

# WORKING ON MICIC

at the regional, national  
and local level

A guidance note for IOM regional and national offices



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# Introduction

## ■ The MICIC Initiative and Guidelines

Over the last few years, IOM has been at the fore-front of the Migrants In Countries In Crisis (MICIC) Initiative, a state-led effort launched to improve the protection of migrants in the context of crises<sup>1</sup>. The aim of the MICIC Initiative was to raise awareness on the specific challenges migrants face when the country they live and work in, or transit through, is affected by a conflict or natural disaster, and to recommend actions and gather evidence on how to effectively reduce their specific vulnerability. Based on its longstanding experience and undiscussed role in the international community, IOM has played a significant role in the process: IOM contributed substantially to the global standard setting and policy process by hosting the Secretariat to the Initiative and developing a set of capacity building activities that were piloted and implemented in several countries and regions.

The MICIC Initiative has come to a close in 2016, with the publication of the Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster - a comprehensive set of recommendations to better account for migrants in all emergency preparedness, response and recovery efforts. These voluntary guidelines, elaborated based on the inputs, priorities and recommendations shared by States, international organizations, civil society and private sector actors, are a blueprint for all efforts aiming to protect migrants in crisis situations by all relevant actors. While not legally binding, the Guidelines were welcomed by a large group of States and other stakeholders.

Diverse efforts are needed to implement the Guidelines' recommendations. IOM has taken on a forefront role in many of the relevant areas, including as part of its contributions towards the Global Compact on Migration, which is giving ample consideration to the issue of migrants in countries affected by crises, and its commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant global policy frameworks.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the MICIC Initiative and its process, please visit [micicinitiative.iom.int](http://micicinitiative.iom.int) or watch the MICIC videos.

IOM's efforts in the areas of work relevant to the implementation of the guidelines (which are being referred to as "MICIC" or MICIC-related") started decades ago. The organization has now positioned itself as the leading international actor in the provision of assistance to migrants, as well as their States of origin and destination, in the context of crises. However, the publication of the Guidelines has helped raise the profile of issue among policy-makers and donors at global level, which has opened opportunities for the implementation of a variety of targeted awareness raising, capacity building and emergency preparedness and response activities.

## ■ MICIC Capacity Building activities

In this context, IOM's pilot MICIC Capacity Building Program, launched in 2015 <sup>2</sup>, and follow up efforts led by many regional and national offices, have allowed to:

- Explore the feasibility of relevant capacity-building activities (targeting actors such as civil protection and foreign service personnel) which had not been systematically carried out by IOM at national/sub-national or regional level;
- Develop a toolbox of capacity-building materials that is available to support ongoing and future activities in these areas of work;
- Gather lessons and list recommendations for IOM offices on how to proceed to the design and implementation of similar activities in the future.

Thanks to these efforts, IOM's current and future MICIC-related activities can build on the reference framework of the Guidelines and on a comprehensive set of capacity-building and coordination tools targeting governmental and non-governmental counterparts. All IOM offices are encouraged to use these materials to support institutional strengthening in their host countries at the regional, national and local level and, ultimately, to work towards increasing protection and assistance for migrants in the context of crises.

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<sup>2</sup> Key initiatives at national level preceded this program, namely the "Capacity-building on Crisis Management and Assistance to Migrant Nationals", or CMAN project, implemented by IOM Philippines.

## ■ This tool

This Guidance Note aims to inform further capacity building work on MICIC issues, by providing indications and recommendations on how to design and implement MICIC-related projects and activities, based on the experience gathered by IOM staff in HQ, regional and national offices so far.

The document is divided in two main parts: “host countries” and “countries of origin”. These correspond to two streams of work on MICIC, respectively 1) the inclusion of all non-nationals (migrant workers and their families, international students, refugees and asylum seekers, tourists and any foreign resident, regardless of status) in the emergency management system and procedures of a host country at national, province, city or neighborhood level; and 2) assistance to nationals living, working or travelling abroad in the event of a crisis affecting their host country. Specific programming options exist for each stream of work; for each of them, tools have been developed that can support implementation (see figure 1).

