

## BACKGROUND

*“We hope the Initiative serves as a solid blueprint of how State-led efforts, developed in consultation with impacted stakeholders, can lead to the adoption of concrete, practical migration solutions”, Assistant Secretary of State of the United States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Anne C. Richard on the MICIC Guidelines.<sup>1</sup>*

The Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Guidelines, launched in New York and Geneva in June 2016, were the result of a state-led process, co-chaired by the Philippines and the United States. They establish a series of non-binding principles, guidelines, and practices to help governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders, amongst which diasporas, to better protect migrants lives during crisis. **Diaspora<sup>2</sup> is referenced across all three MICIC Guidelines overarching areas: crisis preparedness, emergency response, and post-crisis action, with diaspora being recognized as a key stakeholder contributing, amongst other areas, to capacity building and humanitarian response.** Taken in tandem with IOM diaspora<sup>3</sup>-related initiatives<sup>4</sup>, such as the three-pillared 3E strategic approach – to enable, engage and empower transnational communities – these initiatives and tools can strengthen diaspora engagement for the benefit of migrants before, during and after conflict and disasters.

**Diasporas play a pivotal role in transforming crises.** This can be mainly attributed to their motivation, contextual knowledge, and ability to swiftly mobilize capacities, enabling them to respond effectively in both crisis situations and development endeavors. Furthermore, their ability to respond decisively and efficiently to crises enhances their impact, making a substantial contribution to the overall progress and resilience of their transnational communities.<sup>5</sup> Alongside the MICIC Guidelines, concurrent IOM diaspora-related initiatives, such as documents,

## KEY TAKE AWAYS

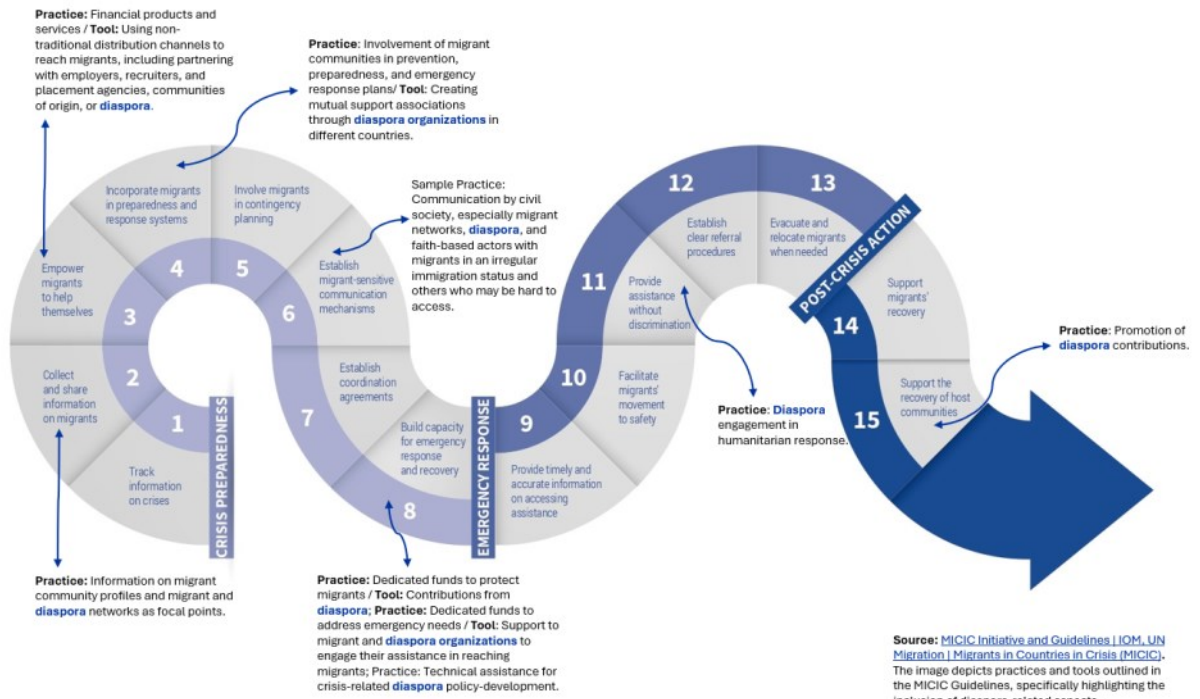
- ◆ The Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Guidelines, establish a series of non-binding principles, guidelines, and practices to help governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders, including diasporas, to better protect migrants lives during crisis.
- ◆ Diaspora is referenced across all three MICIC Guidelines overarching areas: crisis preparedness, emergency response, and post-crisis action, with diaspora being recognized as a key stakeholder.
- ◆ By mutually leveraging the MICIC Guidelines, the expertise of diaspora, and IOM-related initiatives, we further contribute to saving lives, and protecting migrants in countries in crisis.

