MICIC

Save Lives
Increase Protection
Decrease Vulnerability
Improve Response

MIGRANTS IN COUNTRIES IN CRISIS INITIATIVE

GUIDELINES AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative

Regional Consultation

Latin America and the Caribbean

**San Jose, Costa Rica
17-18 February 2016**

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INTRODUCTION

This document identifies guidelines and effective practices from the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Regional consultation. It is divided into three parts, according to the pre-crisis, emergency, and post-crisis phases. Text in red identifies general guidelines on protecting and assisting migrants caught in countries in crisis. Text in blue distills, in general terms, practices applicable to the preceding guideline as participants explored and suggested such practices during the regional consultation.

The MICIC Initiative focuses on two types of crises whose magnitude demands a significant humanitarian response by the authorities of the country experiencing the crisis, countries of origin and/or by the international community: natural disasters and conflicts. Latin America is regularly affected by disasters while major armed conflicts are less common in the region than in other parts of the world. Many of the practices in this document therefore focus on situations of natural disasters.

Besides natural disasters and conflicts, other situations in Latin America pose equally significant challenges for migrants: Latin America is currently home to countries with some of the highest homicide rates in the world. The prevalence of violent organized criminal groups in parts of Latin America has a direct impact on the situation of migrants – both as a push factor of migration and as a protection challenge for migrants transiting through these countries. Even if outside the scope of the MICIC initiative as presently defined, the impact of this generalized violence on migrants should be acknowledged as it exacerbates vulnerability. The practices in this document focus on conflict and natural disaster contexts but might also inform policies to assist migrants affected by organized crime or other situations.

I. PRE-CRISIS PHASE

1. RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF MIGRANTS

I.   Provide migrants with necessary information and support so that they can help themselves during crisis, and ensure that law, policies and practices do not hinder migrants' access to assistance.

II.   Understand and assess the vulnerabilities of all migrants including those who may manifest particular needs based on, *inter alia,* age, separation from family, gender, migration status, or disability.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

All stakeholders

- **Awareness of rights:** Use media, including newspapers, radio stations, leaflets, consular websites, social media, and other forms of communication to inform migrants of their rights in Host States and how to access assistance in an emergency to empower them to assert their rights and access protection.

- **Rights in transit:** Protect rights of migrants in transit, irrespective of migration status, including rights that apply to mobility, such as the right to leave any country as crises often occur in countries through which migrants transit.

- **Referral systems**: Ensure refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons are identified and ensure referral to national dedicated agencies or UNHCR to enable their access to specific protection emanating from their status as well as protection from refoulement.

Host States

- **Separate immigration enforcement** activities from activities to provide access to services, administrative, judicial, and complaint mechanisms, and state protection to protect fundamental rights in ordinary times and in times of crisis.

- **Legal status:** Ensure immigration and regularization laws, codes, regulations and enforcement mechanisms, inter alia, facilitate and promote the ability of migrants to maintain their legal status or to reacquire it when impacted by crisis.

- **Culture of tolerance, non-discrimination, and respect:** Work with migrant leaders, host communities, and youth, inter alia, to foster and engender strong relationships between migrants and citizens in order to build a culture of social inclusion, non-discrimination, and respect in society towards migrant populations.

International organizations and civil society

- **Advocacy:** Advocate, in Host States and transit, for better protection and assistance to migrants and for respect and protection of migrants' rights and dignity, irrespective of migration status.

2. DATA ON MIGRANTS AND MIGRATION

I. Establish formal and informal systems to collect and regularly update information on nationals abroad, including contact details, emergency contacts and place of residence.

II. Identify informal networks including migrant associations and the mechanisms they use to collect and manage contacts of nationals abroad and establish cooperation to reach out to their networks.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

Host States

- **Mapping of migrant communities in disaster prone areas:** Map areas where migrants concentrate including gathering information on migrant's characteristics such as temporary or permanent migrants, tourists, migrant workers.

- **Data collection forms:** Make migrants visible in research and statistics and include questions on nationality in data collection forms.

<u>States of origin</u>

- **Registration systems**: Establish or improve and regularly update systematic registration systems to increase registration rate of nationals living or traveling abroad, thereby increasing capacity to locate and reach out to them in the event of a crisis, by *inter alia*:
  - Recording and regularly updating information on contact details, time and duration of stay, place of residence, contact information of relatives in the home country;
  - Creating electronic systems harnessing new technology rather than paper-based ones to allow nationals to register online and upon arrival in the destination country;
  - Creating specific portals for travelers to register their travel and enter contact information, as well as to access travel recommendations, emergency contacts, brochures.

