



Credit: Benjamin Suomela

The Regional Migration Programs' Knowledge Uptakes provide lessons learned and promising practice-oriented solutions to feed into the consultations for the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and serve as a global knowledge product for policymakers and practitioners. The Knowledge Uptakes draw upon the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration (PRM)-funded Regional Migration Programs' years of experience in supporting migration policy and implementing operational programs and services.

WHY IT'S RELEVANT

Many migrants face significant risks during the migration process. Avenues for safe and regular migration are not sufficient to meet the demand brought about by the desire or pressure to migrate for a variety of social, economic, political, and environmental reasons, which leads many individuals to travel irregularly and often along dangerous routes. On irregular migration routes, migrants, including many children, have been subjected to kidnapping and ransom demands, extortion, physical violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking. Some who start their journeys by willingly placing themselves in the hands of smugglers can become trafficked victims along the way.

Once they reach their destination, migrants who traveled through regular and irregular channels can remain vulnerable to trafficking in persons and other forms of exploitation due to language barriers, challenges of social integration, and unscrupulous employers, landlords, and service providers who take advantage of their limited knowledge of local conditions and reduced bargaining power. Many migrants are unable or unwilling to access social services and the justice system even if they are entitled to do so. In addition, migrants may face xenophobia or harsh host communities, particularly when host communities are also struggling with a lack of resources, employment, access to services, and safety.

In spite of the risks and challenges, migrants can and do positively contribute to their host communities as well as their origin communities. According to McKinsey and Company, in 2015, migrants contributed to 9.4% of the global GDP, around 6.7 trillion USD, which is 3 trillion USD more than had migrants remained in their origin countries.¹ Migrants are estimated to contribute 465 billion USD in remittances into developing countries in 2017 alone. Remittances are an important contributing factor to poverty reduction. Not only do migrants remit substantial amounts to developing countries, they promote trade and investment, and bring innovation, skills, and knowledge to their countries of origin and

¹ Woetzel, J., Madgavkar, A., Rifai, K., Mattern, F., Bughin, J., Manyika, J., Elmasry, T., Di Lodovico, A. and Hasyagar, A. (2016). People on the Move: Global Migration's Impact and Opportunity. McKinsey and Company.

destination. Migrant workers across all skill ranges fill labour market gaps, stimulating the economies of the countries they live in, which in turn creates more jobs and generates more tax revenue. Migrants and diaspora communities bring greater cultural diversity to the societies they live in and take back social remittances in the form of skills and new ideas.

To enhance the positive contributions of migration and decrease the risks associated with unsafe migration, global discussions and frameworks promote safe, orderly, regular, and responsible migration. In the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set **Target 10.7 on “facilitating orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.”** The SDGs also recognize the vulnerability of migrants to abuse, exploitation, human trafficking, and forced labour, and the need to take immediate and effective measures to address and eradicate these issues.

Similarly, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which was adopted unanimously at the United Nations General Assembly in 2016, echoes this effort and aims to develop the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) to achieve this. As conveyed in the New York Declaration’s Annex II, the GCM will address, amongst other issues, the **“effective protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants, including women and children, regardless of their migratory status, and the specific needs of migrants in vulnerable situations;” “combating trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and contemporary forms of slavery;” “reduction of the incidence and impact of irregular migration;” “contribution made by migrants to sustainable development and the complex interrelationship between migrant and development;” and “combating racism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance towards all migrants.”** States and other stakeholders are working towards the implementation and achievement of these goals, though grappling with the challenge of tackling such wide-ranging, complex, and multi-faceted aspects of migration. While there are many policies, programs, and approaches to address the goals of the 2030 Agenda, the New York Declaration, and the GCM, appropriate information is at the base of understanding migration challenges and risks, understanding the contributions and benefits, and addressing gaps in knowledge on the realities of migration, whether in regards to the risks or the benefits.

