City of Freetown | PROFILE 2022

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

LOCAL

IOM UN MIGRATION

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UN MIGRATION

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OBJECTIVES

1 Help local authorities take stock of the migration initiatives they have in place.

2 Foster dialogue on migration between national governments and local authorities.

3 Enable local authorities to learn from one another by sharing common challenges and identifying potential solutions.
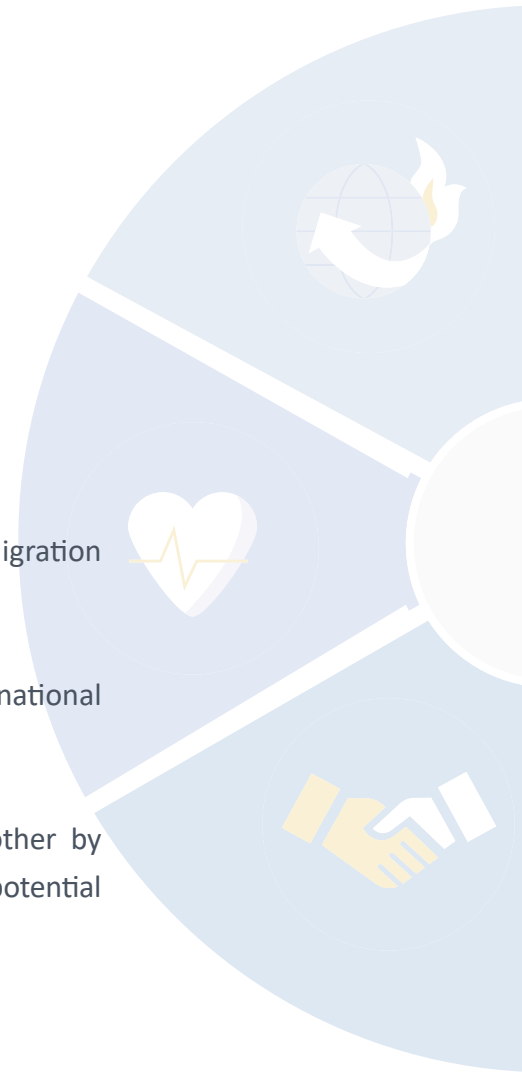
"Rapid urbanization continues to transform the demographic landscape of many countries around the world. Cities are already home to the majority of international migrants, driven by opportunity as well as necessity, and local authorities are becoming leaders in finding creative solutions for rapid social change, supporting communities through innovation."[1]

[1] António Vitorino, IOM Director General, Report to the 109th session of the IOM Council (November 2018). Available at www.iom.int/speeches-and-talks/director-general-report-109th-session-council.

INTRODUCTION

The Migration Governance Indicators

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. That same year, IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact developed the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI), a set of 90 indicators that help States assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures.

The indicators constitute a starting point to engage governments in a consultative process that allows them to identify areas that are well-developed and others that would benefit from further development, and most importantly priorities that are in line with the specific challenges and opportunities a given country is facing.

The MGI is characterized by three main fundamental attributes:

1. The MGI is a **voluntary** exercise: The MGI is conducted in countries that have requested to be part of the process.
2. The MGI is **sensitive to national** specificities: The MGI recognizes the different challenges and opportunities of each context, and therefore, does not propose a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather spark a discussion on what well-governed migration can mean.
3. The MGI is not a static tool, it is a **process**: The MGI is not a static tool to collect data on countries' migration frameworks. It is rather the first step of a dynamic process that can enable governments to identify areas of their migration policy in need of further development, or that could benefit from capacity-building.

Migration Governance Indicators: From national to local

The role of cities and municipalities in migration governance[2] has grown significantly in recent decades, given the rapid pace of urbanization and the importance of cities as destinations for all forms of migration and displacement. Researchers, policymakers and international development agencies have all highlighted the crucial role of cities and municipalities in both accommodating migrants and formulating sustainable responses to migration-related matters.

With this in mind, in 2016, United Nations member States adopted the New Urban Agenda at the Habitat III Conference in Quito (Ecuador). This was the first time that a United Nations framework fully integrated migration into the strategic planning and management of cities and urban systems. Its adoption was a significant recognition of the role of local governments not only in the management of migration at the local level but also in realizing the urban dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This includes, but is not limited to, Sustainable Development Goal 11, which has been designed to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

In an effort to support the discussion between levels of governments on migration governance, IOM has adapted the MGI[3] to the local level. The Local MGI seeks to offer a more comprehensive picture of a country's migration governance landscape by juxtaposing a local dimension to MGI national assessments. Like its national equivalent, the Local MGI[4] is based on a set of approximately 80 indicators helping local authorities take stock of local migration strategies or initiatives in place and identify good practices as well as areas with potential for further development. The aim of the exercise is to foster dialogue

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[2] Migration governance refers to the system of institutions, legal frameworks, mechanisms and practices aimed at regulating migration and protecting migrants. It is used almost synonymously with the term "migration management", although migration management is also sometimes used to refer to the narrow act of regulating cross-border movement at the State level.

