The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI): a key tool for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration implementation

GUIDANCE NOTE

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The MGI has proved to be an effective tool in assisting governments' efforts to meet the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals. To date, 92 countries and 51 local authorities have participated in the process, demonstrating a truly global footprint.*

Source: IOM, *The Migration Governance Indicators Success Stories* (2021). Available at https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-governance-indicators-success-stories.

António Vitorino
IOM Director General

MGI

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Global Compact
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BACKGROUND
The link between the Migration Governance Indicators and the Global Compact for Migration

This guidance note aims to illustrate the ways in which governments and other relevant stakeholders can use the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) in the implementation, follow-up and review of progress towards the achievement of Global Compact objectives.

The MGI was developed by IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact in 2016 to help governments assess the migration governance structures and practices they have in place. The MGI is not meant to rank countries on the design or implementation of migration policies, but rather it is a tool to assist governments in taking stock of the comprehensiveness of their migration policies, as well as in identifying gaps and areas that could be strengthened.

The MGI was a response to governments' need to track progress on target 10.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): "Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies." The MGI used IOM's Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) as a basis to define "well-managed migration" insofar as its 90+ questions have been grouped under the three principles and three objectives of MiGOF.
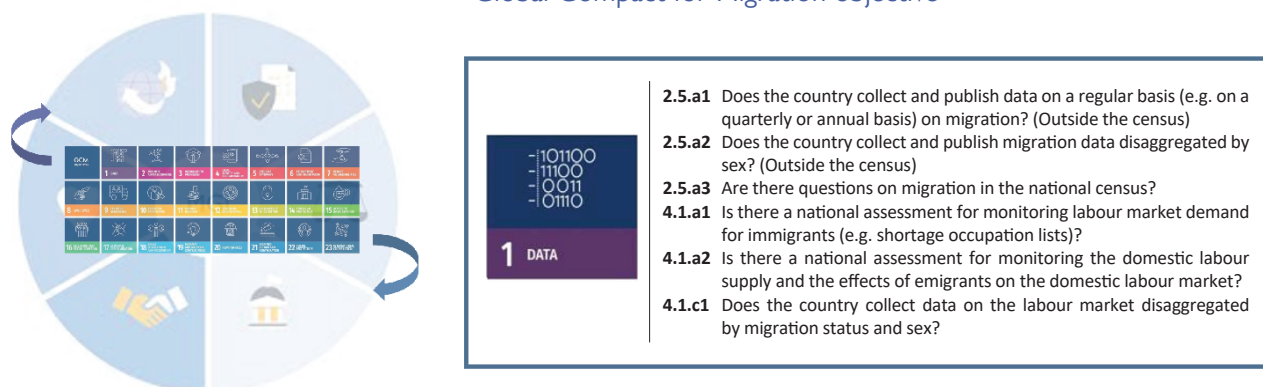
While the overall structure of the MGI has remained the same since 2016, its process and indicators have been refined over the years. Most notably, after the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration in 2018, the MGI went through a full revision, and questions were added to make sure the 90+ indicators could contribute to tracking progress on all 23 Global Compact objectives.

As a consequence, it is now possible to map the MGI indicators against Global Compact objectives to establish a clear and direct link between the two frameworks.

As of January 2022, 92 countries and 51 local authorities have conducted an MGI assessment. These include national MGI assessments in 26 of the 30 Global Compact for Migration champion countries, and local MGI assessments in 8 of them. Several governments have already started using this tool to support their work on the Compact at the national and local levels as it will be demonstrated.

