to identify priority areas and emerging issues of relevance to the GCM implementation in Mongolia. The forum has been appreciated by participating organizations, especially the civil societies, to be a very insightful venue for an exchange of information, experience and good practices among all relevant stakeholders in line with GCM priorities and implementation in Mongolia. The information presented during the forum was incorporated to this updated Voluntary GCM Review in Mongolia, along with additional written inputs from the relevant organizations after the Forum.

## 2. Policy and enabling environment

The Government of Mongolia has prioritized

2010. However, when looking at the regional migration situation, it shows that the central region (where the capital city Ulaanbaatar is situated) is most affected by internal migration.

Internal migration has grown exponentially, especially rural-to-urban (heading mostly towards the capital Ulaanbaatar) and, more recently, to mining areas. In Mongolia, internal migration and displacement are increasingly shaped by a diverse combination of environmental factors often linked to climate change. These factors can have a slow onset, like the deterioration of pastoral and grazing land, or rapid onsets, in the case of winter dzuds. Short term circular migration has been part of the Mongolian traditional nomadic lifestyle for many centuries, and herding, which provides 10% of Mongolian GDP and 25% of the employment, requires constant seasonal movement. Yet, climate change is shifting these traditional patterns and changing movement and displacement in unprecedented ways.

Due to climate change, the cost of desertification is around 2 billion MNT on an annual basis<sup>4</sup>. Aside from climate change, another main cause of desertification is linked to overgrazing. With around 75 million grazing animals, Mongolia has exceeded the carrying capacity of its land by almost three times<sup>5</sup>. Seventy per cent of all pasturelands in Mongolia is reported to be affected by overgrazing. In the last two decades, Mongolia has had an increased occurrence of sudden natural disasters, such as droughts, floods and dzuds. In 2020, Mongolia had a combination of dzud and COVID-19 pandemic when some of the communities have been affected by harsh weather and, at the same time, was under restrictions and lockdown in order to prevent from the spread of COVID-19 infection. All these environmental phenomena have a negative impact on the development of Mongolia, causing huge development gaps and increasing discrepancies between rural and urban Mongolia. Rural areas have a low resilience to slow on-set and sudden climate disasters, especially due to the lack of infrastructure and services. Most of the people in the countryside rely on herding as the main source of their income, and disruption of soil, grazing land and other natural resources have a disproportional impact on them. The overall effect of climate change-induced disasters on the lives of herders is increasing and causing climate-induced displacement. But another way to look at it is not just the impact, but the preferred coping strategy for the people in the countryside in response to disaster is migration.

In order to minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin (GCM Objective 2), the Government of Mongolia has started conducting migration research and surveys in local context, in close cooperation and coordination with IOM, using international practice and expertise such as Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Mobility tracking and Flow monitoring. Mongolia was the first country in which DTM was effectively used in COVID-19 context. The usefulness of the DTM Flow Monitoring was confirmed when Mongolia has identified the first COVID-19 positive case at large that could potentially have led to community transmission. Municipality of Ulaanbaatar requested to extend the DTM monitoring two times and took over the methodology fully institutionalizing DTM Flow monitoring as a municipal instrument for emergency purposes.

Moreover, in 2021-2022, the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar has fully institutionalized the DTM Mobility tracking in Mongolian context to collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies (GCM Objective 1), including urban planning and development. In parallel, local governments in Umnugovi and Dundgovi provinces have also adopted the DTM Mobility Tracking methodology to conduct surveys on displacement, especially due to climate change-induced disasters, and population assessments, in direct consultation with the National Statistics Office. Accurate and disaggregated data for evidence-based policies (GCM Objective 1) is crucial for rural and regional development planning, as well as to ensure provision of basic services for migrants. There are around 8,000 households moving in <sup>6</sup> seasonally, looking for greener pastures. When internal migrants (herders) ften left out of basic services and information (GCM Objective 3 and 15), facing discrimination from local herders for using the pastureland temporarily for free of charge and thus deteriorating the pastureland condition. There is no concrete coordination mechanism in the country to manage these otor movements nor accurate and timely data, and it has been determined by IOM and FAO to be an important issue to initiate dialogue and interventions in 2022 through targeted programmes and projects. It is worth to note that, in order to improve the access to information (GCM Objective 3) of otor migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic when accurate information is vital to pandemic prevention

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> FAO, 2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> FAO, 2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Term used to explain the movement of herders during harsh winter, looking for better pastureland to stay until the situation improves in their homeland.

during migration, IOM has organized a radio program to inform otor herders on the move on COVID-19 and protective measures tailored to them in cooperation with the Mongolian National Public Radio.

The Government of Mongolia is receiving support from the IOM Mongolia through the

According to the National Statistics Office<sup>8</sup> and IOM survey, in 2020, Mongolia has seen an increasing trend of reverse (urban-to-rural) migration, which, as it happened elsewhere in the world, seemed to be a strategy to cope with the economic hardship inflicted by COVID-19 and related restrictions. Due to the fact that Ulaanbaatar is the capital city (13 times bigger than the second most populous), for Mongolia urban-to-rural migration means Ulaanbaatar-to-anywhere else in the country. In the last 5 years a total of 43,478 people migrated from Ulaanbaatar to 2 r mi

mainly males traveling to destinations in Asia, like the Republic of Korea, China, Japan, and some countries in Europe, with the Czech Republic and Sweden are the main destinations, as well as the United States. that there is a

even though they generally earn less than men. They also usually send money more regularly and for longer periods of time. These remittances cover the basic living expenses, health, welfare, and education costs of those staying behind and play a significant role as a safety valve for domestic unemployment. Therefore, there is a need to promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants

During the unprecedented pandemic of COVID-19, there was a tendency to discriminate people who were stranded abroad and wanted to return to Mongolia. Because there was no local transmission inside the country, the public perceived them as a virus and threat to the health of the local population and opposed the return of Mongolians abroad. Similar discrimination is also observed towards internal migrants, where urban residents blaming migrants coming from countryside for traffic congestion and different types of pollution, including air, water and soil in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar. The Government of Mongolia, in cooperation with IOM, State Emergency Commission, UNRCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, UNFAO, Swiss Cooperation and Development Agency

anti-stigma information campaign in the period of 8 December 2020 and 27 January 2021. The focus of the campaign was to reduce stigmatization and discrimination towards infected people as well as internal migrants and to encourage the public to thank frontline workers for their hard work and effort to keep the public safe. Under the campaign, different information materials were produced, and videos disseminated through social media and more than 30 TV channels.

enacting new laws and procedures to fight trafficking in persons, provide shelter and repatriation assistance to victims of trafficking, and building capacity of police, border protection officers, and relevant law enforcement officials in identifying victims and prosecuting offenders. In 2021, a nationwide prevention campaign from sexual exploitation among young girls and women called Dream Umbrella has been organized by International Organization for Migration with the support from the Coordination Council for Crimes Prevention and the National Police Agency.

for over 200 frontline border officials at the Point of Entry (PoE) in response to COVID-19 outbreak to increase border capacity and preparedness as well as to estimate further capacity

## 5. Next steps

One of the most important policy work to be achieved to fulfil the objectives and commitments outlined in the Global Compact is to successfully mainstream both international and internal migration into the seven Targeted Development programs of the Mongolian long-term policy document Vision 2050 - and ensure actual implementation and concrete policies.