WHAT WE’VE LEARNED

Based on IOM’s expertise, as well as IOM’s experience with the Regional Migration Programs, information campaigns have been instrumental in raising awareness and addressing knowledge gaps on migration, whether in origin, transit, or destination countries. Information campaigns are a promising practice that can be of use in addressing a wide range of areas. The Regional Migration Programs, and IOM generally, have effectively utilized information campaigns to:

- 1. Develop and share information on safe and regular migration channels**, as well as the risks associated with unsafe migration, in line with the SDGs and GCM;
- 2. Deliver civic education and key messages to migrants communities** on topics related to health, shelter, protection, etc.
- 3. Provide outreach to migrants on services and resources;** and
- 4. Improve perceptions of migrants and mitigate host country and community tensions.**

Information campaigns are critical for an improved understanding of migration for a variety of stakeholders, whether civil society, service providers, international agencies, or local, national, regional or international policymakers. This is of particular importance as stakeholders work together to address migration in the SDGs and the GCM.

Outreach is also imperative for migrants. While migrants may still move through irregular pathways, awareness raising allows migrants to make informed decisions, understand the risks and what regular pathways may exist, and know their rights in the migratory process. In addition, information campaigns serve as outreach on services and resources available for migrants. In the messaging, it is helpful to convey a balanced message. For instance, in raising awareness on the risks of irregular migration, scare tactics alone may be less helpful, compared to campaigns that also provide positive options or channels for migrants.

In destination countries, information campaigns can promote a better understanding of migration and the positive contributions of migrants. Enhanced understanding, sensitization, and tolerance can reduce xenophobia and violence towards migrants. Information campaigns humanize migrants by depicting their lives and experiences, and deepen the public’s understanding of the drivers of migration, the difficulties faced by migrants, and the positive contributions of

migrants to host societies.

Nevertheless, there are many challenges with information campaigns and doubts as to whether campaigns can truly change behavior, as noted in various publications and evaluations. Generally, the intention is not only to raise awareness but to have the target audience act upon the information, which is difficult to measure. Furthermore, there is limited evidence on the impact of information campaigns, particularly in relation to counter-trafficking efforts. It is therefore of significant importance that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a part of the development of an information campaign, and takes place throughout the campaign, as well as in post-campaign assessments.

Keeping these assumptions and challenges in mind, over time the Regional Migration Programs developed the following takeaways. These good practices are useful in developing, implementing, and evaluating information campaigns to improve effectiveness, and are in line with existing literature.

Good practices for information campaigns:

- Design campaigns that are focused on specific objectives and the target audience(s)
- Monitor and evaluate impact throughout the campaign
- Raise awareness through innovative and creative methods
- Engage and build capacity of government, media, and local community
- Establish and ensure trust with the target community

GOOD PRACTICE: DESIGN CAMPAIGNS THAT ARE FOCUSED ON SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND THE TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The careful research, design, and planning of an information campaign determines the effectiveness of the approach. There are many guidelines and toolkits which can facilitate the design of an information campaign.

[ICAT Toolkit for Guidance in Designing and Evaluating Counter-Trafficking Programs](#)

IOM is a member of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), and contributed to the development of "[A Toolkit for guidance in designing and evaluating counter-trafficking programmes: Harnessing accumulated knowledge to respond to trafficking in persons.](#)" This toolkit recommends consideration of the following questions when developing awareness-raising initiatives:

1. Who is the specific target group for the intervention?
2. What behavior is the intervention trying to change or reinforce among the target group? What action do you want them to take?
3. How will these changed behaviors or actions contribute to reducing trafficking in persons (TIP) (e.g. through reducing the number of new victims, identifying existing victims, increasing reporting on TIP cases)?
4. What evidence is available to suggest these actions will contribute to the desired outcomes?
5. What is the existing level of awareness among the target group(s)?
6. What barriers exist to the target group(s) adopting the desired behaviors or outcomes? For example:
 - Are there cultural or social norms discouraging the desired behavior?
 - If, for example, the program wishes to encourage consumers to buy products that are ethically produced, is sufficient reliable information on ethical production available?
 - If a campaign aims to discourage risky migration, do community members perceive realistic alternatives?
7. How will the planned intervention or program address these barriers?
8. What are the most trusted information sources for the target group? Is it, for example, particular members of the community, certain social media sites or a particular NGO/INGO?
9. Should the target group be segmented and, if so, how? For example, are separate messages or information sources needed for children and youth, men and women, ethnic minorities, different language groups, those with different education or literacy levels?