guiding frameworks and procedures (e.g.: *The Dublin Declaration, The Framework for Diaspora Engagement in Humanitarian Assistance; The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Diaspora Engagement in Shelter Assistance; The Diaspora Mapping Toolkit; The Contributions and Counting: Guidance on Measuring the Economic Impact of your Diaspora beyond Remittances; IOM's Work on and with the Diaspora*), further acknowledge the significant role of diasporas as key actors in preparedness, crisis response and building long-term solutions. They expedite planning, early recovery and contribute to social cohesion efforts in the post-crisis space. Furthermore, diaspora related platforms (e.g.: [iDiaspora](#)) facilitate access to capacity building tools, foster direct engagement of diaspora in coordination mechanisms (e.g.: [Humanitarian Hub](#)), and prompt contributions to data collection, communication networks, and financial instruments.

**By leveraging the MICIC Guidelines and diaspora-related initiatives and actions, we can collectively improve the crisis response, and mitigate its impact while making significant strides towards achieving long-term solutions.**

⇒ Explore the linkages between MICIC & Diaspora in the following section

THE 15 GUIDELINES AT A GLANCE



Information retrieved from: Guidelines to Protect Migrants In Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disasters © IOM 2016

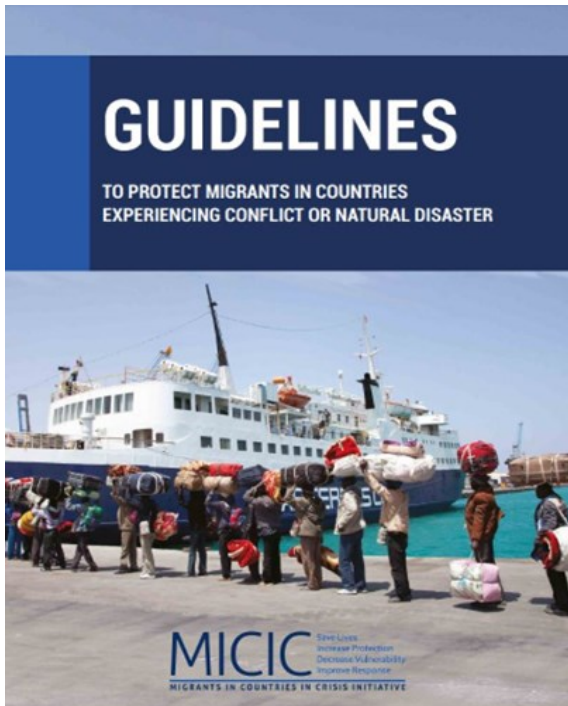
## LINKING MICIC & DIASPORA FOR A COMPREHENSIVE CRISIS RESPONSE

*“In moments of crisis, we realize again and again that one cannot do it alone—governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society must come together to assist migrants quickly and flexibly: to save lives, increase protection, decrease vulnerabilities, and improve responses. These are the mantra of the MICIC Initiative”, Chairperson of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Secretary Imelda M. Nicolas on the MICIC Guidelines. <sup>6</sup>*