While this guidance note specifically focuses on the MGI, it is only one of the tools that can be used to support governments' work on the Global Compact for Migration. For more information on those other tools and on the Compact more broadly, please consult the United Nations Network on Migration guidance for member States and relevant stakeholders on Global Compact implementation.
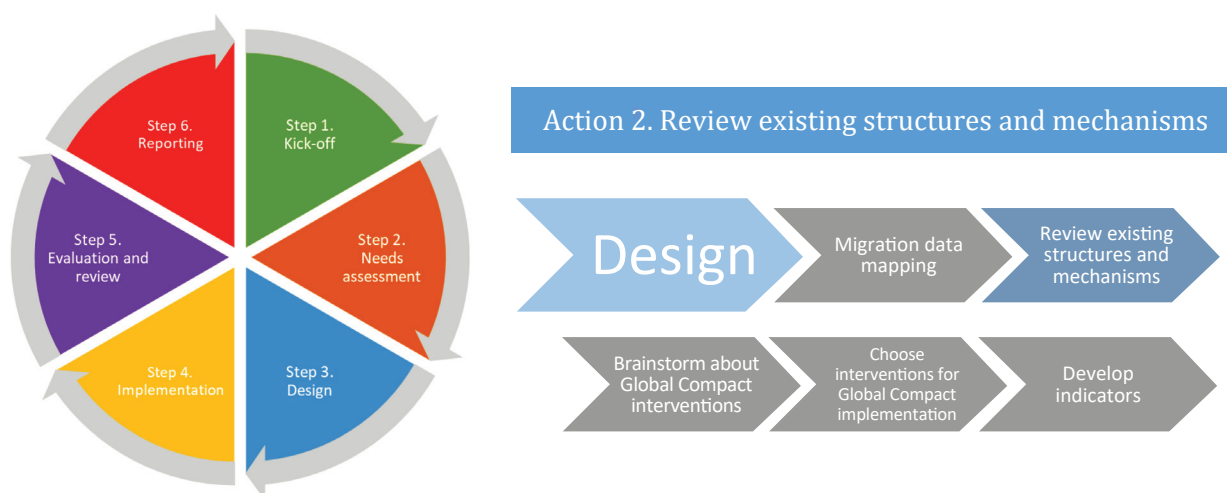
Figure 1. Example of Migration Governance Indicators questions related to a given Global Compact for Migration objective

2.5.a1 Does the country collect and publish data on a regular basis (e.g. on a quarterly or annual basis) on migration? (Outside the census)
2.5.a2 Does the country collect and publish migration data disaggregated by sex? (Outside the census)
2.5.a3 Are there questions on migration in the national census?
4.1.a1 Is there a national assessment for monitoring labour market demand for immigrants (e.g. shortage occupation lists)?
4.1.a2 Is there a national assessment for monitoring the domestic labour supply and the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market?
4.1.c1 Does the country collect data on the labour market disaggregated by migration status and sex?

1 DATA

THE MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS FOR THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION IMPLEMENTATION

In its guidance note on implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,[1] the United Nations Network on Migration identifies a six-step approach charting out a path for the implementation of the Compact.

Figure 2. Six-step approach for charting out a path for the Global Compact for Migration implementation

The MGI is mentioned under step 3 ("Design"), action 2 ("Review existing structures and mechanisms"), which highlights the following:

> [The] Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) help countries track progress on migration governance. If an MGI assessment has taken place for the country, national actors can use this tool to strengthen policy coherence across migration governance domains. As the framework is based on policy inputs, the assessment can help governments diagnose where there may be gaps in the way they formulate their national migration governance.

More concretely, there are three main ways in which the MGI can contribute to the Global Compact for Migration implementation: (a) identifying migration governance gaps to develop evidence-based Global Compact national implementation plans; (b) providing data to set a baseline, track progress and report achievements on Global Compact objectives; and (c) contributing to resource mobilization.

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[1] United Nations Network on Migration, Implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM): Guidance for governments and all relevant stakeholders. 15 October 2020. Available at https://migrationnetwork.un.org/resources/implementing-global-compact-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-gcm-guidance-governments.

Identifying gaps to develop the Global Compact for Migration national implementation plans

The existence of a direct correspondence between Global Compact objectives and MGI indicators signifies that the MGI can be used to collect insights on the migration governance structures deemed necessary for the achievement of the 23 objectives.