GOOD PRACTICE: MONITOR AND EVALUATE IMPACT THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN

The design of the M&E methodology should take place while designing the information campaign. Though evaluations are traditionally thought to take place post-intervention, a good practice is to include M&E throughout the information campaign, creating as many opportunities as possible to assess the effectiveness and adapt the campaign strategy as needed.

IOM X C4D Toolkit

IOM X is IOM's innovative campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop exploitation and human trafficking. IOM X, in coordination with the Greater Mekong Sub-region & Malaysia region, developed the "[IOM X C4D Toolkit: A step-by-step guide to applying Communication for Development \(C4D\) to counter-trafficking activities.](#)" The purpose of the toolkit is to provide practical guidance for strengthening ongoing awareness-raising information campaigns, specifically in relation to the prevention of human trafficking and exploitation.

IOM X uses a framework with five inter-dependent stages to develop its evidence-based communication activities. The stages are: 1) Analysis; 2) Strategic Design; 3) Development and Testing; 4) Implementation; and 5) Monitoring and Evaluation. Each of these stages lends itself to the M&E of the information campaign, so as to measure the results intended. As explained in the IOM X toolkit, "monitoring" tracks outputs and outcomes so that adjustments can be made to the activity during implementation, and "evaluation" measures how well a program achieves its outcomes.

Monitoring purpose:

- To correct, reorient or redesign
- To readjust communication activities and messages

Monitoring answers these questions:

- What is happening to the target audience?
- Why is it happening?
- What early signs of progress can we detect?
- What are the short-term effects? (In the target audience group, in the Migrant Resource Centers, etc.)
- To what extent are planned activities actually being realized?

Evaluation purpose:

- To demonstrate the impact of the communication activities
- To determine the level of behavior change, adoption or discontinuation

Evaluation answers these questions:

- What happened as a result of the communication activities?
- What behavior change(s) have taken place?
- What portion of the target audience adopted the new behavior or continued and/or expanded a currently practiced one?
- Why did they adopt it or continue/expand it; and did they influence others to practice it?
- What was the impact on the target audience?

Implementing the Community Response Map in Mesoamerica

IOM created a feedback platform to support aid and development projects known as the Community Response Map (CRM). CRM facilitates online tracking, compilation, and visual mapping of communications received by target communities, and was developed to enhance community engagement and two-way communications. CRM allows project managers to easily customize, pilot, and scale feedback solutions that connect directly with target populations. Outreach activities, such as radio spots, community mobilization, public events, and social media, stimulate calls to a hotline or SMS inquiries. This feedback can be used to gauge comprehension of key messages. It is also helpful for conducting follow-up surveys to assess effectiveness of campaign outreach. This is particularly

useful for measuring various metrics including geographic distribution, gender balance, or discrimination, whether the message was well understood, and whether it contributed to behavior change over time. This could be important in many contexts but especially among vulnerable populations or where lives are being endangered by risky behavior.

Two-way communications are a key aspect of community engagement, facilitating access to services and more information decision-making for the people IOM assists. Feedback is also an essential element in ensuring accountability and transparency in IOM projects.

- Accountability – CRM offers constant and direct two-way communications between IOM and beneficiaries, increasing IOM’s accountability to the population it serves.
- Efficiency – The use of communication tools (SMS, phone) to monitor progress, highlight gaps, and deepen understanding of challenges that can greatly enhance IOM’s operational efficiency in the field.
- Internal controls – Systematic contact with beneficiaries provides a valuable tool by which to eliminate fraud and waste, especially in high risk situations where IOM works through implementing partners.
- Behavior change – CRM provides individuals an opportunity to communicate directly about their situation and identify emerging concerns, and empowers local communities. It can serve as an important driver of desired behavior change.