- **Informal networks**: Identify informal networks including migrant associations and civil society organizations and the mechanisms they use to collect and manage contacts and other personal information of nationals abroad, including those that may travel by irregular means or become irregular once in country of destination. This could be done by, *inter alia*:
  - Identifying community leaders and focal points amongst nationals to facilitate contact with and information dissemination and assistance to wider networks of nationals abroad;
  - Developing relationships with nationals abroad (particularly associations and groups) during ordinary times to collect information and contacts that can be used in the event of a crisis to localize migrants and provide assistance;
  - Organizing social events to improve community coherence among migrants and to build trust in consular services within migrant communities;
  - Encouraging migrant communities to map their communities and establish emergency communication lines.

- **Map nationals abroad:** Establish tools for mapping communities of nationals abroad including diaspora and hometown associations and other types of associations and groupings established by nationals outside their country of origin.

<u>International organizations and civil society</u>

- **Research**: Undertake, analyze and synthesize research on statistics, demographics, and characteristics of migrants in destination countries as well as pertinent emigration and immigration trends.

3. INFORMATION TO AND COMMUNICATION WITH MIGRANTS

I. Establish mechanisms to ensure regular two-way communication with migrants to convey information about security alerts and receive information on their condition and needs by using various communication means in regular times that can be accessed in times of crisis.

II. Provide information to migrants on country-specific emergency information such as what to do, where to go, who to contact in the event of a crisis and how to access timely information on impeding or ongoing crises.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

<u>All Stakeholders</u>

- **Awareness raising on natural disasters through local media, i.e. radio shows**: The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Coordinating Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America, (CEPREDENAC), joined forces to produce a radio soap opera, "Tiempo de Huracanes", (Times of Hurricanes), disseminated through community radios throughout Central America, to raise awareness on disaster prevention in an interesting and easily understandable way with communities at risk, including migrants, who often live in areas of higher risks to disasters.

- **Relationship- and network-building with civil society**: Build relationships and networks with civil society   actors in Host States, particularly those that work directly with nationals, including key focal points, to facilitate better protection and assistance to nationals, including communication with them.

<u>Host States</u>

- **Awareness raising campaigns for natural disasters with tourists:** Disseminate targeted information on disaster preparedness to tourists inter alia by distributing leaflets and information sheets in relevant languages explaining the precautionary measures to be adopted in the event of a disaster. Distribute information through the consular services present in the country, in touristic areas prone to disasters, and at borders and airports.

- **Liaison with consulates and embassies posted in the country**: Ensure regular communication with consular staff present in the country to ensure they are aware of risks, emergency procedures, focal agencies and actors in an emergency and communicate emergency procedures to their nationals residing or traveling to the country, by inter alia:
    o Establishing a mailing list with emergency focal points in consular offices;
    o Distributing brochures or manuals to Diplomatic Corps present in the country providing information on possible threats and emergency procedures to provide to visitors and residents of their own nationality.

- **Interpretation:** Make sure information in times of crisis is accessible in different languages to non-nationals.

<u>States of origin</u>

- **Active outreach by consular services** to migrant communities and travelers via various means of communications, by inter alia:
    o Mobile applications providing access to consular information, contact information, travel alerts;
    o Disseminating advisory bulletins, for example traveler guides including recommendations or warnings for travelers and providing contact information of embassies/consulates or national and local authorities;
    o Creating webpages or using social media such as facebook and twitter to give guidance on the dangers of natural disasters for nationals living or travelling overseas and providing information regarding consular contact details;
    o Socializing emergency plans through events organized by the consulate;

- o Disseminating information through migrant associations and civil society organizations that are likely to reach irregular migrants due to pre-established relationships of trust;
- o Setting up hotlines in consular services.

- **Relationship- and network building** with nationals abroad: Build relationships with existing migrant networks including diaspora and hometown associations established by nationals outside of their country of origin. Use these networks in the event of a crisis to reach out to migrants, in particular to irregular migrants. Such mechanisms could include, *inter alia*:
  - o Identification of focal points/ leaders in local communities and migrant associations;
  - o Interdisciplinary working groups with migrant leaders;
  - o Organization of community meetings to build trust.

- **Hotlines:** Establish hotlines to be activated or strengthened in crisis situations.

Migrants and Diaspora

- **Outreach and communication with migrants:** Support other stakeholders by facilitating outreach to, and communication with, migrants.

4. CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUPPORT

I. Create the necessary capacity for embassies and consular services in host countries to act as first responders in the event of a crisis.

II. Support other stakeholders, including local authorities, migrant associations or volunteer networks to better protect and assist migrants.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

All Stakeholders

- **Migrant associations and diaspora:** Build capacity within migrant association and diaspora groups to reach out to migrants in the event of a crisis and provide humanitarian assistance to migrants. Engage them in crisis preparedness efforts.

- **Volunteer networks:** Build capacity of volunteers associations or networks to support other stakeholders in providing humanitarian assistance to migrants.

- **Border communities:** Build capacity of and establish cooperation among communities and authorities in border areas prone to natural disasters through setting up coordination structures and emergency mechanisms. Carry out joint emergency response simulations and trainings.

- **Financial literacy:** Build capacity of migrants on financial literacy, such as use of remittances for education or health, saving mechanisms, financial products available and their effective use. Tie financial education for migrants to a concrete financial product and provide access to these products.

- **Training on crisis assistance to migrants:** Provide training to relevant authorities on how to build their capacity in migrant-sensitive crisis preparedness and response, including data collection to include needs and vulnerability of non-nationals, identification of vulnerable populations, referral systems, and cooperation with International organizations.

- **Local authorities:** Build the capacity of local authorities in assisting migrants in emergency situations caused by natural disasters or conflict and raise awareness for the particular vulnerabilities of migrants. Work with authorities to foster and engender strong relationships between local authorities and migrants.

States of origin

- **Training for consular officials:** Provide training to consular officials including on a range of issues, *inter alia*:
  - How to conduct evacuations and repatriations of nationals including regular simulation exercises and roleplays;
  - Provision of identity and other documents to crisis-affected nationals;
  - Data collection and analysis, registration of migrants using relevant IT systems;
  - Contingency planning;
  - Coordination with relevant national and local authorities.

- **Returnee integration**: Build the capacity of national and local authorities on reintegrating migrant returnees, including setting up inter institutional cooperation and mechanisms to follow up on policy implementation.

5. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

I.   Set up cooperation and coordination structures and frameworks at the national level among relevant agencies providing assistance to migrants in crises through all phases, at all levels, including national, sub-national and local authorities.

II.   Set up bilateral and regional consular cooperation agreements.

III.   Build on existing regional cooperation mechanisms to increase cooperation on wide-range issues including migration policy, consular protection, evacuation and crisis preparedness.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

States

- **Consular cooperation agreements:** Establish and formalize bilateral, multilateral, and/or regional agreements with other countries for consular assistance and representation in situations where there is limited or no diplomatic presence in a third country to facilitate efficient cooperation in times of crisis.

- **Ad hoc consular cooperation:** In the event of a crisis and non-existent agreements, facilitate ad-hoc cooperation with third countries for consular assistance and cooperate with consular missions present in neighboring countries to support nationals who are caught in the crisis.

- **Consular cooperation in destination country:** Set up cooperation mechanisms with other consular offices to exchange information and provide consular support in Host States. An example is the Tricamex Initiative in the USA in the city of MCAllen, where consular services of Mexico and central American states have set up cooperation on assistance on consular protection.

- **Consular networks among national consulates:** Establish consular networks among consulates in regions with significant populations of nationals abroad linked to the central authority/ministry overseeing consular activity, to improve coordination and information sharing, for instance by using new technologies such as whatsapp groups.

- **Agreements with service providers**: Establish agreements with private sector actors or international and humanitarian organizations to assist in evacuations, conduct search and rescue activities in disaster contexts and provide other services.

- **Increase regional cooperation** in a number of areas including consular protection, evacuations, disaster preparedness and protection of vulnerable migrants. Action on this would include building synergies and engaging with other regional or subregional processes, agendas and strategies that are pertinent to the MICIC Initiative or to particular issues encompassed within it:
  - Use regional and sub-regional organizations such as the Regional Conference on Migration, the South-American Conference on Migration or other regional fora including MERCOSUR, UNASUR or CELAC to share experiences, best practices, and lessons learnt and for systematizing or standardizing protection for migrants in crisis, in particular those with particular vulnerabilities including unaccompanied migrant children, adolescents, women, victims of trafficking;
  - Establish regional agreements on consular protection for instance using representations of regional organizations to register and support nationals in case of crisis with documentation and evacuation support and organize exchange platforms for consular offices to share emergency control measures, information and tools;
  - Increase regional cooperation on disaster preparedness and risk reduction and ensure migrants and their particular vulnerabilities are factored into regional risk reduction plans and strategies;
  - Improve coordination and cooperation among countries on evacuation, for instance by establishing cooperation platforms for evacuations to share resources and compile good practices and guidelines for evacuation procedures;
  - Establish cooperation on reintegration programmes and support for migrant returnees, for example by developing guidelines such as the Guiding Principles for the Development of Migration Policies on Integration, Return and Reintegration of the Regional Conference on Migration.