The following sections provide guidance on the way IOM can engage in MICIC work. The guidance includes information on:

- Main objective of IOM’s engagement in relevant MICIC work;
- Main counterparts to be involved at national and sub-national level;
- Proposed activities;
- Tools available to implement the activities;
- Lessons learned and recommendations gained from past experience.

## ■ The MICIC team

Ever since the onset of the MICIC Initiative, IOM has had dedicated staff at HQ to oversee relevant policy and capacity-building activities. The HQ-based MICIC team and the Regional Thematic Specialists (RTSs) of the Department of Operations and Emergencies (DOE) serve as thematic focal points for MICIC related activities.

With the finalization of the policy initiative, the team is now fully focusing on capacity-building, and specifically to:

- **Knowledge transfer:** provision of direct support to train IOM colleagues to lead MICIC capacity building events using existing tools.
- **Coordination:** in order to implement monitoring and evaluation, facilitate the exchange of information, experiences and lessons, incorporate feedback to existing tools and to avoid the duplication of activities, facilitate coordination of MICIC-related activities in consultation with Regional Offices and other HQ Departments.
- **Support to programme development and implementation:** provision of direct support to IOM country and regional offices in the establishment and roll-out of activities, platforms and mechanisms to build Governments' capacities and to develop strategies and project proposals to this end; organization and implementation of trainings for State authorities (consular officials and emergency response personnel) and other actors (CSOs, Red Crescent Red Cross National Societies, others); adaptation of existing capacity building tools and resources to specific contexts or new sets of actors (in particular, CSOs and local authorities).
- **Communications:** maintaining external information flow and communication through the MICIC web portal and its features, thus promoting the global visibility of the MICIC work carried out at regional and national level. This includes the publication of news, blogs and tools produced as a result of field-based activities.

The MICIC team can be reached at [micicsecretariat@iom.int](mailto:micicsecretariat@iom.int) or through the MICIC IOM team ([miciciomteam@iom.int](mailto:miciciomteam@iom.int)) distribution list.

Further information, guidance and assistance on MICIC-related programming and resources can be obtained through the DOE RTSs, the PRM regional programme coordinators, and on the MICIC website at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/>.

## IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MICIC



### IN HOST COUNTRIES



### IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

#### Main activities & tools available

- **Research on migrants' presence & vulnerability in the country**
  - Examples of reports from other countries
  - ToRs for the research consultant
- **Awareness raising of emergency response personnel**
  - Event package: draft CNs and agendas, guidance to lead the sessions and relevant materials
- **Capacity building of emergency responders**
  - Event package: draft CNs and agendas, guidance to lead the sessions and relevant materials
  - Training of trainers and participants' manual
- **Coordination among key actors (civil protection, foreign services, NGOs)**
  - Event package: draft CNs and agendas
  - Template to draft Standard Operating Procedures
- **Communication campaigns for migrants on risks**
  - Examples of information products from other countries
- **Drafting migrant-inclusive preparedness plans**
  - Guidance note on drafting migrant-inclusive preparedness plans

- **Research on nationals abroad and risks they face**
  - Examples of reports from other countries
  - ToRs for the research consultant
- **Awareness raising of foreign service personnel**
  - Event package: draft CNs and agendas, guidance to lead the sessions and relevant materials
- **Capacity building of foreign service personnel**
  - eLearning course on crisis management
- **Coordination among key actors (both in home and host countries)**
  - Event package: draft CNs and agendas
- **Improving communication with nationals abroad**
  - Model for a smartphone App for travel advisory and consular service provision
  - Examples of information products from other countries
- **Drafting consular post preparedness plans**
  - Template consular contingency plan
  - Guidance note on planning for the evacuation of nationals