Using CRM, the Regional Migration Program in Mesoamerica engaged communities across Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico through virtual and social networks to facilitate two-way communications about migrants’ rights and reducing the risks of irregular migration. CRM tracked the feedback received by targeted communities to better respond to their needs and questions.

GOOD PRACTICE: RAISE AWARENESS THROUGH INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE METHODS

Information campaigns can take many forms, for instance through pamphlets, posters, newspapers, billboards, radio, and media. Given the rise in use of social media and technology, information campaigns are adapting and utilizing social media as an innovative means to reach wider audiences. Innovative and creative approaches to raising awareness have shown success, particularly when keeping in mind specific target populations.

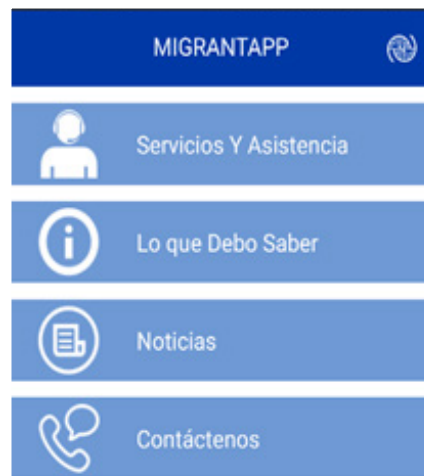
Raising Awareness of Migrants’ Positive Contributions in Central Asia

The Regional Migration Program is partnering with civil society, students, and artists to raise awareness on the positive contributions of migrants in Central Asia through the photo story project “[Migrants: An Invisible Force in Central Asia](#).” The project includes photography and story writing and aims to engage communities, promote dialogue, and emphasize the power of narrative as a way to increase awareness of: migrants’ rights; how migration affects societies; how migrants are integrated into societies; and why communities must fight against racism, intolerance, and xenophobia. The photo story project intends to travel as a moving “caravan” exhibition, referencing nomadic movement. The writers and photographers will join the exhibitions and dialogues, along with migrants, civil society, IOM, and governments.

Using Social Media Information Campaigns in North Africa

In North Africa, the Regional Migration Program collaborated with local partners to raise awareness via social and mass media to migrant and host communities on safe migration options, the dangers of human trafficking, and the positive contributions of migrants through a series of campaigns. In Egypt, the Regional Migration Program developed a national awareness raising campaign with the government using social media and mass media products. In Sudan, short films produced by the Sudan Film Factory promoted the inclusion of migrants, trafficking, and other topics on International Migrants Day. In Libya, short videos, social media posts, and billboards were utilized to distribute content, along with targeted efforts during two International Migrants Day events. In total, the Regional Migration Program informed over 40,000 persons through awareness raising activities in the region from October 2015-2016.

Developing Smart Technology: The Migrant App in Mesoamerica



Piloted in Costa Rica, the Migrant App aims to provide reliable information for migrants and for stakeholders planning assistance. The App gives migrants clear, reliable information on specialized services, protection mechanisms, regular migration and residence options, and alerts, for example on disasters and epidemics. The App also forms migrant profiles based on movement patterns and motivations, vulnerabilities, risks, and protection requirements, which can then inform needs-based assistance and policies. The Migrant App provides migration tips by category and regular information updates are provided. The App also provides an IOM contact page, amongst other resources.

Migrants in vulnerable situations need reliable information the most. The most vulnerable are also most at risk of false and confusing information. Central American migrants may include highly vulnerable migrants, like unaccompanied migrant children, victims of trafficking, returnees, migrants eligible for refugee status and resettlement, irregular migrants from outside of the region that transit through Central America, intra-regional irregular Central Americans, and labor migrants. The Migrant App helps better identify these populations that have traditionally been extremely difficult to identify and reach.

The application's structure is clear, easy to use, and interactive. Each migrant user may choose whether to activate the GPS, and individual migrant data is not used or shared. Mini surveys are sent to migrants and avoid survey fatigue as subsequent questions are based on the previous responses the migrant provided.