[3] The Migration Governance Indicators were developed in 2015 by IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact. More information is available at https://migrationdataportal.org/snapshots/mgi#0.

[4] More information is available at https://migrationdataportal.org/local-mgi.

on migration between national governments and local authorities and enable local authorities to learn from one another by discussing common challenges and identifying potential solutions.

While the Local MGI retains the attributes of the National MGI, it is also anchored in the notion that cities and local authorities have different capacities, competencies and added value when it comes to governing migration. Therefore, the methodology has been adapted to reflect that the degree of fiscal and political autonomy of participating cities influences the kind of migration governance they can practically and legally engage in. Furthermore, new indicators of the level of autonomy and capacities have been added to give some context to the results of the assessment.

Given the differences outlined between the MGI at the national and local levels, the purpose of the Local MGI is not to provide a baseline, but rather to be a tool for government authorities to have an introspective look at the measures they have in place to manage migration, as well as to share their experiences. Furthermore, it recognizes that good practices can take different forms depending on the division of competencies between local and national authorities. Therefore, the Local MGI analysis should not be interpreted as an invitation to change the division of competencies, but rather be understood as a tool to spark a discussion on what cities can do on migration within the scope of their mandate. A comprehensive picture of migration governance can be captured only by looking at different levels of government.

In 2021, four MGI assessments were carried out simultaneously in Sierra Leone at the local level for the cities of Bo, Freetown, Kenema and Makeni.

This report is the result of the implementation of the Local MGI in the city of Freetown (Sierra Leone). This profile summarizes key examples of well-developed areas as well as areas with potential for further development of the local migration governance.

CONTEXT

Migration trends

There is limited data on migration at both the national and local levels in Sierra Leone. According to Statistics Sierra Leone (2017), 1.3 per cent of the population in the Western Area Urban District (Freetown) were migrants at the time of the 2015 Population and Housing Census.

National-level data compiled by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs for Sierra Leone estimate an international migrant stock in midyear 2020 of 53,700, representing 0.7 per cent of the total population. The total number of emigrants was 152,500, and Sierra Leone had a net migration of -21,000 in total in the five years prior to 2019.[5] Sierra Leone's National Migration Policy (2020) estimates the number of Sierra Leoneans in the diaspora to be 336,000.[6] The main destinations for Sierra Leonean emigrants are the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, other European countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, and neighbouring African countries such as Guinea, Liberia, Senegal and Nigeria.

According to the 2017 Migration Profile for Sierra Leone, the main specified reasons for emigration include family reunification (37.5%), education (6.3%) and remunerated activities (2.5%) (European Commission, 2019). It is estimated that at the national level, 8,000–10,000 young people in Sierra Leone embark on irregular migration annually, of which 25 per cent are victims of human trafficking.[7]

According to the *2015 Sierra Leone Census Thematic Report on Migration and Urbanization*, over half of lifetime immigrants in Sierra Leone were Sierra Leoneans born abroad, who at the time of the census had returned home, while over a quarter were born in Guinea.[8] At the time of the 2015 census, 40 per cent of lifetime immigrants in Sierra Leone were residing in Freetown.

Figure 1. Nationalities of lifetime immigrants in Sierra Leone, 2015
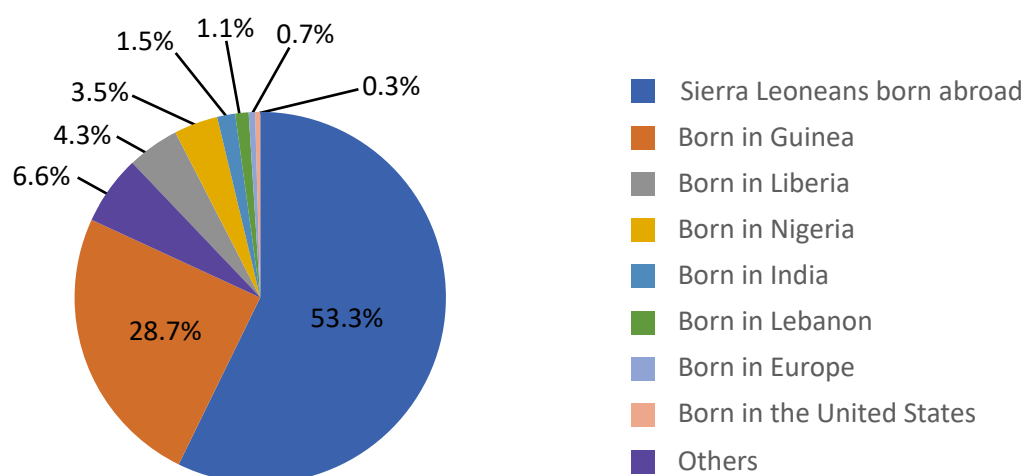
Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2017.