#### Other activities

- Training migrants as emergency responders
- Rising awareness of locals on migrants' rights in emergencies
- Integrating data on migrants in risk assessments and analyses
- Stocktaking exercises: migrant organizations and leaders, NGOs working with migrants, translators and interpreters

- Emergency drills at the foreign post level
- Stocktaking exercises: migrant organizations and leaders, local response actors and service providers, translators and interpreters
- Communications campaigns to raise migrants' awareness on risks and responses

## HOST COUNTRIES – Including migrants in emergency management

### ■ Main objective

In migrants' host countries (i.e. the country in which migrants are living or through which migrants are transiting), IOM's MICIC-related activities aim to ensure that emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities adequately account for the presence of foreign nationals.

### ■ Main counterparts

#### **Civil protection or emergency management agency**

In most countries, a dedicated governmental agency oversees all emergency management/civil protection efforts. This agency represents the main natural counterpart for MICIC-related efforts, in particular those targeting governmental counterparts. These structures most likely have a senior management/policy core, active at the national level and often connected with the Office of the Prime Minister or the Ministry of Interior, as well as a complex sub-national structure of staff members and volunteers, who carry out concrete emergency management work at local level. The engagement of both these levels is essential to the success of these activities – however work at the local level requires more extensive local presence and longer-lasting efforts to reach out to a critical mass of responders.

#### **Other actors involved in emergency response**

Many other governmental actors (e.g. security forces, firefighters, health services) are key service providers during emergencies of different kinds, often acting in coordination with the main mandated agency. Depending on the country, some non-Governmental actors may play a role in the emergency management system, too – notably the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies, national and local relief NGOs and so on.

Involving personnel from all these institutions and organizations in the proposed activities can be essential for the success and sustainability of capacity building efforts. In addition to providing specialized assistance, such actors may be among those that migrants fully trust, and prefer referring to in emergencies (e.g. firefighters, Red Cross/Red Crescent). In addition, working directly with such actors may be an option to improve the capacity of the system to work with migrants even when the lead Governmental emergency management authority is not willing to engage in capacity-building activities.

## **Immigration authorities**

In most countries, a dedicated governmental agency oversees all The Governmental authorities dealing with migration issues can be key counterparts to any programme aiming to provide services in a migrant-inclusive manner – including emergency management work. Such authorities may be competent for drafting relevant legislation, or may promote or carry out operational and outreach efforts to improve migrants' inclusion in their host societies. They can also champion relevant programmes and projects to other host government institutions. While they are not often involved in emergency preparedness, response and recovery work, they can be encouraged to engage with civil protection and other relevant actors to better do so.

Such authorities can prove specifically useful as they often collect data and draw statistics on migrants' presence and movement, or have contacts with migrant representatives, groups and networks, consulates and embassies, and civil society organizations: this information can greatly support relevant efforts.

## **Non-emergency-related civil society actors working with migrants**

Community organizations and civil society working with migrants, including migrants' formal and informal groups based on nationality or ethnicity (e.g. hometown associations) represent a key lifeline and go-to actor for migrants in normal times, and are therefore likely to become even more important in times of crisis. In most contexts, these actors are not systematically involved in emergency management activities, as they tend to rather focus on "normal-time" service provision. However, raising their awareness on the ways they can contribute to emergency management efforts and including them in relevant coordination mechanisms is key to making emergency preparedness, response and recovery more migrant-inclusive.

## ■ Proposed activities

### Awareness raising of key personnel

In order to engage the main counterparts and build their ownership of the issue of the inclusion of migrants in emergency management, it can be useful to kick-start activities through an awareness raising meeting for representatives of the most relevant institutions.