The MICIC Guidelines provide a roadmap for the creation of a better, more inclusive response with the overall goal of saving lives, and ensuring migrants are not left behind during the response. By further leveraging and combining the standards and practices of the MICIC Guidelines, with the expertise, reach and resources of diaspora communities, we can enable a more effective and comprehensive approach in critical areas such as data collection, communication, financial contributions, fostering migrant-inclusivity, and early recovery.<sup>7</sup> Diaspora groups are key actors for their communities in countries in crisis, in mobilizing a collective and localized crisis response, with significant cultural and local knowledge, as well as information and communication networks which may reach populations otherwise outside of traditional data collection and communication methods.



# LINKING MICIC & DIASPORA FOR A COMPREHENSIVE CRISIS RESPONSE



**IN CRISIS PREPEREDNESS** MICIC Guidelines underscore the role of diaspora in collecting information on migrants and migrant communities, empowering migrants through non-traditional channels and partnerships, and promoting mutual support associations through diaspora organizations. Diasporas play a dynamic role in boosting data enrichment by actively engaging in activities such as data collection, analysis (including mapping, research, and publications), and disseminating facts and figures publicly and/or with specific stakeholders (e.g. governments). During data collection exercises, migrants often slip through the cracks, leading to underestimations of people in need during crisis. MICIC provides specific guidelines and practices on how to engage in **data collection** and enhance knowledge sharing on migrant communities (e.g., geographic distribution of migrants, nationality, ethnicity, vulnerabilities, etc.). Engaging diasporas in data collection practices through the approaches outlined in the MICIC Guidelines, not only improves the inclusivity of the process but also ensures that actors are better prepared to respond effectively to all populations affected by crisis.

**DURING EMERGENCIES**, the MICIC Guidelines stress that humanitarian aid must be provided without discrimination and recognize diaspora as vital actors in organizing and delivering assistance. They highlight diaspora's crucial role in establishing **communication** channels, fostering trust among various communities, and otherwise helping ensure that migrant groups, at risk of being overlooked, are receiving life-saving assistance. Additionally, diaspora serve as conduits to rely vital information, and raise awareness, such as through the use of high-profile celebrity diaspora to reach wider migrant audiences. By creating and actively engaging in dedicated national platforms for diaspora engagement,<sup>8</sup> member states can better ensure appropriate inclusion of migrant voices and foster collaboration and shared initiatives among different groups.<sup>9</sup>

**IN POST- CRISIS ACTION** the MICIC Guidelines encourage the States to facilitate diaspora contributions through customs waivers, incentive schemes, work permits, and flexible re-entry arrangements to improve resiliency and speed rapid recovery. Diasporas are key economic contributors to their origin communities, providing remittances, investments, and services that boost development, alleviate poverty and boost human capital development.<sup>10</sup> Championing this trend, MICIC advocates for enabling and empowering migrants to strengthen the vitality of their countries of origin and encourages and guides stakeholders to leverage **financial instruments**, such as dedicated funds, minimize remittances transaction costs, and support fundraising initiatives. MICIC Guidelines also advise that countries of origin foster the capacity of diaspora to create employment opportunities for returning citizens, and provide work permits and flexible re-entry arrangements which work to accelerate recovery in the post-crisis space.