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[5] More information is available at https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=stock_abs_&t=2019&cm49=694.
[6] The National Migration Policy has not been published as of September 2021.
[7] More information is available at https://sierraleone.un.org/en/106033-statement-rcmr-babatunde-ahonsi-review-implementation-global-compact-safe-orderly-and.
[8] A lifetime immigrant is defined as someone who was enumerated in Sierra Leone but was not born in the country.

Sierra Leone's administrative structure

Sierra Leone is a constitutional parliamentary Republic with three levels of government: national government, local councils and chiefdom councils. Decentralization was reintroduced with the Local Government Act (2004)[9] and revised with the National Decentralization Policy (2010). There are no constitutional provisions for local governments; hence, the Constitution (1991) and the Local Government Act provide the main legal framework for local councils.

There are 22 local councils in the country, made up of 7 municipal councils in urban areas and 15 district councils in predominantly rural areas. The city of Freetown is part of the Western Area Urban District, which comprises exclusively the city of Freetown and does not have a district council but is locally governed by the Freetown City Council (FCC). FCC consists of 47 councillors representing 47 wards across 130 zonal areas and is headed by a mayor who is elected every four years.[10]

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[9] Sierra Leone's local government structures were removed in the 1970s and reinstated by the Local Government Act in March 2004.
[10] More information is available at www.clgf.org.uk/regions/clgf-west-africa/sierra-leone/.

Competencies of the city

Level of decentralization of local authorities	The Local Government Act mandated 80 functions to be devolved to local councils. To date, 71 of these have been devolved. Services that are operated locally include primary and secondary health care, primary and junior–secondary education, environmental health, agriculture extension services, rural water supply, waste management and community development. Freetown has a municipal police force; otherwise public security is the responsibility of the Office of National Security under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Local councils develop strategic plans and budgets in accordance with national development plans and sectoral policies. National-level ministries, departments and agencies are responsible for sectoral policy matters. They provide technical guidance and monitor the performance of relevant functions devolved to the local councils. The sectoral ministries (for the devolved services such as health, education, agriculture and social welfare) are decentralized at the district level with a department under the local council headed by a sectoral district officer, and they develop their own sector plans in accordance with national sectoral policies for approval by the local councils.
The competencies of cities in relation to migration	Migration policy is drafted at the national level, and local authorities rely on national agencies for guidance and funding for its implementation. Local authorities do not have dedicated staff for migration issues, and FCC's development plan does not specifically address or target migrants. Migration issues – such as border management; the issuance of visas, passports and work permits; refugee services; and investigative aspects of irregular migration – are handled by the central Government. Local councils do not perform functions directly relating to international migration but are responsible for service delivery affecting and affected by internal migration patterns. For example, local councils provide education, housing and city planning that affect both national and migrant populations.
Local financing mechanisms and the restrictions on their use	Local councils and their operations are financed by their own revenue collections and transfers from both central Government and line ministries. Sierra Leone's Local Government Act allows local councils to raise revenues from local taxes; property rentals; licenses; fees and charges; and mining revenues, interest and dividends. It also provides for three types of transfer from the national Government: administrative grants, grants for decentralized services, and local government development grants. The grants from the national Government that are transferred to local councils for local service delivery are earmarked for delivery of services in all sectors devolved to local councils. The transfer amounts are calculated using a standard formula for service delivery plus an estimate of administrative costs. Local councils prepare their budgets, which must receive approval from Parliament before transfers are made.

	FCC's own revenue is approximately 60 per cent of its total budget. Local revenues are not subject to approval from the central Government, and some programmes are also funded by donors, such as international institutional donors and civil society partners.
Local participation in the formulation of migration policy	The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security led efforts to develop the National Migration Policy and the Sierra Leone National Labour Migration Policy (2018), respectively. The National Migration Policy has been validated by stakeholders and tabled in Cabinet for adoption, and the National Labour Migration Policy is in the process of being implemented as of November 2021. Local councils, including FCC, and district councils were involved in the development of the National Labour Migration Policy through consultations, meetings and workshops, but they were not involved in the formulation of the National Migration Policy. Both policies state that they were produced through extensive consultations with a range of stakeholders but do not mention specifically the involvement of local councils. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development was recently included in the Technical Working Committee of the National Migration Policy, and by extension so too were FCC and other local and district councils.