Host States

- **Inter-Ministerial and/or Inter-Agency Mechanisms:** Establish inter-ministerial and/or inter-agency structures that incorporate national and local actors pertinent to protecting and assisting migrants caught in countries in crisis through all phases of the crisis to engender planned, coordinated, and prompt responses. Such structures also need to provide mechanisms for timely and effective information exchange between relevant ministries and actors at all levels, including migration/immigration and emergency response actors.

- **Emergency committee of consular services**: Set up a central coordination structures that acts as liaison with diplomatic staff present in the country to update them on risks, emergency procedures, focal agencies and actors in an emergency and supports them in localizing their nationals and providing assistance in case of a natural disaster or conflict. This Emergency Committee of Consular services also coordinates with other national emergency agencies, tourism structures, International organizations, etc. to ensure cooperation between consular offices and federal and local emergency response authorities.

- **Cross-border cooperation on disaster preparedness**: In zones prone to natural disasters (Earth quakes, flooding, tsunami, volcano eruptions), establish cross-border cooperation taking into account particular vulnerabilities of migrant populations present in the area, by inter-alia:
    o Setting up a binational committee for planning and coordinating disaster response, involving local and national actors;
    o Carrying out joint simulations involving national and local disaster response bodies, border services, fire fighters, health;
    o Establishing Standard Operating Procedures for cross-border cooperation in the event of a disaster;
    o Disseminating key information on disaster preparedness including location of shelters, hospitals, consulate offices, etc. to nationals and non-nationals residing in the border area.

6. COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

I. Develop consultation and engagement strategies to reach out to migrants, diaspora and civil society   organizations as crucial partners in assisting migrants in times of crisis and understand and make use of their competencies.

II. Feed and integrate better protection and assistance to migrants caught in countries in crisis into relevant mechanisms, agendas, processes and strategies.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

States

- **Role of migrants and civil society:** Recognize and support the crucial role of migrants, and civil society   through all phases of the crisis. Their competencies include access and pre-established relations of trust also with irregular migrants, language, cultural affinities, networks, good knowledge of the situation on the ground, investment in the protection and assistance to vulnerable migrants.
    o Ensure migrant and civil society   representatives are engaged in relevant preparatory and planning activities at the pre-crisis phase including relevant working groups or committees dealing with policy development and crisis planning and trainings on crisis preparedness;
    o Establish permanent mechanisms and structures that systematically engage migrant and civil society   representatives in migration policy dialogue and development;
    o Establish frameworks for regular information-sharing and dialogue among government representatives, civil society   and migrant associations;
    o Engage migrants and civil society   in diverse roles throughout all phases of the crisis, including education, training, and capacity building, awareness-raising, information

dissemination, communication, service provision and include migrants and their capacities in disaster preparedness.

- **Relationship- and network building with diaspora organizations:** Create a sound institutional framework for diaspora engagement and strengthen governments' ability to support and reach out to diaspora groups in times of crisis and get their support for emergency response and recovery to develop joint post-crisis programmes. This can be done by inter alia:
  o Institutionalizing relations with diaspora in dedicated national institutions or ministries that maintain regular contacts with diaspora members and facilitate cooperation, trust and information-sharing;
  o Encouraging engagement and promoting productive investments in States of origin by rewarding good initiatives;
  o Including diaspora in diaspora policy development;
  o Mapping diaspora and keeping updated lists of diaspora including focal points;
  o Strengthening diaspora networks and relationships with and between diaspora members.

- **Volunteers:** Recognize the value of volunteers who can support other stakeholders to better protect and assist migrants.

- **Other agendas, processes, and strategies:** Build synergies and engage with other agendas, processes, and strategies that are pertinent to the MICIC Initiative or to particular issues encompassed within it to promote awareness, references, and implementation of the MICIC Guidelines and Effective Practices and to ensure the true nature of this endeavour as a collective responsibility is widely shared and understood. Relevant processes and agendas include:
  o Migration Specific fora including the Regional Conference on Migration and the South-American Conference on Migration;
  o Regional Risk Management Initiatives such as the Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres Naturales en America Central (CEPREDENAC) or the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CEDEMA);
  o Regional or sub-regional organizations including MERCOSUR, UNASUR or CELAC;
  o The Nansen Initiative.

7. PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

I. Create the necessary capacity for embassies and consular services in host countries to act as first responders in the event of a crisis.

II. Build and enhance the capacity to protect and assist nationals abroad through clear, coherent and well-articulated and disseminated national laws, policies, regulations and institutional mechanisms and institutions.

III. Integrate migrants into laws, policies, strategies, plans, programs, structures, mechanisms, and activities relating to Disaster Risk Reduction to better protect and assist migrants and build resilience to crises and their impacts.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

- **Migrant inclusion in disaster risk reduction plans:** Factor in migrants and their specific vulnerabilities and needs as well as their capacities into crisis preparedness and disaster risk reduction strategies, plans, and programs at national, regional and global levels.

- **Coordination between migration and disaster management:** Set up a coordination framework between institutions responsible for migration and disaster management to ensure migrants are incorporated in disaster preparedness and planning. At the local level, extend membership of municipal emergency committees to representatives of the migration general directorates and establish relations with consular services.

- **Natural disaster-prone areas:** Map potential disaster zones/areas and understand demographics, vulnerabilities and resilience of population living within such areas, including migrants, and factoring these into preparedness policies, plans, strategies and programs.

States of origin

- **Enhance consular capacity:** Create the necessary capacity for embassies in host countries, and in particular consular offices, to act as first responders in the event of a crisis, including:
  - Training of consular staff on emergency response;
  - Developing clear guidelines/Standard Operating Procedures for consular staff on how to operate before, during and after an emergency, how to assist nationals in situation of risk and/or vulnerability.
  - Establishing and regularly updating consular contingency plans in every country with consular presence defining vulnerabilities and threat context, response capacity, existing local structures and networks, designating focal points, procedures for setting up 24h hotlines and handling calls in an emergency, conducting evacuations, protocols for emergency document issuance. Involve migrants and their capacities in developing contingency planning.
  - Setting up close cooperation between consulates and relevant national and local authorities in the host country including nominating focal points for interaction with national agencies to be aware of local emergency plans and focal points in case of disasters;
  - Ensuring sufficient technical and staffing capacity for the situation of an emergency, including training non consular staff to assist in the case of an emergency;
  - Equipping missions with contingency funding to procure emergency items to assist migrants or organize evacuations;
  - Having necessary structures in place to support consular services in countries in crisis with additional human resources;
  - Equipping consular services with Emergency kits for situations when they have to go to the ground in disaster contexts.

- **Evacuation arrangements:** Set up evacuation arrangements in embassies / consular services for nationals that have to be repatriated in the event of a crisis:
  - Establish agreements with transportation companies such as airlines or shipping companies for the event of evacuations;
  - Establish agreements with International organizations to help with evacuations;
  - Establish agreements with regional structures and organizations to support evacuations;
  - Establish communication structures to reach nationals abroad;

- Map local resources and infrastructure in the destination country such as hospitals, hotels, restaurants, doctors that can be accessed in the event of a crisis;
- Establish procedures on nationals with dual nationality / mixed families for providing support or evacuation assistance in times of crisis;
- Establish a central structure to manage evacuations and provide support to consulates abroad.

- **Repatriation funds**: Establish emergency funds for evacuation or repatriation and assistance to nationals abroad (and remains) and special budgetary lines to support consular services in times of crisis.

- **Institutional framework:** Establish a central institutional structure to ensure assistance to and protection of nationals abroad, such as a Committee for Assistance to Nationals Abroad or a Ministry for Nationals abroad that supports the return of nationals affected by natural disasters or conflicts abroad and supports consulates in providing assistance to nationals abroad.

- **National laws, policies and regulations:** Encourage the elaboration of a dedicated migration policy protecting migrants present in the country, including regulations regarding disaster management through an inclusive process involving civil society and migrant associations. Establish Standard Operating Procedures to assist migrants in special situation. Mainstream assistance and protection of migrants into other policy areas including disaster preparedness and crisis management laws, policies, strategies, and plans.

- **Emergency response teams:** Establish emergency response teams that can be deployed to assist national services and migrants in countries in crisis.

International organizations

- **Support** governments in building preparedness for disasters, including by organizing workshops with migrants and other vulnerable populations.