Concretely, this enables countries to take stock of the gaps that emerge from the MGI assessment, identify the corresponding Global Compact objectives, and develop their national Global Compact implementation plan in a way that addresses these gaps. This endeavour can be pursued with the technical support of national Networks on Migration where relevant – or the United Nations Country Teams.

As of today, many countries have already used the MGI findings in their Voluntary Global Compact for Migration Review at the regional level, which will serve as a basis for their contribution to the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in May 2022. Some examples are highlighted below.

Examples

- In **Guinea-Bissau**, the MGI findings informed the elaboration of the national plan of action to implement the Global Compact for Migration. The plan outlines concrete actions to tackle gaps identified in the MGI report, such as promoting capacity-building to strengthen data collection on migration, improving access to information, and reviewing the legislation that defines the conditions for foreigners to access essential services to align it with international standards.

- In **Canada**, the MGI findings were used in the Global Compact regional review as a tool to assess the maturity of their national migration system.

- In **Iraq**, the MGI process led to the creation of an interministerial committee on migration which developed a new national migration strategy to implement the Compact. One of the main gaps identified in the assessment was the lack of data collection and use, which became a key pillar of the national migration strategy. A data task force was established to develop a capacity-building action plan, which is currently in its first stage of implementation. Iraq also mentioned the MGI in its Voluntary Global Compact for Migration Review submission under the second section on "Public policy and the favorable environment".

- In **Ireland**, the research done through the MGI COVID-19 module informed the Global Compact national review. The report uses MGI information on topics such as access to public medical testing and treatment irrespective of migration status, and the translation of COVID-19 resources into various languages to ensure that they are accessible to migrants.

- In **Sierra Leone**, the MGI assessment will be used by the country to report on their progress in achieving the Global Compact objectives. Sierra Leone also mentioned the MGI in its Voluntary Global Compact for Migration Review submission under the second section on "Public policy and the favorable environment".

Local level

Along with its potential contribution to the Global Compact for Migration national implementation plans, the MGI can also be used to support the implementation at the local level through local MGI assessments.

In line with the Compact's whole-of-government and whole-of-society guiding principles, horizontal and vertical policy coherence is needed.

As stated in the United Nations Network guidance note on the Global Compact implementation, "Coherence with local authorities is particularly crucial when it comes to migration, as municipalities are often the primary actors in delivering services to migrants, fulfilling their needs and ensuring their human rights."[2]

Not only does the local MGI allow for national and local authorities to collect information on migration governance practices at the local level (e.g. cities, municipalities, subnational states), but also the correspondence between national and local MGI frameworks offers a unique point of view to compare how different levels of government deal with migration governance, enabling multilevel dialogues and enhancing vertical policy coherence.

Providing data to set a baseline, track progress and report achievements

MGI data are collected through a participatory process, in close cooperation with national and local governments. Government buy-in throughout the process, including in the validation of the migration governance profiles,[3] makes it more likely that governments will be inclined to use such data for policy purposes.

According to the Secretary-General's second Report on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration:

> 110. States are encouraged to consider how to develop benchmarks and mechanisms to measure progress on, and monitor the implementation of, the commitments in the Compact, taking account of existing mechanisms, such as the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework, where relevant.

Here are a few examples of how data can be used at the national, regional and global levels.

National level

The data collected through MGI assessments can help governments and United Nations partners to set baselines for policy aspects of the Global Compact for Migration objectives. Where United Nations coordination structures are in place, i.e. in a United Nations Country Team setting, the findings of the MGI can be visibly included and considered in the Common Country Analysis and in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

This baseline can be used as the starting point against which governments can track progress towards their Global Compact commitments over time. This can be done through MGI follow-up assessments. Concretely, an MGI follow-up assessment consists of verifying whether the MGI results published in a given year reflect the current reality of migration governance in the country, by updating the responses to all MGI questions.

If conducted regularly (ideally every three to four years), this exercise will provide governments with important information on the status of implementation of their national Global Compact objectives, which can contribute to their reporting endeavours.[4]

To date, 18 countries have conducted an MGI follow-up assessment.