KEY FINDINGS

The Local MGI is composed of around 80 indicators grouped under the 6 different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:

MIGRANTS' RIGHTS
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Indicators in this category look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. They also examine measures to ensure integration and access to work.

WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH
PAGE 19

Indicators in this category assess the institutional frameworks of cities, municipalities or states for migration. This area also examines the existence of migration strategies consistent with development objectives, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in migration management.

PARTNERSHIPS
PAGE 21

Indicators in this category focus on cities, municipalities or states' efforts to cooperate on migration issues with the national government as well as other cities and relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.

WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS
PAGE 23

Indicators in this category assess cities, municipalities or states' initiatives in terms of international student mobility, access to the labour market and decent working conditions for migrant workers. Aspects related to diaspora engagement and migrant remittances are also included in this domain.

MOBILITY DIMENSION OF CRISES
PAGE 24

Indicators in this category examine the type and level of readiness of cities, municipalities or states to deal with aspects of mobility crises. The questions focus on the processes in place for citizens and non-citizens both during and after disasters, especially if humanitarian assistance is available for migrants and citizens.

SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION
PAGE 26

Indicators in this category look at the cities, municipalities or states' approaches to migrant safety as well as return and reintegration policies and the fight against trafficking in persons.

1 ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFILMENT OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Migrants can access health care under the same terms as nationals regardless of their migratory status, even though the Freetown City Council (FCC) does not have any specialized measures to facilitate migrants' access to Government-funded health services. Primary health care is delivered by local councils under the technical lead of the District Health Management Team, which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of health services in accordance with national sectoral policies.

Migrants can generally access all municipal services – such as waste management, water supply and sanitation services – on the same basis as nationals even though FCC does not have specific mechanisms in place to support migrants' access to these services. FCC coordinates with local non-governmental organizations that provide complementary support services – such as awareness-raising and sensitization campaigns on topics such as education, health, social protection and sanitation – to migrants through monthly meetings. Specific issues relating to services for migrants can be discussed at these meetings if they arise. National-level measures to ensure the protection of migrant children, unaccompanied minors and children left behind are applied at the local level by FCC in cooperation with national-level bodies, even if there are no specific procedures in place at the local level. For example, child victims of trafficking in Freetown receive help that is managed by the Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone Police, with the support of FCC's Gender and Social Services Department. Freetown plans to use funds received through the Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response in 2021 to expand its Waste Management Micro-Enterprise Program to ensure access to improved livelihoods and public health of communities, especially for the youth living in informal settlements, where many migrants live.

1.2. Areas with potential for further development

Migrants, regardless of their migratory status, can enrol in all public education institutions if they pay tuition fees. While FCC grants nationals access to free basic education and does not have specific measures to ensure that migrants can access primary and secondary public education, the only requirement needed is registration with the health authorities. The District Education Office of the Western Area Urban District oversees local school operations, including the development of annual action plans and budgets, under the supervision of FCC.

There is presently no social housing in Freetown. FCC's development plan, Transform Freetown 2019–2022, which was developed by the Office of the Mayor of Freetown, calls for the construction of 5,000 low-cost housing units by 2022, with the objective of moving individuals from slums and informal settlements to formal housing. Migrants would not be barred from accessing this social housing, but there are no criteria in place for accessing it.

There is no mechanism established by FCC to provide migrants with legal advice and services. However, a referral mechanism is in place at the national level to ensure legal advice for survivors of trafficking. Additionally, Sierra Leone's Legal Aid Act (2012) aims to "provide accessible, affordable, credible and sustainable legal aid services to indigent persons", and eligibility is based only on income levels.

FCC does not undertake any measures to combat xenophobia or discriminatory practices directed towards migrants in the provision of social services, though it provides social services to all, irrespective of race or background. However, the National Migration Policy (2020), which was developed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, proposes to "develop an action plan to prevent and detect the exploitation, abuse and discrimination of national and migrant workers".

FCC does not offer specific information or orientation programmes for newly arrived immigrants. Such information is offered through the Immigration Department's offices, which are supervised by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the central Government. While the Immigration Department is decentralized and offices are present in various cities, most service requests are referred to Freetown.