8. BUILD FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, AND CAPACITY TO ADDRESS POST-CRISIS NEEDS

I. Build frameworks and capacity including the creation of funds or insurance mechanisms for migrants to address post-crisis needs.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

States

- **Migration and development linkages:** Establish initiatives that promote better linkages between migration and development, including by integrating migration and development into regional, national and local development plans and ensuring that the risks to human and societal development of migrants caught in countries in crisis are part of such plans.

- **Fund research** on existing financial products to evaluate gaps and strengths of products targeting migrants and use by migrants in times of crisis. Support pilot programs to test ideas and prove viability to the private sector.

- **Support the development of financial products** that meet migrants' needs by incentivizing their development, offering products directly to migrants or subsidizing and incentivizing services. Linking insurance to or promoting it with other fees, such as visa fees for the country of origin, may increase the use of insurance products by migrants but would not reach those migrating through irregular channels.

- **Provide education on financial services and savings** and ongoing support to migrants to promote migrants' access to and trust into financial services and products and ensure products are used effectively. Work with community organizations to reach migrants and provide financial education.

- **Use of remittances**: Raise awareness with migrants and their families to make better investment of remittances and save money to build upon on return in crisis situation. Design programs to facilitate channeling remittances into saving or local development for example by:
    o Setting up collective remittance systems. An example of this is the 3 for 1 collective remittance system implemented in a Latin American country; for every $1 in remittances contributed by a migrant, $3 in federal, state, and local funds are also contributed towards infrastructure projects in migrant sending areas within the country to improve access to water, sewerage, roads, and similar infrastructure projects;
    o Offering savings accounts to remittance senders: Banco Familiar, a Paraguayan bank that controls a large share of remittance transactions from Spain, created a program offering savings accounts to remittance senders and recipients. http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=38971554

- **Transferability of pensions and payments**: Enable migrants to contribute to pensions and receive payments upon returning to their respective home countries for retirement.

Private sector

- **Financial products for migrants:** Develop affordable, flexible, simple and easy to use financial products for migrants that can build resilience before a crisis, support in providing for basic needs during a crisis, and help recovery in the aftermath. Relevant financial products include insurance and micro-insurance, savings, remittances and fast-cash loans. The following considerations should inform design and distribution of products:
    o Design products that are also relevant in times of peace and target different needs rather than focusing on one specific issue;
    o Work with migrants and organizations who are close to migrants and know their needs in designing effective products;
    o Adapt documentation requirements to the needs and to the situation of migrants;
    o Consider non-traditional distribution channels to reach migrants including partnering with employers, communities of origin or destination, governments, consular services, diaspora;
    o Promote cross-border accessibility and fast access to products in crisis situations.

II. EMERGENCY PHASE

I.   Ensure non-discriminatory access to, and provision of assistance and protection.

II.   Ensure freedom of movement to enable migrants to flee to safety including facilitating evacuation or repatriation.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

Host States

- **Communication with migrant populations**: Make sure emergency communication including information on shelters and official helplines run by the government reaches migrant populations, including through:
    o   Translating information in relevant languages;
    o   Distributing information through various channels including consular offices present in the country, civil society   organizations and local community leaders;
    o   Broadcasting messages on local radio stations and disseminating information through social media and websites.

- **Identification of vulnerable migrants:** Engage local authorities, International organizations, and civil society   to identify and make appropriate referrals for protection and assistance for crisis-affected migrants, including migrants with particular vulnerabilities such as children, women, victims of trafficking or migrants in transit   without legal status to address their specific protection concerns. Often, these actors may have better access to, networks with, and the capacity to build relations of trust with affected populations.

- **Mechanisms to submit requests for assistance:** Establish mechanisms, such as focal contact persons/ministries/departments or hotlines that allow persons affected by crises, including migrants, to submit requests for assistance.

- **Emergency committee:** Establish or activate an emergency committee to coordinate response and serve as focal point for local authorities as well as consular offices of other countries. Provide information on channeling enquiries about disappeared persons and create a rapid support mechanism to attend to non-nationals or foreign missions trying to locate their nationals, whether still missing or hosted in emergency hostels.

- **Mobile teams:** Establish mobile teams / rapid response teams to reach affected populations and migrants also in remote areas.

- **Decentralization** of humanitarian assistance and good coordination structures on national regional, local, level to make sure policies are implemented at local level.

- **Partnerships with private actors:** Activate existing partnerships or establish ad hoc cooperation to conduct search and recovery activities in disaster contexts or help with evacuation.