For emergency management actors, such events can be useful to recognize the issue at stake (i.e. the possibility that migrants will be affected in a future emergency, the specific impacts they may suffer, their responsibilities in the non-discriminatory provision of culturally-appropriate emergency assistance – including to migrants, regardless of status). For actors already working with migrants, such events can help identify the role they can play in a multi-stakeholder emergency management system. Such events can be a good way to gauge local interest on the issue, potential obstacles to working on it and existing options for operational follow-up.

### Dedicated research activities

A good way to build awareness on the topic and to identify critical areas of work is to gather evidence on migrants' presence in the country and on the way migrants, due to their geographical distribution, movement and characteristics, are likely to be affected by potential, future emergencies. This research activities<sup>3</sup> can build on existing data on risks and migration (even though they may be incomplete or not up-to-date) and take stock of existing laws, structures and resources relevant to the inclusion of migrants in emergency management. This kind of studies can also help identify past occurrences of local crises that have affected migrants, and main challenges migrants have encountered in accessing information and resources needed for preparedness, response and recovery. The evidence gathered through these activities can help support all other components (i.e. awareness raising, identification of priorities and key locations for capacity building activities).

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<sup>3</sup> Some examples of relevant research work can be found at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/resources-and-publications/studies-and-research>

### **Capacity building of emergency responders**

Personnel (staff and volunteers) of emergency management actors can receive specific training with the aim to: 1) build their awareness of migrants' cultural background, and how it reflects on migrants' needs and priorities in emergencies and 2) address the identified specific needs and priorities through adapted provision of emergency services. The development of the so-called "cultural competence" of such professionals is already a key approach for migrant-inclusive emergency management in many countries around the world. As many of these actors have clear hierarchical structures (often mirroring sub-national administrative divisions), a training-of-trainers (ToT) approach (i.e. training a national master team of trainers who can replicate the training at sub-national level) is a good way to reach out to a critical mass of responders in an effective manner – also keeping in mind that their personnel is likely to be already involved in learning activities on a periodic basis.

### **Establishing coordination mechanisms among key actors**

The inclusion of migrants in emergency management is almost everywhere a multi-stakeholder effort, which involves both emergency management and migrant assistance actors. In most contexts, no single actor will be specifically carrying out relevant activities; however, multiple actors may already be doing some work that can be leveraged to this end. Hence, creating coordination systems (for instance by establishing coordination events, structures, or procedures) can be an effective way to address the issue. Such structures should include, to the extent possible, mandated emergency management actors alongside institutions and organizations that have the primary mission to serve and assist migrants in non-crisis times, including consular and diplomatic personnel from their country of origin. On IOM's side, this may entail the provision of technical assistance for the development of policy standards and Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs).

It should be noted that the inclusion of migrants in emergency response management can also be mainstreamed in existing regional emergency coordination structures, composed by representatives of different countries.

### **Raising migrants' awareness on risks and options for engagement in emergency management**

Migrants themselves are a key target for inclusive emergency management activities. Improving their awareness on the potential emergencies they may face, preparedness and response measures and relevant actors and options that are available to provide services and assistance can help strengthen their ability to protect themselves and react effectively in the face of an emergency. Such awareness raising activities are particularly effective when they target individuals who can help spread information within broader migrant groups and communities, including representatives and leaders, interpreters and translators, community volunteers and school-age children.

### **Concrete emergency preparedness activities**

In addition to the above, a variety of local-level activities can be rolled out to contribute to reducing migrants' vulnerability in emergencies, including:

- Factoring data on migrants' presence, movement and characteristics into risk assessments and analyses for different hazards;
- Taking stock of migrants' presence and characteristics in the area, and of the key community actors and representatives that can play a role in emergencies;
- Developing and disseminating information and communications materials for migrants on potential emergencies and recommended preparedness and response measures (translated in migrants' languages and adapted to communication preferences);
- Revising emergency preparedness and evacuation plans to account for migrants' presence and needs in the area;
- Setting up culturally-adapted, multi-lingual early warning systems;
- Carrying out adapted community-based emergency management activities in high-immigration communities;
- Training migrants as emergency responders;
- Raising awareness of the local populations of migrants' rights in emergencies.