There are no specific measures in Freetown to assist those who wish to emigrate, but there are some guidelines at the national level. For example, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security helps Sierra Leoneans wishing to emigrate for employment abroad, and it is responsible for registering and monitoring international jobseekers.

Migrants are not permitted to vote in elections at any level in Sierra Leone, as stipulated by the Public Elections Act (2012).

2 FORMULATES POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Freetown City Council's (FCC) development plan, Transform Freetown 2019–2022, focuses on providing informal settlements where many migrants live with upgrades to housing and sanitation services and reducing their vulnerability to natural disasters.

The local Government cooperates with other ministries, departments, agencies and task forces on issues related to migrants, particularly in cases of human trafficking. At the national level, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, in cooperation with other ministries and departments,[11] is responsible for services relating to irregular migration, such as the provision of legal services in trafficking cases and social reintegration of returned migrants. FCC has a Gender and Social Services Department, which represents the Ministry at the local level and implements policies related to gender and the protection of vulnerable groups, including migrants.

FCC has taken steps to enhance vertical policy coherence on migration-related issues on an ad hoc basis. For example, FCC extensively engaged with several stakeholders – including ministries, departments, agencies and community members – for the development and validation of the Transform Freetown 2019–2022 development plan.

FCC provides easily accessible general information relating to the public's access to municipal services on various platforms, including its website and a service directory app called Find Me In Freetown. FCC also provides general information about the municipality and its services in English and three local languages[12] on its website, via radio programmes and through the Ward Development Committees of its 47 wards.[13]

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

FCC does not have a specific migration strategy defined in a programmatic document or manifesto, and there is no department responsible for designing or implementing migration policies at the local level. Local councils develop local strategic and development plans, but migration policies are developed at the national level.

FCC does not have a department tasked with engaging with diaspora groups present within its jurisdiction, but some diaspora groups based in Freetown – such as the Indian, Nigerian and Guinean communities – have engaged with FCC on development and emergency response activities through initiatives managed by national authorities. For example, the Indian community donated food items and personal protection equipment to a COVID-19 isolation centre in Freetown.

Even though FCC does not conduct systematic training on cultural sensitivity, gender or human rights for public servants of the municipality, international organizations have provided training to some FCC staff on these topics. For example, IOM conducted trainings on trafficking in persons for ministerial agencies and members of local councils, including FCC. Additionally, Save the Children, a non-governmental organization, provided training on gender and social protection issues to the staff of FCC's Gender and Social Services Department, and FCC's Gender and Social Services Officer replicated these trainings for the Department's local social workers.

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[11] These are the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Office of National Security, specialized branches of the police, the Family Support Unit, and the Transnational Organized Crime Unit.

[12] Namely, Krio, Temne and Mende.

[13] The members of Ward Development Committees are elected from and represent zones within the ward. They are responsible for regularly conducting zonal meetings.

FCC does not collect and publish data related to migration. A civil society partner of FCC – the Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor – collects data on informal settlements that house many migrants, but these data are not disaggregated by migratory status or published. FCC, in line with the recommendations of the National Labour Migration Policy (2018) and the National Migration Policy (2020), aims to improve data collection at the local level, but relevant measures are yet to be implemented as of November 2021.

3 ENGAGES WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Areas with potential for further development

Freetown is part of international networks for exchange of best practices and knowledge on migration-related issues. The Mayor of Freetown is a leading member of the Mayors Migration Council (MMC), an international council of mayors that aims to share knowledge on migration policy and best practices. In October 2020, the Mayor of Freetown co-initiated the Mayors Dialogue on Growth and Solidarity with the Mayor of Milan, which aims to establish solutions for human mobility in African and European cities. Following this, the Freetown City Council (FCC) and Milan started to work together to explore paths for regular migration, with a view to avoiding brain drain. Freetown is also a member of C40 Cities (a network for cities focused on tackling climate change and driving urban action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions) and the GEF-7 Sustainable Cities Impact Programme (which supports cities pursuing integrated urban planning that delivers sustainable development outcomes).

Freetown's participation in international networks for multilateral city cooperation has contributed to learning and exchange on migration issues. For example, as a participant in the MMC, FCC learned good practices relating to the integration of migrant issues into COVID-19 responses and benefited from guidance on migration governance and management. Through its participation in the MMC, Freetown also received a grant from the Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response to expand the city's Waste Management Micro-Enterprise Program to ensure that more youth living in informal settlements, many of whom are rural migrants, have the opportunity to jointly improve their livelihoods and the public health of their communities.