- **Volunteer networks:** Request or grant access to volunteer networks such as the White Helmet Initiative to support government-led efforts in providing humanitarian assistance.

- **Identity documentation:** Facilitate the provision of emergency documentation—by a range of stakeholders, including States of origin and International organizations—to affected migrants, who may have lost their documents, left them behind, or never had them to enable the provision of assistance and protection, including evacuation and repatriation.

- **Immigration enforcement:** Refrain from undertaking immigration enforcement activities, including detention and deportation, during the emergency phase of crises and relax requirements for regularization during an emergency.

- **Separate immigration enforcement** activities from access to humanitarian services. This means, inter alia, ensuring that in the provision of emergency services, identifying information is not requested or sought to ensure that fear of authorities and other potential repercussions such as deportation does not inhibit crisis-affected migrants from accessing lifesaving assistance and protection.

<u>States of origin</u>

- **Evacuation assistance:** Provide evacuation assistance, including pre-and post-evacuation support to migrants, supported by sending additional personnel and establishing or activating a central structure to manage evacuations. Involve local authorities and organizations in identifying vulnerable migrants that need particular care during evacuations. Evacuation support could include, inter alia:
  - Before evacuation: Reaching out to migrants to provide information on evacuation, gathering migrants and providing housing and food until evacuation;
  - Upon arrival in home country: Providing basic services such as shelter, transport assistance, healthcare;
  - Setting up hotlines to communicate with relatives at home to update them on the evacuation;
  - Issue emergency documentation for migrants without necessary documentation;
  - Establishing agreements to waive taxes for business related things and personal goods/assets migrants want to take home;
  - Establishing follow up mechanisms with migrants who have been evacuated.

- **Consular authorities:** Build on established relationships with migrant communities and other stakeholders to reach affected migrants by:
  - Broadcasting messages on local radio stations, and disseminating information through websites and social networks;
  - Liaising with other governments and international organisations;
  - Visiting shelters to identify nationals requiring assistance.

<u>States of transit</u>

- **Humanitarian border management:** Institute humanitarian border management policies and mechanisms to ensure the rights and dignity of migrants are protected.

- **Humanitarian visas:** Grant temporary protection status or humanitarian visas to migrants arriving from crisis-affected countries, either through consulates in or near the crisis-affected country or upon arrival in the country.

- **Protection of transit migrants:** Set up specific protection and assistance measures for transiting migrants, including dedicated medical units and institutional support and migrant shelters run by civil society with government aid.

- **Non-deportation or return to countries in crisis:** Refrain from returning or deporting migrants who have arrived from countries experiencing conflicts or natural disasters back to those places. Ensure respect for the principle of non-refoulement.

International organizations / civil society organizations

- **Emergency and humanitarian services:** Provide emergency and humanitarian assistance including necessary in-kind provisions, evacuation, and repatriation to migrants, in general and as a means of augmenting insufficient or unavailable State capacity.

- **Access to affected migrants:** Use preexisting relation of trust with migrants to survey and register migrants and their needs in affected areas and function as intermediaries between migrant communities and local/federal authorities where necessary.

- **Communication:** Use existing networks with migrants and local communities in many countries to communicate with affected migrants and communicate their situation to families back home.

Employers

- **Assistance to migrant workers:** Assist migrant workers by creating shelters or providing other forms of emergency assistance.

III. POST-CRISIS PHASE

I.   Provide targeted support to address the immediate and longer-term needs of migrants following the return to their country of origin and facilitate economic reinsertion.

II. Provide reconstruction support to migrants remaining in the country after a crisis.

III. Promote and facilitate the engagement of local authorities and local/host communities in reintegrating returned migrants.

Among others, the following practices may be valuable:

All Stakeholders

- **Research:** Undertake research to assess, analyze, and understand short and longer-term socio-economic impacts of return following crises, at the local and national levels in States of origin and destination, as well as on migrants, their families and local/host communities.

- **Migrants who remain:** Provide assistance to migrants remaining in the country that experienced a conflict or natural disaster including by engaging migrant associations:
    o   Replacing documents lost in the disaster;
    o   Providing Financial support: Loans, micro-credits, cash-transfer programs;

- Providing equipment, re-building materials and organizing rebuilding workshops for damaged homes.

- **Migrants as actors in reconstruction:** Local governments can support and engage migrants in reconstruction efforts to rebuild their communities in the aftermath of a disaster.

