

UN TASK FORCE 4 ON
**BEST PRACTICES REGARDING THE
DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Terms of Reference (DRAFT AS OF 20 JUNE 2019)

Background

The United Nations Statistics Division, under the guidance of the United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, has initiated the work on revising the 1998 [Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1](#) (referred to as *the 1998 Recommendations* thereafter)

The paucity of quality migration data and analysis has long been recognized and requires major investment. Data sources to inform the issue of international migration include decennial population and housing censuses, population registers, civil registration and other administrative data, residence permits and various household surveys.

Pursuant to Agenda 2030's, Sustainable Development Goal Target 17.18 calls for an enhancement of capacity-building support to developing countries to increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts by 2030. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration as a first objective also calls on Member States to strengthen international migration data by improving the collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate, reliable, comparable data, disaggregated by sex, age, migration status and other characteristics. The GCM is clear in strengthening the global evidence base on international migration by improving and investing in the collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate, reliable, comparable data, disaggregated by sex, age, migration status and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, while upholding the right to privacy under international human rights law and protecting personal data.

Data sources to inform the issue of international migration include decennial population and housing censuses, population registers, civil registration and other administrative data including residence permits as well as various household surveys.

Population and Housing Census

In many countries, censuses are the main source of data for disaggregated analysis in line with SDG target 17.18, and in particular, for data on disability and migration. While censuses, by their nature, do not collect information on a large number of variables, the number of observations is vast, especially for disaggregation of data and in comparison to household surveys. The unique benefit of a population and housing census, despite infrequent conduct, is that it represents the entire statistical universe, down to the smallest geographical unit, of a

country or region. The potential impact of including questions on migration in all census questionnaires of the 2020 census round cannot be over-stated for advancing research on the status and trends of migrant health, education, employment, access to mobile or other assets, and a wide range of other benefits and/or deprivations. While the majority of the previous censuses have collected data on migration, the main challenge is that the data have not been collected, analyzed and disseminated in a standardized and systematic way across countries and also between censuses.

Household surveys, including labour force surveys

Another major source of migration data is the household sample survey such as labour force surveys and living standards measurement surveys. Household surveys are based on a representative sample of a country's population with the intention to yield statistics with more details or focusing on special population groups. Sample surveys enable relevant questions to specific migration issues are included. Further, the survey's sample design is also important to ensuring that migrants are taken into account and are among the survey's respondents. Another point of interest is that when household survey is repeated at frequent, regular intervals, it may be possible to estimate the size of net population movements between the survey dates.

Population registers

National population registers or registers of foreigners may be of greatest use to understanding aggregate levels and common reasons to migrate. It is important to note that the value of register data depends on data quality, data content (what is collected) and coverage to identify who is included in the register. Thus, population registers can provide timely information on international migration affecting a country. The identification of international migrants depends on national laws and whether the inscription or deregistration applies to citizens of the country or foreigners.

Civil registration and other administrative data

The bulk of migration emanates from administrative data which most often are scattered in different government offices. Administrative sources are designed to collect information and generate data for administrative functions and often are not designed to support research or statistical analysis. The most useful administrative sources are those for visas, work permits, residence permits, and border crossing data.

Objectives and Task

The objective of this task force is to compile best practices in

- collecting data through data sources (censuses, surveys and administrative sources) and and the integration of data sources
- data analysis, dissemination and communication

The exercise will also consist of identifying broad recommendations in different areas mentioned above to facilitate standardized ways to collect, analyze and disseminate migration statistics. Recommendations could be classified by data source

The Task Force reports to the UN Expert Group on Migration Statistics.

In order to provide informed recommendations regarding the data collection, analysis and dissemination of migration statistics, the Task Force aims at compiling best practices from around the world on how countries, institutions and researchers undertook these activities.

Task Force membership and main responsibilities

The Task Force should compose of representatives from National Statistical offices or other relevant national institutions responsible for migration data collection and compilation, from migrant sending, transiting and receiving countries, experts and relevant international organizations, as well as academic experts.

Ghana Statistical Service and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and will jointly coordinate the work of the Task Force.

Task Force members are asked to contribute actively to the work of the Task Force, such as preparing the questionnaire for the global consultation; supporting the analysis of its results; sharing best practices from their own country of area of work; revising the draft document for submission to the UN Statistical Commission.

Draft Work Programme

June-October 2019	Global survey aiming to identify relevant best practices of data collection, analysis and dissemination of migration statistics
October 2019– June 2020	Compilation and analysis of best practices
June-October 2020	Global consultation on a draft document on best practices that will feed into the revision of the 1998 Recommendations.
October 2020-November 2020	Revising the draft document following global consultation. Additional consultation rounds may be necessary.
Submission to the UN Statistical Commission in March 2021	