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2 Ibid.
3 All published migration governance profiles can be found at https://migrationdataportal.org/overviews/mgi#0.
4 For State engagement in the Global Compact reviews, please see A/RES/73/195 on the Global Compact for Migration, paragraphs 48 and 53, available at www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_73_195.pdf; A/RES/73/326 on the modalities of the international migration review forums (IMRFs), paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 13, 20 and 21(c), available at https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/326; and the guidance for country and regional networks on IMRF, available at https://migrationnetwork.un.org/resources/guidance-country-and-regional-networks.
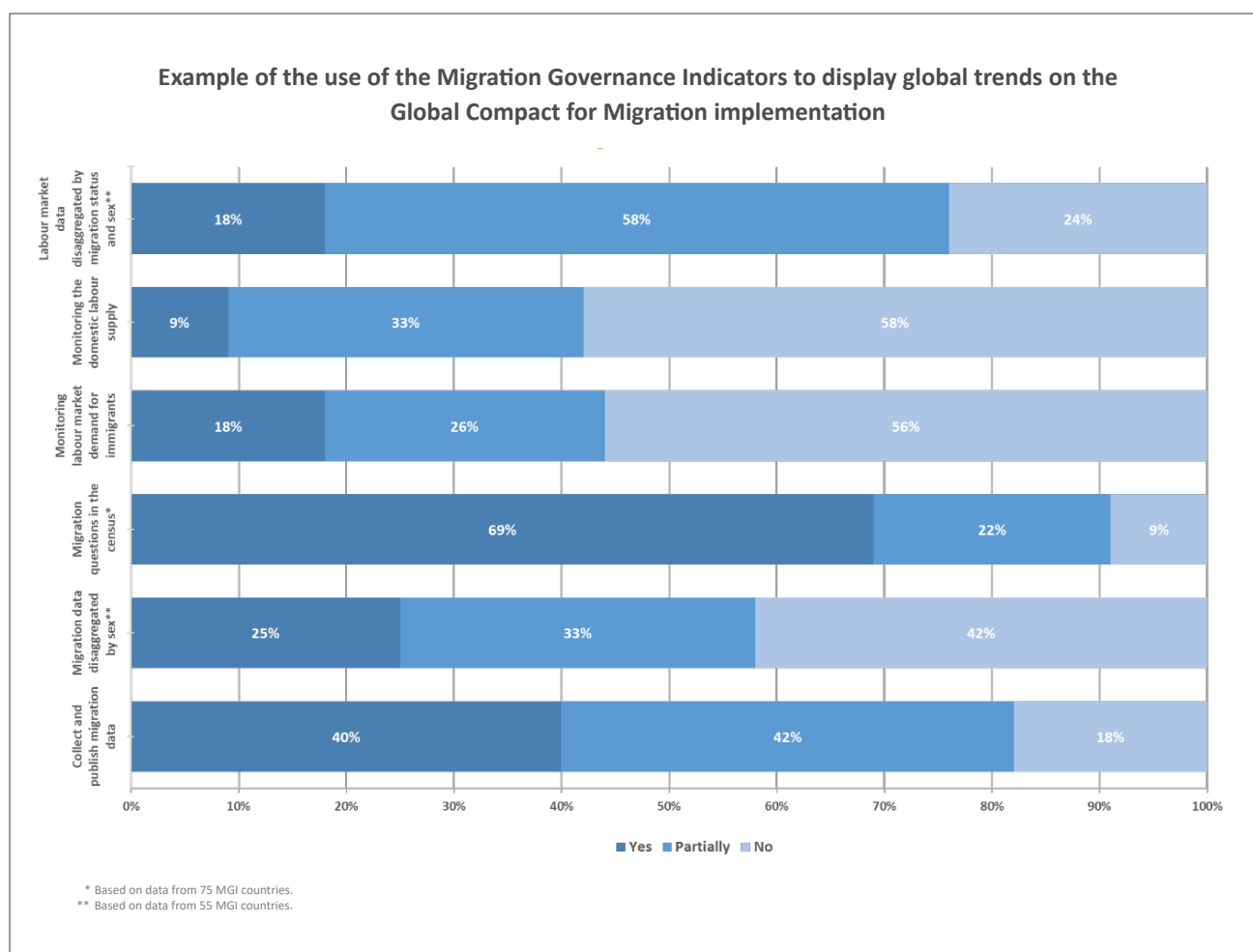
Global and regional levels

The primary intergovernmental global platform to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all aspects of the Global Compact for Migration is the IMRF,[5] which will take place every four years starting in May 2022. In addition, relevant regional platforms are used to review the implementation of the Compact to inform each edition of IMRFs.