Incorporating Theater in Raising Awareness in the Horn of Africa and Yemen

The Regional Migration Program produced a live performance theater show entitled the "Anti-Tahrib Drama Show" by the Horn Starts Traditional Dance Group. The performance presented a thought-provoking role-play episode with messages on the risks of irregular migration and respecting migrants and their rights. The actors ended the performance with a song that captured the risks that migrants encounter en route and the need to protect migrants' rights. Over 500 university students attended the performance, as well as government officials, UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations, and the host community. The show was also aired on television and was viewed by thousands in Somalia. To supplement the theater-based information campaign, t-shirts, bags, and cups carrying awareness messages were also distributed. In addition, 400,000 community members, including government officials, received a SMS text message about the risks of irregular migration.

Promoting Dialogue and Coordination through Communication Tools in Central Asia

The Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative aims to improve the protection of migrants in countries experiencing a conflict or natural disaster. MICIC supports governments to address the vulnerability of migrants in emergencies by identifying the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders and providing concrete guidance on how to prepare for and respond to crises in ways that protect and empower migrants. In Central Asia, the Regional Migration Program brought together practitioners and policymakers to increase knowledge of MICIC and to promote dialogue amongst governments as well as coordination during emergencies. Countries, including Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, contributed different examples of national-level communication tools, such as mobile applications and WhatsApp groups, to the MICIC repository of promising practices, which supplements the MICIC "Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster."

GOOD PRACTICE: ENGAGE AND BUILD CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT, MEDIA, AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

How migrants are portrayed has a significant impact on how migrants are treated. In countries where xenophobia, racism, and discrimination are rampant, information campaigns can raise awareness of the positive contributions of migrants, as well as humanize the image of migrants and mitigate tensions between the host and migrant communities. Key stakeholders, such as media and governments, play an important role in how migrants are portrayed, and should be engaged as partners and trained to better understand and disseminate migration-related information.

Building Capacity and Raising Awareness on Migrant Rights and Xenophobia in South Africa

After an increase in xenophobic attacks in South Africa, IOM was asked to increase awareness raising and develop a curriculum on social cohesion for the South Africa Qualification Authority (SAQA) to mediate tensions between migrant and host communities. The curriculum developed by the Regional Migration Program is entitled “Capacity Building of Government and Non-Government Service Providers towards the Rights of Migrants in South Africa.” Since June 2010, the Regional Migration Program, with the cooperation of various experts, presented training workshops to officials and civil society on different aspects of migrants’ rights with the purpose of building the capacity of participants to actively contribute towards the prevention of migrants’ rights violations.

The Regional Migration Program partnered with local NGOs in four provinces to conduct awareness raising activities to bridge the gap between the local community and migrants in a project entitled “Building and Strengthening Communities of Diversity and Peace.” The project included the following objectives: identify areas of high xenophobia risk; create communities that are conscious of cultural diversity through programs that promote the spirit of Ubuntu (humanity) and social and cultural cohesion; build capacity of members within communities on conflict transformation, which include mediation, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills.

The NGOs addressed social cohesion and cultural diversity through the provision of an information campaign, which also included educational workshops, sports, and cultural events. Over time, a network was created amongst individuals within the local population, civil society, faith-based organizations, and the migrant community to provide a permanent monitoring and a support network to educate members on migration issues, implement preventative methods, share information, and monitor communities for any signs of xenophobic attitude or outbreaks.

A network of Peace Monitors was also created. Individuals with standing in their communities were identified, empowered, and trained with skills on analyzing conflict, mediation, and negotiation to curb issues before they reach threatening levels.

The activities of the project included:

- Cultural Awareness Campaigns – On a designated day, children wore their traditional outfits, cooked their traditional foods, and exchanged information about their cultures in their schools.
- Cultural Festival – Similar to the school-based campaign, the Festival took place in community halls with adults and families.
- Cultural Diversity Workshops – Provided a safe platform for individuals to express the challenges faced in South African communities.
- Awareness raising via local media and radio stations.
- Soccer matches with local and migrant players together in a team.

