

GUIDELINE 7: Establish coordination agreements in advance to leverage strengths and foster trust

States, private sector actors, international organizations, and civil society often work with fewer resources than required. Each of these stakeholders has unique skills, resources, and strengths. Working together to build partnerships, entering into agreements, and establishing routine coordination improves collective responses towards migrants, and prevents duplication of efforts. Such arrangements are best entered into before the next conflict or natural disaster, when stakeholders have the opportunity to anticipate challenges and leverage unique skills and strengths. Joint planning and coordination maximizes resources, improves the effectiveness of responses, and fosters trust between stakeholders. Involving migrants and civil society, who have first-hand knowledge of the specific needs and challenges faced by migrants, can improve the effectiveness of efforts to protect migrants in countries experiencing crises, including at the local, national, regional, or international levels.

These arrangements may relate to a range of activities relevant to the needs of migrants during the emergency phase and its aftermath—from collection of data to information sharing, consular services to identity assessments, awareness-raising to strategic communication plans, provision of humanitarian relief and services to referral systems, capacity-building to evacuation and reintegration assistance, and much more. This may include coordination and information sharing among anti-trafficking experts and humanitarian assistance providers to ensure screening for trafficking and referral to appropriate services. Additionally, by developing systems to identify refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless persons, States can better ensure that these persons are appropriately referred to the available refugee and other protection mechanisms.

Stakeholders can often arrange in advance key services and resources that will be in high demand when a crisis hits, including transportation, shelter, food, health care, and timely and accurate information. Establishing and maintaining clear channels of communication between consular posts and relevant agencies of the host State is important. Such channels of communication could prove critical during crisis situations.

Sample Practices

- *Pre-arranged agreements among stakeholders, such as agreements between States and international organizations for identity verification, shared use of assets, family tracing, and deployment of experts and humanitarian personnel.*
- *Multi-stakeholder agreements for relocation and evacuation that set out roles and responsibilities of partners and provide guidance on allocation of costs.*
- *Cross-border cooperation on crisis preparedness, taking into account particular needs of migrants, especially at a local level for communities that straddle borders.*
- *Reciprocal consular assistance and representation agreements to address gaps in situations where States do not have a diplomatic or consular presence in a country or have limited capacity.*

PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT GUIDELINE 7: Establish coordination agreements in advance to leverage strengths and foster trust

Multiple Stakeholders

Pre-arranged service agreements

Stakeholders should arrange in advance, agreements to provide services to migrants. Such agreements could include:

- Support to evacuate migrants, including transportation and accommodation;
- Identity verification of persons claiming to be citizens of particular States and provision of temporary identity and travel documents;
- Shared use of assets to monitor a crisis and to communicate;
- Family tracing;
- Transportation to deploy emergency and humanitarian personnel, and to deliver emergency and humanitarian relief to migrants, including food, shelter, medical aid, and cash;
- Health care in hospitals and health care centers.

Multi-stakeholder agreements on relocation and evacuation

Multi-stakeholder agreements can promote responsibility-sharing and safe and orderly relocation and evacuation of migrants. A State, for example, may want to work with one or several other States, international organizations, civil society, or employers and recruiters in order to share and leverage resources. Such agreements could include provisions that:

- Set out roles and responsibilities of each relevant partner to the agreement;
- Establish criteria and processes for determining when and how relocation and evacuation of migrants will take place;
- Articulate processes for identity verification and issuance of temporary laissez-passer and travel documents;
- Give clear guidance on allocation of costs;
- Identify channels to communicate information on the process to migrants;
- Articulate reporting requirements;
- Make arrangements for particularly vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied or separated children, victims of trafficking, or disabled persons;
- Allow for joint training and exercises to test arrangements in advance;
- Require monitoring and evaluation of the arrangement.

Partners' roles and responsibilities may include:

- Monitoring conditions that may necessitate relocation or evacuation;
- Disseminating crisis alerts and relocation and evacuation information (e.g., gathering points and routes);
- Arranging transportation services, including to final destinations;
- Providing health assessments and care prior to and during travel;

- Providing food, water, and other basic needs during travel;
- Offering translation services.

States

Cross-border cooperation on crisis preparedness

States can establish regional, cross-border cooperation on crisis preparedness and management taking into account the particular needs of migrants, including communities that straddle borders. Cooperation could include:

- Establishing binational or regional committees of local and national actors to plan and coordinate responses;
- Establishing an informal border committee of local leaders and key representatives of local communities to discuss cross-border issues;
- Establishing standard operating procedures for cross-border crisis cooperation;
- Carrying out joint simulations involving local and national crisis-response bodies, border services, fire fighters, and other relevant personnel;
- Signing memorandums of understanding between communities to govern hosting, movement, and resource management arrangements in case of crisis and large migratory movements;
- Establishing cross-border resource access and sharing arrangements between communities;
- Ensuring emergency response equipment and systems on both sides of a border are interoperable;
- Disseminating key information on crisis-preparedness, including location of shelters, hospitals, and consulates to migrants and other populations residing in the border area.