In this context, the MGI follow-up assessment can provide useful information for countries wishing to showcase their progress in such forums and, thanks to its broad geographical coverage, offer them a common point of departure for discussion in regional and subregional dialogues.

IOM can offer information on migration governance trends and gaps at the global and regional levels based on the MGI. With a constantly growing database, the MGI provides interesting insights for global reports.

Figure 3. Distribution of answers to Migration Governance Indicators questions related to the Global Compact for Migration Objective 1

Example of the use of the Migration Governance Indicators to display global trends on the Global Compact for Migration implementation

Indicator	Yes	Partially	No
Labour market data disaggregated by migration status and sex**	18%	58%	24%
Monitoring the domestic labour supply	9%	33%	58%
Monitoring labour market demand for immigrants	18%	26%	56%
Migration questions in the census*	69%	22%	9%
Migration data disaggregated by sex**	25%	33%	42%
Collect and publish migration data	40%	42%	18%

■ Yes ■ Partially ■ No

* Based on data from 75 MGI countries.
** Based on data from 55 MGI countries.

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5   More information is available at https://migrationnetwork.un.org/international-migration-review-forum-2022.

Financing for the Global Compact for Migration implementation

The MGI can serve as an instrument for the financing of the Global Compact implementation plans in two main ways: (a) it can be used by donors to better align funding with actual needs, based on an independent evaluation of governance structures in a country; and (b) governments and other relevant stakeholders can use MGI results to develop proposals for funding mechanisms to tackle specific governance gaps.

Using the Migration Governance Indicators for funding needs assessments

A common issue identified by donors is the lack of instruments that allow for the identification of gaps in migration governance, and subsequent monitoring of whether the funds invested have led to the expected outcome. With regular follow-up assessments, the MGI can serve as such instrument. Donors can access the MGI results through the country reports publicly available on the Migration Data Portal, as well as through their participation in the MGI interministerial consultations, in which the findings are discussed to identify concrete actions that can be taken.

Using the Migration Governance Indicators findings to seek funding from relevant mechanisms

As mentioned, the MGI uses a standard methodology to provide insights into areas of a country's migration governance that would benefit from further development. Countries can then use this information to justify a request for funding from the donor community or relevant financing mechanisms, or they can use the MGI as a basis for programmes targeting migration governance. In the context of the Global Compact for Migration, the MGI can specifically feed into project proposals to the UNSDCFs funding mechanism, or into proposals for the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (Migration MPTF),[6] which is the United Nations' pooled fund established to contribute to providing resources for the Global Compact implementation.

CONCLUSION

The inputs collected through the MGI process are comprehensive, covering all the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration; and most importantly, they have been endorsed by participant governments, which makes them an important source of data on migration to build policies, develop action plans, report on achievements or mobilize funds. In the context of the Compact, this tool has been widely recognized as instrumental for its implementation – as illustrated by the country examples – and moreover, it has the potential to set a common ground for discussions.

IOM stands ready to support governments and other relevant stakeholders interested in using the MGI results to inform global, regional, national and United Nations planning processes – in particular, as part of the Common Country Analyses, and activities geared towards the achievement of Global Compact objectives, within or outside the UNSDCFs.[7]

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[6] More information is available at https://migrationnetwork.un.org/projects/migration-multi-partner-trust-fund-migration-mptf.
[7] More information on the MGI can be found on the Migration Data Portal, available at www.migrationdataportal.org/overviews/mgi#0.