Media and Journalist Training on Human Rights-Based Portrayal of Migration in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and West and Central Africa

In Haiti and the Dominican Republic, the Regional Migration Program trained media and journalists on how to cover migration and conflict. A workshop was conducted and a handbook written. Similarly, in West and Central Africa the Regional Migration Program is also developing the capacity for press through workshops on how to cover migration, using a human rights-based approach and terminology that is sensitive, objective, and neutral, as well as workshops on how to combat biases, stigma, and stereotypes through media reporting.

GOOD PRACTICE: ESTABLISH AND ENSURE TRUST WITH THE TARGET COMMUNITY

Establishing trust in the target community will enable the messages of an information campaign to be received. It is especially important for any intended change in behavior to occur. Building trust complements building the capacity of the local community, civil society, and the government, as often the community’s leaders hold local trust and thus are key partners for information campaigns.

Establishing Trust and Sharing Information on the Risks of Irregular Migration in Myanmar

In the Rakhine state in Myanmar, the Regional Migration Program works closely with NGOs, civil society youth groups, and religious leaders and conducts Trainings of Trainers to build the capacity of local representatives to raise community awareness. There is a general distrust of international organizations and their agendas so working with youth groups and religious leaders provides easier access to instill trust, gain credibility, share important information, and raise awareness on the dangers of irregular migration with local communities. IOM brought local groups together and collaborated with local leaders to design materials. Historically songs are very important in Myanmar. Local stakeholders developed counter-trafficking songs, which then became theme songs for national anti-trafficking day. The groups are trained, cascade trainings, and go into townships and areas IOM cannot reach, for instance Sitwe, which is completely surrounded by security checkpoints, to distribute Information Education Communication materials on behalf of IOM. In areas such as Sitwe, where there is conflict, there is a spike in trafficking and IOM's work is even more pertinent.

Working with the Local Community on Raising Awareness in Mesoamerica

In Mesoamerica, the Regional Migration Program tackled awareness-raising through information campaigns that have been showcased by CNN for their effectiveness and demonstrate bilateral work between IOM and the government. These information campaigns showed success at the local level because they collaborated with local committee organizations, local government, and the municipality, thereby developing trust and gaining a sense of local ownership. This also built the capacity of the local governments on the reintegration of migrants and the prevention of irregular migration and risks.



REGIONAL MIGRATION PROGRAMS

WHAT ARE IOM'S REGIONAL MIGRATION PROGRAMS?

Funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), IOM's Regional Migration Programs provide technical assistance to help build the migration management and protection capacities of origin, transit, and destination countries, and directly assist the world's most vulnerable migrants. The Regional Migration Programs utilize a five-pillar approach tailored to each region and ensures that implementation is needs-driven.

REGIONAL MIGRATION PROGRAMS' 5 PILLAR APPROACH



CAPACITY BUILDING

Engage governments and local stakeholders in origin, transit, and destination countries to advance effective and humane migration management, and promote safe, orderly, and regular migration.



DIRECT ASSISTANCE

Protect and assist the world's most vulnerable migrants, such as unaccompanied children, persons rescued at sea, and trafficked victims, while building local and government stakeholders' ownership of migrant protection.



REGIONAL DIALOGUE

Support regional-level information exchange and cooperation between governments to address regional migration challenges and uphold the rights of migrants.



INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

Partner with UNHCR and other UN organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector to promote multi-stakeholder coordination on migration issues, advance information-sharing and cooperation, and leverage complementarities.



EMERGENCY MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

Promote the capacities of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to anticipate migration crises and better respond to the needs of migrants affected by crises.

In addition, IOM's [Global Knowledge Management Project](#) strengthens regional programming through streamlined monitoring and evaluation capacity development, enhanced systems and processes for knowledge management, and the increased visibility of promising practices from this portfolio.

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE



- CENTRAL ASIA
- CHINA
- DOMINICAN REPUBLIC & HAITI
- GREATER MEKONG SUB-REGION & MALAYSIA
- HORN OF AFRICA & YEMEN
- WESTERN BALKANS
- WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA
- SOUTHERN AFRICA
- NORTH AFRICA
- MESOAMERICA