FCC participates in bilateral programmes for city-to-city international cooperation on international migration-related issues. In June 2021, FCC was working on a proposal to the European Union, focusing on an exchange of fashion designers, developing local value chains for fashion design, and linking Sierra Leonean designers with international markets.

FCC conducts regular coordination meetings with its civil society partners. While migration is not a priority topic in these discussions, the issue can be discussed. FCC also consulted the Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor – a civil society organization representing the city's informal settlements that house large populations of migrants – on interventions targeting the informal settlements where many migrants reside, during the development of Transform Freetown 2019–2022, through working groups, meetings and joint field visits.

FCC actively cooperates on migration issues with IOM through a programme which seeks to reduce irregular migration by providing urban youth with local employment opportunities. In 2019, IOM provided 20 youth-owned small- and medium-sized enterprises in Freetown with tricycles for waste collection and delivered training for 200 people on business skills and sustainable waste management.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

FCC does not formally or regularly engage with the private sector on migration-related issues. At the national level, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security liaises with the private sector on issues relating to work permits for migrants and international recruitment agencies, but FCC does not play a role in this regard.

FCC did not engage with diaspora and expatriate communities residing in Freetown during the development of the Transform Freetown 2019–2022 plan.

FCC has engaged with academia on issues such as city planning and informal settlements, although not specifically on migration. For example, FCC collaborated with the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), a research partnership between Njala University and University College London, to inform its urban policy, planning and development programme, and environmental management initiatives. SLURC participated in FCC's working group for urban planning and housing during the development of the Transform Freetown 2019–2022 plan, and it contributed to the setting of objectives related to urban planning and housing under the plan's Resilience cluster.

4 ADVANCES THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

There are measures in place in Freetown to promote gender equality, which are also applicable to migrants. For example, the Freetown City Council's (FCC) development plan, Transform Freetown 2019–2022, sets a target of providing 15,000 adults – with a focus on women – with literacy skills by 2022, as well as an aim to reduce maternal mortality by 40 per cent. Further, FCC is working towards the goal of 50 per cent of councillors being women, and it offers free childcare to women employed in the informal sector.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

FCC does not monitor the local labour market demand for immigrants nor the local labour supply and the effects of emigration.

FCC does not implement programmes to promote and facilitate the inclusion of migrant workers in the workforce or to help employers hire migrants. At the national level, migrants are granted work permits only when no Sierra Leoneans are available for recruitment. The Sierra Leone Local Content Policy (2012) stipulates that at least 20 per cent of an organization's managerial positions and 50 per cent of its intermediate positions must be held by Sierra Leonean citizens.

There is no systematic programme for the employment of foreign residents in the public sector at the local level in Freetown. At the national level, neither the National Labour Migration Policy (2018) nor the National Migration Policy (2020) addresses the employment of migrants in the public sector.

There are no programmes at the local level to support foreign residents in entrepreneurship. The National Migration Policy includes a policy objective to "create a smooth and seamless process to register businesses and start-ups in order to attract foreign investors and highly skilled workers to the country", but it does not define a role for local councils in this regard.

There are no specific measures in place to encourage international students to work in Freetown after graduation. International students wishing to stay in Sierra Leone to work must follow the general procedures for applying for a work permit and meet the criteria set out by the General Law (Business Start-up) (Amendment) Act (2007).

There are no programmes put in place by FCC to reduce or monitor the costs of sending and receiving remittances. At the national level, the Ministry of Finance oversees remittance-related issues, and the Office of Diaspora Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for promoting the formal banking system with respect to remittances. One of the objectives of the National Migration Policy is the removal of barriers to sending remittances, such as the high fees associated with transmitting them; however, action plans for the implementation of the Policy are yet to be developed as of November 2021.

5 EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSES THE MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Structures are in place at the local level to communicate with the public during emergencies. In Sierra Leone, emergency response is categorized into various pillars, and the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) leads the pillar for communication and social mobilization. MIC works with stakeholders at both national and local levels of Government, including local councils, to communicate with the public during emergencies. In Freetown, councillors are responsible for raising public awareness in their wards during crises. The Freetown City Council's (FCC) outreach teams include line ministries' officers, ward committees and other community leaders. Communication efforts involve community meetings, megaphones, and communication via the Internet, television and radio. Freetown's communication and outreach efforts feature door-to-door communication by specialized teams to access population groups – which also include migrants – who may not have regular access to television, the Internet or print media.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no strategy currently in place at the local level for emergency management that accounts for human mobility and the specific needs of migrants and displaced persons.[14] Nonetheless, FCC's draft Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (2020) considers the needs of displaced individuals and proposes emergency actions for the provision of shelter, health care, food security, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, and protection to support displaced individuals. The Plan does not specifically address the needs of migrants, but its provisions apply equally to migrants and citizens.