**MICIC Guidelines and diasporas mutually strengthen one another, optimizing their capabilities to address needs, reduce vulnerabilities, and risks, foster resilient societies, and make contributions to sustainable development.**

⇒ Explore the Practices in the following section





## CONNECTIONS IN PRACTICE

### INDONESIA COLLABORATIVE DISASTER RESPONSE IN TÜRKIYE

During the February 2023 earthquake in Türkiye, the General Consulate of Indonesia facilitated communication channels with the Indonesian community in Istanbul and other provinces, complemented by the formation of **a task force comprising** representatives from various Indonesian diaspora groups. Given that a significant portion of Indonesian nationals in Türkiye consists of migrant workers and students, this engagement proved crucial during the February 2023 earthquake. Recognizing the time constraints in dispatching aid from Indonesia and limited funds at the disposal of diplomatic missions, diasporas proved crucial to spearhead fundraising efforts. Remarkably, within a single day, the collected funds reached USD 1 million, with Indonesian tourists in Türkiye also contributing to the cause. This collaborative effort not only addressed logistical challenges but also allowed the General Consulate to channel the funds efficiently to the relevant authorities, showcasing the power of community engagement in disaster response. This approach stands as benchmark for unlocking the power of collaboration and mutual support between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. It further substantiates MICIC-diaspora shared objectives and the assertion that concerted efforts are indispensable, particularly in times of crisis.

### PANDEMIC RESILIENCE: IOM AND DIASPORA UNITE TO SUPPORT ZIMBABWEAN MIGRANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is home to approximately 4.2 million migrants from the region. The nationwide lockdown during the Covid-19 has resulted in huge socio-economic impacts and social protection needs in the country, with considerable impact on the vulnerable populations including migrants.

Although, the South African government has announced some assistance to ameliorate the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 response, thousands of Zimbabwean migrants, particularly those in irregular and vulnerable situations, are finding it difficult to have access to this assistance. At the **initiatives of some Zimbabwean Diaspora in South Africa**, in collaboration with the Embassy of Zimbabwe and the International Organization for Migration, a **COVID-19 Humanitarian Appeal** was launched to provide humanitarian assistance to stranded and vulnerable Zimbabweans in South Africa. Furthermore, **Zimbabwean diaspora communities worldwide not only rose to the occasion but was one of few diasporas that contributed more financial support during the COVID-19 pandemic than in previous years.** This approach stands as benchmark for unlocking the power of collaboration and mutual support between intergovernmental, governmental, and non-governmental stakeholders. It further substantiates MICIC-diaspora shared objectives and the assertion that concrete and practical tools (i.e.: MICIC Guidelines) and concerted efforts are indispensable, particularly in times of crisis.



IOM provides support services to Zimbabwean returnees © IOM 2021

## CONNECTIONS IN PRACTICE

# MIGRANTS STRIVE FOR SAFETY AMIDST THE WAR IN UKRAINE

The scale of the invasion highlighted the challenges faced by migrants in crisis situations, addressing their protection and rights amid conflict. It emphasized the role of state, non-state, and international actors, along national, regional, and global migration management systems. Consistently, diasporas have been dynamic catalysts in amplifying humanitarian efforts, expanding reach, and providing crucial support to migrants, ultimately saving lives.<sup>11</sup> In the race to escape war, migrants faced disparities in treatment and unwarranted delays, putting their lives at great risk. In response to these concerns, Ukrainian authorities have implemented measures, such as establishing a hotline for foreign students, to address the situation. Assistance to migrants in Ukraine since the onset of the conflict has also originated from foreign missions and home countries authorities but also diaspora communities. For instance, the Nepalese government in coordination with the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) coordinated the evacuation of their nationals stranded in Ukraine. **Leveraging diaspora's assistance to migrants is pivotal in countries prone to or experiencing conflict and disasters.** Stakeholders should forge relationships in advance, championing and enabling diaspora engagement to ensure protection during emergencies. This approach largely mirrors MICIC Guidelines and Practices (e.g.: migrants' movement to safety, assisting migrants at border crossing), while contributing valuable tools and recommendations to stakeholders responding to crisis, including diasporas. It is beneficial to leverage MICIC Guidelines and the diaspora initiatives and actions mutually, as reciprocal enhancement. This interaction creates a symbiotic reinforcement, benefiting migrants.