Bilateral agreements on migrant workers

States of origin and host States can enter into bilateral agreements or memorandums of understanding to regulate protection of migrant workers in the event of a crisis, or on emergency procedures and evacuations. Aspects these agreements can regulate include:

- Migrant workers' rights and duties;
- Migrant workers' equal treatment;
- Employers' rights and duties;
- Migrant workers' fair recruitment;
- Roles and responsibilities of employers, recruiters, and States for the provision of assistance to, and evacuation of, migrant workers in crisis situations;
- Emergency clauses in employment contracts that require employers to cover evacuation costs of migrant workers in a crisis situation.

Host States

Pre-established coordination arrangements between consular posts and host State

Host States can establish cooperation structures and mechanisms with consular posts to facilitate cooperation and coordination in providing assistance to migrants during a crisis. Measures to facilitate cooperation include:

- Setting up a central coordination structure that liaises with consular officials, communicates with them on a regular basis, and supports them in localizing their citizens and providing assistance in case of a natural disaster or conflict;
- Setting up regular coordination and communication mechanisms or meetings between host State authorities and consular posts to exchange information and strengthen relations;
- Providing briefings for consular officials on national and local emergency procedures, institutional focal points, and other relevant emergency actors and procedures;
- Creating a rapid support mechanism that can be activated during a crisis to support foreign consular missions to locate their citizens.

States of Origin

Reciprocal consular assistance and representation agreements

Bilateral or multilateral reciprocal consular assistance and representation agreements may be an effective way to address gaps when States do not have a consular presence in a country, or have limited capacity to assist their citizens. Reciprocal consular assistance and representation agreements could address:

- Evacuation, transportation, and other assistance;
- Shared use of assets for communication, including telecommunications and teleconference facilities, transportation, shelter, and other support;
- Coordination to share information in normal times and in times of crisis on citizens of non-represented States who approach the consular mission;
- Reporting and liaison mechanisms in crisis situations;
- Provision of consular assistance, including front line consular assistance and assistance with departures for citizens of non-represented States;
- Standard operating procedures to request assistance;
- Clear agreements and plans on financial responsibilities.

Private Sector Actors

Arrangements between employers and recruiters and security, evacuation, and relocation services

Employers and recruiters can establish partnerships with vendors and service providers before a crisis hits to ensure access to services during a crisis, and as part of comprehensive crisis management planning. Such arrangements can include:

- Transportation for the relocation or evacuation of employees by air, land, and sea;
- Safe accommodation;
- Security officers and escorts;
- Health care, with facilities and medical escorts in the host State and States of transit.
- Communication services, including radios, telephones, and the internet;
- Financial services for availability of cash, including in different currencies;
- Engaging with companies offering packages of assistance for planning, relocation, and evacuation;
- Engaging with local lawyers and interpreters.

Small or individual employers

Small and medium-sized enterprises and individual employers have limited capacity to protect their migrant workers during a crisis. Even so, implementing basic measures that do not require many resources will help migrants respond to crises. Such measures could include establishing relationships with relevant consular posts or foreign ministries. This would enable employers and migrants to receive emergency information and also facilitates migrant workers' access to assistance available through States of origin.

International Organizations

Evacuation and relocation assistance

States may need to rely on international organizations to relocate or evacuate migrants. Establishing arrangements with States in advance of a crisis can clarify roles, responsibilities, and terms of partnerships and improves preparedness. Such arrangements could include criteria for evacuation or relocation, responsibilities for costs and funding, and information on other services to be provided (e.g., screening to identify migrants with particular vulnerabilities and victims of exploitation, trafficking, abuse and violence as well as referral and specialist services for those with particular needs).

Centralized portal or clearing house to log requests for evacuation by migrants or States and facilitate multi-State or multi-stakeholder cooperation on evacuations

Not all States of origin have the capacity to assist migrants in countries experiencing crises. Addressing needs associated with a short-lived crisis when migrants are able to receive assistance in the host State, may be manageable, but when large numbers of migrants need to be evacuated, international organizations may be required to provide support. In order to manage requests from States of origin, international organizations could consider establishing centralized portals for States to:

- Request assistance;
- Provide information on migrants to be evacuated, including their location and needs;
- Access reports on contact with and location of migrants;
- Receive information on where to evacuate migrants, including locations in States of origin;
- Request additional assistance for migrants with specific needs, and confirm if migrants

have received it, including through referrals to specialized organizations or agencies in the host State;

- Request identity verification services;
- Post requests, messages, or enquiries from family members.

Civil Society

Coordination among civil society

Arrangements among civil society at the local, national, regional, and international levels can cover a wide-range of activities, including:

- Information sharing on migrants and their needs;
- Joint advocacy;
- Mutual capacity building;
- Awareness-raising;
- Service provision.