FCC does not have coordination agreements, partnerships or referral systems in place with key actors to assist migrants during local emergencies; nor does it have a contingency plan in place to manage large-scale population movements in times of crisis. Large-scale emergencies are managed at the national level by the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) under the Office of National Security.

FCC does not have a disaster risk reduction strategy with specific provisions for preventing and addressing the displacement impacts of disasters. However, FCC's draft Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan considers the displacement effects of natural disasters, such as floods and storms, and sets out emergency response actions to support displaced individuals. FCC's development plan, Transform Freetown 2019–2022, addresses displacement only indirectly. It includes an objective to "increase the capacity of Freetown's 47 wards to recognize risk and identify resilient solutions to prevent and recover from disasters [such as flooding and landslides]", both of which have led to displacement in the past.

FCC's draft Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan[15] designates the setting up of an Information and Communication Team in the event of a disaster, consisting of the Deputy Mayor, the Deputy Director of the Meteorological Agency, the Director of the Environment Protection Agency, and the Assistant Director of the Office of National Security, as well as the United Nations Country Team and civil society partners. The team is to be responsible for providing information to the population – regardless of migratory status – regarding the disaster as well as the response actions taken by the Government.

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[14] However, the Mayor of Freetown, Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, notes the importance of urban planning and development control to reduce the risks for people migrating in the context of disasters and climate change, and she acknowledged in May 2021 that informal settlements are often in areas that suffer from deforestation, water shortages and landslides – "creating a toxic environment" and that "those who are fleeing, the migrants, find themselves at greater risk than ever before".

[15] The Plan is yet to be adopted as of June 2021.

FCC's draft Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan recognizes the potential of natural disasters to have disproportionate effects on women and includes measures for their protection, such as the provision of psychosocial support and the creation of safe spaces; however, it makes no specific mention of migrant women. Nonetheless, FCC is working to engage more women in emergency response planning – FCC's Plan lists "women's representatives" as fixed members of the Western Area Urban District Disaster Management Committee and proposes women's groups as key local partners for the emergency response team. Gender is also a fixed module in FCC and Office of National Security disaster training for community volunteers.

There are no mechanisms in place at the local level for the protection of migrant children or unaccompanied minors during times of crisis. FCC's draft Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan includes a response action, "Children protection", with measures such as the provision of psychosocial support for children and ensuring child-friendly spaces. No specific reference to migrant children is made however. At both the local and national levels, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs is responsible for social protection issues during crises for all persons, irrespective of nationality, as well as for the reunification of children and their families or caregivers.

Transform Freetown 2019–2022 does not contain specific measures regarding displacement, such as provisions for refugees and internally displaced persons, nor does it address post-crisis recovery. In cases of disaster, the NDMA is responsible for bringing together partners and donors to plan and solicit funding for recovery activities, which are then implemented by FCC.

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

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

There are no programmes at the local level to train public servants in Freetown on migration rules, but labour officers and social workers employed by the central Government to work at the local level receive ad hoc training on labour migration and trafficking through the national ministries. For example, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs collaborated with World Hope International to provide training for Western Area social workers, one of whom was affiliated with the Freetown City Council (FCC), on the provision of care for trafficking survivors. Moreover, all national police personnel, including those joining Freetown's Metropolitan Police, receive training on human trafficking at the National Police Training School, which is under the command of the Sierra Leone Police.

There are some measures in place at the local level to facilitate migrant reintegration. Cases of trafficking are handled mostly by national bodies, but FCC's Gender and Social Services Department cooperates with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, the Transnational Organized Crime Unit, and the Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone Police to facilitate family reunification and the reintegration of trafficked persons. At the national level, the National Migration Policy (2020) includes a chapter on the "Return and reintegration of Sierra Leonean emigrants", which includes objectives to improve the national infrastructure for attracting skilled emigrants and promoting reintegration.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

There are no specific mechanisms in place at the local or national level to ensure that migrants have access to justice and public safety. However, Sierra Leone's Legal Aid Act (2012) does not distinguish between citizens and migrants in its criteria and procedures for determining eligibility for legal aid. FCC does not have a local strategy to combat human trafficking, but it is guided by the policies and legislation in place at the national level. Sierra Leone's Anti-Human Trafficking Act (2005) set up the National Task Force on Human Trafficking, which is co-chaired by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and brings together relevant ministries, departments and agencies. FCC occasionally participates in the Task Force, but it does not play a strong role in it. There is also no decentralized task force at the municipality level in Freetown. Additionally, both the National Migration Policy and the National Labour Migration Policy (2018) contain sections with aims to improve the Government's response to migrants' vulnerability to trafficking.

