summarizes key national COVID-19 policy responses in the Comoros from a migration governance perspective. It is based on 12 questions that were added to the standard MGI assessment in the Comoros in order to effectively assess national migration governance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Migration status is not considered as a variable in the reports of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic and Demographic Studies, which publishes occasional updates on the COVID-19 situation in the Comoros. The reports contain data on the number of cases, patients considered cured and deaths. The data are aggregated by health district, or by place, sex and age.



No particular measures have been adopted to promote contributions from the Comorian diaspora to the COVID-19 response, even though the diaspora has been especially active in the fight against COVID-19 through Comorian associations in countries where it is present. The Central Bank of the Comoros reports that during the COVID-19 period, there was a 33 per cent increase in remittances, from 56 million euros in May 2019 to 74 million euros in May 2020. Remittances sent by diaspora associations helped to buy hygiene and medical products. According to the Central Bank of the Comoros, diaspora remittances increased by one third during the first five months of 2020 compared to the previous year.*



No special measures have been adopted to facilitate remittances by the diaspora during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Central Bank of the Comoros, most diaspora remittances were kept by the beneficiaries and did not reach the banking system. Since the borders were closed, the remittances were sent via formal channels, through transfer agencies. In addition, Comorians living abroad make substantial contributions through associations or directly to municipalities in order to support the fight against the pandemic.



No measures have been taken to facilitate the safe and orderly return and reintegration of citizens and residents who may have been stranded abroad during the pandemic. Such situations were handled on a case-by-case basis. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation stepped in to organize the repatriation of Comorian students stranded in Wuhan, China, at the start of the pandemic. According to the COVID Commission, which is in charge of repatriations and COVID-19-related matters, about 500 repatriations took place between May and September 2020.

* RFI, Comores : hausse surprise des transferts d'argent de la diaspora. 30 June 2020. Available at www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20200630-comores-hausse-surprise-transferts-d-argent-la-diaspora.



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ANNEXES

MiGOF: Migration Governance Framework¹⁰

In an attempt to define the concept of “well-managed migration policies”, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) devised a Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF), which was welcomed by the IOM Council in November 2015. For the purposes of the Migration Governance Framework, IOM defines governance as “the traditions and institutions by which authority on migration, mobility and nationality in a country is exercised, including the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies in these areas”.

The Framework sets out the essential elements of “good migration governance” – 3 principles and 3 objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane, safe and orderly, and that it provides benefits for migrants and societies.¹¹ IOM’s view is that a migration system promotes migration and human mobility that is humane and orderly and benefits migrants and society:

When it:

- (i) Adheres to international standards and fulfils migrants’ rights;
- (ii) Formulates policy using evidence and a “whole-of-government” approach;
- (iii) Engages with partners to address migration and related issues.

As it seeks to:

- (i) Advance the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society;
- (ii) Effectively address the mobility dimensions of crises;
- (iii) Ensure that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

The MiGOF does NOT create new standards or norms. In drafting the Framework, IOM relied on its expertise and analytical work, as well as on existing commitments, non-binding declarations and statements. It does NOT address global migration governance that is the international architecture for dealing with issues related to migration and human mobility. Instead, the focus is on the governance and management of migration from the point of view of the State as the primary actor. It does NOT propose one model for all States. The Framework presents a “high road” or ideal version of migration governance, to which States can aspire.

The MiGOF is based on the understanding that, as the primary actor in migration, mobility and nationality affairs, a State retains the sovereign right to determine who enters and stays in its territory and under what conditions, within the framework of international law. Other actors – citizens, migrants, international organizations, the private sector, unions, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, religious organizations and academia – contribute to migration governance through their interaction with States and each other.

¹⁰ IOM Council, Migration Governance Framework, 106th session, C/106/40 (4 November 2015). Available at <https://governingbodies.iom.int/system/files/en/council/106/C-106-40-Migration-Governance-Framework.pdf>.

¹¹ Migration Governance Framework infosheet (2016). Available at <https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-governance-framework>.

The MGI process



1

Launch of the MGI process

The first step of the process is to explain what the MGI entails to key government officials, in order to ensure full understanding of the project and complete buy-in.



2

Data collection

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data, based on about 90 indicators grounded in the 6 dimensions of the MiGOF. A migration governance profile based on the analysis of the findings is then drafted and shared with the government counterparts.



3

Interministerial consultation

The third step of the process is to convene an interministerial consultation where all relevant ministries and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main areas that could be developed further as identified in the draft migration governance profile, as well as priorities on the way forward. It is also an opportunity for them to comment and provide suggestions on the draft profile.



4

Publication of the report on the Global Migration Data Portal

After the migration governance profiles are finalized and vetted by government counterparts, they are published on the Global Migration Data Portal¹² and uploaded on the IOM Online Bookstore.¹³

¹² You can find the profiles at <https://migrationdataportal.org/overviews/mgi#0>.

¹³ Please see <https://publications.iom.int/>.



www.migrationdataportal.org/mgi

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 MGI@iom.int