Host States

- **Portability of social contributions and personal benefits:** Promote and facilitate the cross-border portability of social contributions and other personal benefits.

- **Assets and goods:** Ensure adequate measures to secure or restore assets left behind in the country in crisis.

States of origin

- **Post-crisis needs and skill assessment:** Conduct a needs and skill assessment of the returning population, including an analysis of key socio-economic characteristics of returnees, their skills and qualifications, to inform the design of policies for reintegration and provide adequate services and resources. Needs assessments should also look at returnees' geographical concentration, taking into consideration possible further internal migration from communities of origin to other communities.

- **Hotlines**: Set up hotlines for returnees where they can get reintegration support and be referred to relevant authorities.

- **Diverse and multiple reintegration support**: Provide returned nationals (and their families, where necessary) with a range of services and support to address diverse realities and needs, accommodating immediate and longer-term needs. Immediate needs, in general, may be humanitarian in nature, providing individual assistance whereas longer-term needs may relate to development, social policy and integration also aiming at improved structural conditions for reintegration and inclusion. Many of these services may need to be provided to returned migrants as well as local/host communities. Among the services that may need to be provided, and which could be provided individually, through one stop resources and service centers, or through other mechanisms that provide a package of services, are:
  - Medical and psychological services to returnees who suffered trauma;
  - Immediate access to education for children and youth;
  - Helping children born abroad obtaining citizenship;
  - Adequate Housing;
  - Social protection;
  - Facilitation of economic reinsertion (See further details below);
  - Support to return personal property and assets;
  - Orientation courses for migrant returnees; in particular for nationals born or educated abroad, to overcome barriers such as language proficiency, cultural differences and recognition of qualifications.

- **Facilitate economic reinsertion** of migration returnees and leverage returnees' skills and competences in the local economies through better skill validation practices, including by:
  - Recognition of qualifications acquired abroad, also through flexible mechanisms such as waiving need for official translation of degrees;

- Skill development and upgrading, including reinsertion training for entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship programs, business enterprise and small business management training, financial literacy training, vocational training and targeted programs to youth;
- Job-matching support programmes;
- Public-private partnerships to promote labour market inclusion and vocational training;
- Reintegration programmes offering advantageous financial credit lines for entrepreneurs, subsidizing or co-funding micro-entreprises, startups or other entrepreneurial activities; or offering tax exemptions for entrepreneurs.

- **Culture of tolerance, non-discrimination, and respect**: Raise awareness and work with local communities and community leaders, churches, schools, inter alia to foster strong relationships between returnees and local citizens and to avoid stigmatization and victimization of returnees.

- **Involvement of local communities** hosting large numbers of returnees, engaging and supporting community leaders and associations or civil society   organizations as actors in the reintegration programs for migrant returnees and in providing assistance to returnees and following up on their reintegration. Set up cooperation structures, launch awareness raising programs and provide capacity building to relevant organizations.

- **Diaspora contributions:** Facilitate the receipt and effective use of contributions, services, and support that may be provided by diaspora towards the post-crisis phase, both in terms of addressing the needs of returned migrants and impacts on States of origin as well as supporting migrants remaining in the country that experiences a crisis in reconstructing their community.

- **Assistance to migrants with particular vulnerabilities:** Provide targeted assistance and services to migrants with particular vulnerabilities including children, women, victims of trafficking, migrant in transit to address their specific protection concerns. Targeted support might include:
  - Provide targeted assistance to unaccompanied and separated children and mechanisms to address their specific protection concerns including facilitating immediate access to education and universities for returning migrant children and building capacity of teachers to attend to their specific needs;
  - Empowering women through vocational training to alleviate economic dependence on perpetrators of violence;
  - Establishing psychological and sociological follow up programmes for returned migrant victims of trafficking and those suffering trauma because of crisis;
  - Providing adapted services and reintegration programmes for returned migrants with disabilities.

- **National development plan:** Integrate socio-economic reintegration of migrants in national/regional/local development plans.

- **Inter-institutional cooperation**: decentralization of public services and creation of committees or one stop window comprising officials from local administrations and different ministries such as health, education, labor and social services to build a multisector response.

International organizations

- **Reintegration assistance**: Support national reintegration assistance to migrants through technical assistance and funding, setting up capacity building programs for returnees or investing in community stabilization programmes.

MICIC
Save Lives
Increase Protection
Decrease Vulnerability
Improve Response

MIGRANTS IN COUNTRIES IN CRISIS INITIATIVE