Azerbaijanis stranded in Poland board IOM-funded buses on their long journey home from Kharkiv. © Photos IOM/Mark Brown 2022

### References

1. *Guidelines to protect migrants in countries experiencing conflict or natural disaster*. 2016. Foreword by the Assistant Secretary of State of the United States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Anne C. Richard. P3. Available at: [micic\\_guidelines\\_english\\_web\\_13\\_09\\_2016.pdf](https://www.micic.org/micic_guidelines_english_web_13_09_2016.pdf) (iom.int).
2. Diaspora: "migrants or descendants of migrants, whose identity and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country." *International Migration Law, 'Glossary on Migration'*, 2019:49.
3. For further information regarding the conceptual approach to diaspora in the context of this document, please consult Table 1.
4. For further information on IOM's array of initiatives, documents, tools, and platforms related to diaspora (and purpose of this document), please consult Table 3.
5. "Considerations on how to engage with diasporas in fragile contexts." 2024. Document by Larisa Lara, Transnational Communities & Digital Communications Officer, DPSMM/LMI. Kindly note that this is an internal document, with draft status.
6. *Guidelines to protect migrants in countries experiencing conflict or natural disaster*. 2016. Foreword by the Chairperson of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Secretary Imelda M. Nicolas. P. 4. Available at: [micic\\_guidelines\\_english\\_web\\_13\\_09\\_2016.pdf](https://www.micic.org/micic_guidelines_english_web_13_09_2016.pdf) (iom.int).
7. For further details regarding IOM resources and tools (e.g.: Diaspora Mapping Toolkit) please refer to Table 3.
8. For instance, in reference to past projects, please refer to the case study *A model for Diaspora engagement in humanitarian contexts at country level. Engagement of the Ukrainian diaspora organizations. Italian case study*. 2023. International Organization for Migration. Available at: [A-Model-for-Diaspora-Engagement.pdf](https://www.micic.org/A-Model-for-Diaspora-Engagement.pdf) (iom.int).
9. For more information on IOM publications related to this topic, please refer to, for example: *Maximizing Diaspora Engagement: Building Trust, Mobilizing Resources and Ensuring Sustainability. Insights and Reflections Paper*. 2021. IOM Publications Platform.
10. For more information on IOM publications related to this topic, please refer to, for example: *Contributions and Counting: Guidance on Measuring the Economic Impact of your Diaspora beyond Remittances*. 2020. IOM Publications Platform.
11. For further reference please refer to: <https://www.theglobaldiaspora.org/post/ukraine-response>.



# ANNEX

## TABLE 1 DIASPORA - CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

While there is no universally accepted definition of 'diaspora', this document aligns with the conceptual approach put forward by the IOM and the MICIC Guidelines.

**MICIC:** "persons from the same State of origin as migrants, but who are in States other than the host state or State of origin." ([Guidelines To Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster:130](#))

**IOM:** "migrants or descendants of migrants, whose identity and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country." ([International Migration Law, 'Glossary on Migration', 2019:49](#))

To boost diaspora contributions and substantiate the Guidelines, the integration of diasporas, including but not limited to diaspora communities and groups, diaspora organizations (registered) and national diaspora networks, into host countries may prove advantageous when supporting migrants pre- during and post- crisis. This integration could entail, amongst others:

- attaining an adequate proficiency in the language of the host state;
- familiarity with societal and cultural norms and communication channels;
- awareness of national, and local rules and regulations;
- an overall understanding of the host country;
- engagement with other diasporas or diaspora networks.

Leveraging the MICIC Guidelines and diasporas through this approach could prove advantageous, thereby contributing to the protection of migrants in countries experiencing conflicts or disasters.