FCC has not taken steps to facilitate the arrival of refugee populations under its jurisdiction. Local councils in Sierra Leone do not have any formally delegated authority regarding refugee matters. Sierra Leone's Refugees Protection Act (2007) does not specify the role of local councils in the provision of services for refugees arriving in their locality. The national revised Contingency Plan for Possible Population Movement (2020) notes that refugees arriving in Freetown, or elsewhere, are to be referred to the National Commission for Social Action.

Responsibility for refugee resettlement and repatriation falls under the remit of the central Government. FCC has not participated in any relevant resettlement or repatriation planning as of November 2021.

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PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS ON THE RISKS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

This annex summarizes key local COVID-19 policy responses in the city of Freetown from a migration governance perspective. It is based on 11 questions that were added to the standard Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) assessment in Freetown in order to effectively assess local migration governance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Freetown, COVID-19-related health services, such as contact tracing, testing and treatment, are freely accessible to everyone regardless of their nationality or migratory status. Sierra Leone's COVID-19 response is directed by the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre, located in Freetown, but this has been devolved to the districts – including the Western Area Urban District (Freetown) – where District COVID-19 Emergency Response Centres have been established. Freetown has two Community Treatment Centres for serious cases, and several Community Care Centres (CCC) for mild and asymptomatic cases, including a CCC that caters specifically to residents of informal settlements, many of whom are migrants.
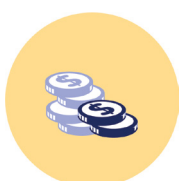
Some fiscal and social security measures offered by the Freetown City Council (FCC) in the context of COVID-19 are available to migrants who reside in Freetown, under the same conditions as nationals. For example, Freetown's COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (2020) makes provisions for food deliveries during lockdowns, targeting the most vulnerable in informal settlements.[1] However, other fiscal and social security measures offered by FCC in the context of COVID-19 are available only to citizens. For example, in April 2020, FCC was working with the National Commission for Social Action to implement direct cash transfers to 19,000 citizens.

Migratory status is not captured as a separate variable in data collection and dissemination related to key COVID-19 health statistics. In general, data collection on migrants is scarce and hard to access in Sierra Leone. FCC's website has a tab dedicated to updates and information about COVID-19, which contains advice on preventive measures, guidelines for home quarantines, and its COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan, but it does not publish COVID-19 statistics.[2]

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[1] Freetown City Council, COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan. 27 March 2020. Available at https://fcc.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/FCC_COVID-19-Preparedness-and-Response-Plan-FINAL.pdf.

[2] Freetown City Council, Freetown COVID-19 update. 9 August 2021. Available at https://fcc.gov.sl/covid-19-2/.

There are some measures in place at the local level to promote diaspora contributions to the COVID-19 response from both diaspora groups residing in the country and Sierra Leoneans abroad. FCC has engaged with the diaspora to encourage them to make financial contributions for supplementary food packages for individuals who are quarantined in informal settlements through a crowdfunding campaign – Here2Help Freetown – which was set up by a group of Sierra Leoneans in cooperation with FCC and GOAL, an Irish non-governmental organization.

There are no measures in place at the local level to support or facilitate the reintegration of nationals and residents returning to Freetown in the context of COVID-19. However, IOM assists in the repatriation of irregular migrants who have been victims of smuggling or trafficking, and those who have been stranded abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic, from multiple countries (including Senegal, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and the Niger) – with support from the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.[3,4] IOM also provides these migrants with a reintegration package consisting of food, psychosocial counselling and livelihood assistance.

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ANNEXES

MiGOF: Migration Governance Framework[16]

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.[17] 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.

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The MGI process

1

**Launch of
the Local MGI
process**

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

2

**Data
collection**

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data based on adapted indicators from the MGI. A draft local migration governance profile based on analysis of the findings is then shared with the government counterparts.

3

**Multi-stakeholder
discussions
on the results
of the MGI**

The third step of the process is to convene a consultation where local and national government officials and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main gaps identified in the draft local migration governance profile. It is also an opportunity for them to comment on and provide suggestions to the draft profile.

4

**Final
report**

The last step is to finalize the local migration governance profile, obtain final validation from the local authorities, and publish a printed version of the report as well as an online version on the Global Migration Data Portal[18] and upload it on the IOM Publications Platform.[19]

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[18] You can find the profiles at www.migrationdataportal.org/overviews.
[19] Please see https://publications.iom.int/.

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