## TABLE 2 IOM'S CAPACITY BUILDING WORK TO IMPLEMENT MICIC GUIDELINES & SUPPORT DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT

**IOM plays a lead role in disseminating, rolling out, and implementing the MICIC Guidelines.** It offers support and services to stakeholders in migrant's home and host countries to strengthen their capacities to protect and assist migrants before, during and after crises. In migrants' host countries, IOM collaborates with governmental and non-governmental actors to ensure that emergency prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery activities adequately account for the presence of migrants and their communities. In migrants' home countries, IOM collaborates with foreign services to build the capacity of consular and diplomatic personnel to assist and protect their nationals abroad when their host country is affected by a crisis. (For further information please refer to the brochure attached to this document).

**IOM serves as a primary proponent and partner for diasporas and diaspora networks,** taking the lead in initiating and advancing documents, frameworks, and platforms that furnish a wide array of tools to foster diaspora engagement (refer to initiatives in table 2). The organization not only offers methodologies for mapping diasporic communities and networks but also provides tangible mechanisms to operationalize recommendations. Additionally, it proactively fosters exchange and collaboration with the diaspora through events and exchange platforms, thereby further solidifying its position as a leading entity in diaspora engagement, support, promotion, and development.



## TABLE 3 RESOURCES

- [The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#) (GCM), anchored in the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG), specifically Objectives 19 (diaspora contributions) and 20 (remittances), advocates for the creation of conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries, and transfer remittances faster, safer and cheaper.
- [The Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus \(HDPN\)](#) recognizes the importance of simultaneous, rather than sequential, engagement of different stakeholders in reducing chronic vulnerability, while also addressing the underlying drivers and structural challenges.

### IOM's DIASPORA-RELATED ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES

- [The Standard Operating Procedures on Diaspora Engagement in Shelter Assistance](#) (2024) and The [Framework for Diaspora Engagement in Humanitarian Assistance](#) (2023) provide models and tools to streamline coordination among diasporas and institutional humanitarian actors, and step-by-step procedures for a more coordinated and effective engagement of diasporas in shelter and settlement response.
- [A Model for Diaspora Engagement in Humanitarian Contexts at Country Level. Engagement of the Ukrainian Diaspora Organizations. Italian Case Study](#) (2023) aims to present a model for diaspora engagement in humanitarian contexts that can be adapted to other countries and different diaspora communities.
- [The Global Diaspora Summit \(2022\)](#) Outcome Document, the [Dublin Declaration](#), envisions to institutionalize and operationalize diaspora capital across policies, programs and partnerships and firm beliefs in diaspora engagement as a long-term force for impact across all sustainable development pillars – social, human, economic and environmental. The creation of a Global Diaspora Policy Alliance (GDPA) to bring together interested governments was a key recommendation from the Summit.
- [The Diaspora Mapping Toolkit](#) (2022) builds on IOM's rich experience of over 150 diaspora mappings implemented across diverse contexts. This Toolkit presents a systematic, comprehensive yet very flexible and agile approach to conducting diaspora mappings in differing contexts.
- [Maximizing Diaspora Engagement: Building Trust, Mobilizing Resources and Ensuring Sustainability.” Insights and Reflections Paper | IOM Publications Platform](#) (2021) outlines the insights and recommendations, as well as key highlights from the 2021 Virtual Global Diaspora Exchanges.
- [The Contributions and Counting: Guidance on Measuring the Economic Impact of your Diaspora beyond Remittances](#) (2020) provides guidance for governments and national authorities looking to understand and measure the economic contributions made by their diaspora to their country of origin.
- Complementary platforms, global movements, and approaches, including for instance [iDiaspora](#), and the [Global Diaspora Confederation](#), facilitate access to updated data and analysis pertaining to diasporas and help bring together and promote diaspora across the world. In alignment with the aforementioned, the [IOM's 3E. Approach, - IOM's Work on and with the Diaspora. Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance](#) (2013) strives to engage, enable, and empower diasporas to maximize their involvement across development and humanitarian initiatives, encompassing both stable and fragile contexts.

## MORE RESOURCES



[MICIC SHAREPOINT](#)



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[MICICSECRETARIAT@IOM.INT](mailto:MICICSECRETARIAT@IOM.INT)