All these activities need to be tailored to the specificities of the local context.

## ■ Tools available

### **Training manual on the inclusion of migrants in emergency management**

A manual on “Integrating migrants in emergency preparedness, response and recovery in their host countries” is available in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. It provides substantive information, case studies and tools on how to adapt emergency management efforts to account for the presence of foreign nationals, as well as methodologies and logistical details to organize capacity building events for emergency management personnel.

It can be used to support ToTs (recommended duration: 3-5 days), as well as follow-up trainings for staff and volunteers in the field (2-3 days). It is highly recommended to use the manual as a blueprint for capacity building efforts, and to adapt the actual capacity building events based on the inputs and priorities of local actors. Selected content of the manual can also be used to support awareness raising events (1-2 day workshops or shorter, 2-4 hour demonstrations).

The training manuals are available on the MICIC website <sup>4</sup> and can be freely disseminated. All other training materials are available upon request.<sup>5</sup>

### **Template SOPs for the inclusion of migrants in emergency management**

A template document to draft Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for the inclusion of migrants in emergency management is available in English, Spanish, French and Arabic.<sup>6</sup> It can be used to formalize coordination agreements and procedures among various actors that are relevant to the inclusion of migrants in various facets of emergency management. The template provides guidance on the content to be included in the localized SoPs.

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<sup>4</sup> The manual can be consulted at: [http://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/resource\\_pub/docs/micic\\_training\\_e-manual\\_pdf\\_only\\_30mar17\\_1.pdf](http://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/resource_pub/docs/micic_training_e-manual_pdf_only_30mar17_1.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Please address relevant requests at: [micicsecretariat@iom.int](mailto:micicsecretariat@iom.int)

<sup>6</sup> The English version is at: [https://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/resource\\_pub/docs/07\\_en\\_sops\\_for\\_assisting\\_migrants\\_in\\_emergencies\\_web.pdf](https://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/resource_pub/docs/07_en_sops_for_assisting_migrants_in_emergencies_web.pdf). All the other versions can be obtained at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/toolkit-host-countries>

### **Post-arrival awareness-raising module**

A full set of training materials to conduct 2-hour awareness sessions with migrants and their representatives, to raise their awareness on local hazards, relevant preparedness and response measures, and local actors and options to get support. It can be used as a standalone tool, integrated in more comprehensive trainings supporting migrants' adjustment in their host location, or as an introduction for more in-depth capacity building and engagement activities. The tool is available upon request.<sup>7</sup>

### **Host country toolbox**

A set of operational tools is available in English, Spanish, French, Russian and Arabic to support local-level activities,<sup>8</sup> including:

- A checklist to ensure that contingency plans account for migrants' specificities;
- A community profiling tool to gather essential information on migrant groups;
- A tool to gather information on organizations and individuals that can help communicate and coordinate with migrants in emergencies;
- A tool to gather information on interpreters and translators, to create a database of volunteers and professionals to help translate products and messages in emergencies;
- A checklist to organize migrant-inclusive trainings and workshops on emergency preparedness and response;
- Events toolkit, inclusive of template documents (agenda, concept note, certificates, feedback questionnaires) for the organization of events and consultations.

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<sup>7</sup> Please address relevant requests at: [micicsecretariat@iom.int](mailto:micicsecretariat@iom.int)

<sup>8</sup> The toolkit can be accessed at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/toolkit-host-countries>

## ■ How to evaluate success of relevant efforts

Evaluation of progress on MICIC-activities can be performed at different levels. As part of training, coordination and awareness raising activities, it is recommended to consider the following elements:

- Participants' reactions to capacity building activities: whether people are satisfied with the training/workshop/event, as measured through perception surveys. An example of perception questionnaire is included in the ToT package.
- Substantive learning: whether people have improved their knowledge on a specific topic through the training/workshop/event, as measured by an assessment of their knowledge. Ideally, an initial assessment should be performed before the activities are rolled out to help quantify participants' improved knowledge as a result of capacity building activities. Tools to support such assessments have yet to be developed.
- Use of knowledge: whether people and institutions are actually using the knowledge they have acquired. This usually require longer-term evaluation efforts to quantify longer-lasting changes in behaviors, institutional structures, and resource allocation. Depending on the activities that have been rolled out, this can include looking at (among others):
  - Whether sessions, materials or courses on the inclusion of migrants in emergency management are regularly being used by relevant institutions and personnel;
  - Whether migrants have been engaged in emergency management structures;
  - Whether relevant coordination mechanisms have been established by key institutions;
  - Whether emergency management procedures, plans, standards etc. have been modified to account for migrants' presence, and their specific needs;
  - Whether emergency management actors have established other relevant initiatives (e.g. data collection on migrants, repository of contacts of key institutions or of emergency interpreters and translators).

A methodology to perform long-term outcome assessments will be made available by mid 2018.

All the above measures can be integrated in relevant activities' result matrixes, and efforts are ongoing to develop specific indicators. Assessing the actual impacts of such capacity building programmes on migrants' safety and well-being may be however extremely tricky: successful preparedness efforts may result in prevented/reduced damage to migrants and their assets, which is complex to quantify. It may be possible to use alternative measures, such as quantifying the number of migrants who have received communications on a given risk or emergency preparedness measure, or the number of areas covered by a revised contingency plan or early warning system.

## ■ Lessons learned and recommendations

- The name of the MICIC Initiative, with its reference to “countries in crisis” has generated ample criticism by some State actors, in particular in host countries, that refused to associate the word “crisis” to their country. While the MICIC Guidelines clarify that the expression “country in crisis” is not a judgement value of any country, it may be helpful to present the capacity building and other tools under a different title and to replace the word MICIC with other expressions. In order to address this sensitivity, past efforts have adopted the terminology “Addressing the vulnerability of migrants in emergencies”. In general, when working in countries of destination that have been, or might be affected, by a disaster or conflict, talking about “emergencies” is easier than talking about “crises”.
- In order for MICIC activities to be sustainable, it is key to get the buy-in of a few key institutions (ideally the lead emergency management authority itself) and of their senior management. Building this consensus may require months of dedicated activities, and should be factored in when planning for projects and activities. It can be useful to have a champion (an individual, a key institution) in the country to support this process. An even longer engagement period needs to be factored in if an office intends to pursue a fully-multistakeholder approach (with the involvement of governmental and non-governmental actors, including migrant groups).
- The inclusion of migrants in emergency management can be, in certain countries, a sensitive political issue. Experience has shown that in some contexts it is more fruitful to present the activities as simple capacity building efforts, trying to focus on operational

aspects. In other countries, however, a general introduction of the issue from a legal or policy perspective can be useful to build interest and engagement of the key counterparts. For the same reason, while in some countries it is possible to engage different parts of the Government in the activities, in others it is recommendable to focus the dialogue only with agencies or ministries that show receptiveness on the issue. This may also mean targeting key non-governmental actors only, if no governmental institution shows readiness to engage.

- Due to the nature of preparedness activities, it is much easier to carry out capacity building activities targeting host country institutions in areas that mainly face natural disaster scenarios.
- While the MICIC Guidelines explicitly focus on natural disasters and conflicts, the recommendations and measures covered by the different products can be applied to a variety of emergency situations – notably man-made disasters, epidemics and accidents, including small-scale ones (which are often way more relevant and tangible for emergency management actors). This can be a key point to highlight in order to improve the counterpart's engagement in the process.
- It is essential that the counterparts understand why inclusive approaches should be actively promoted. In most countries, emergency management actors are convinced that they already work in a non-discriminatory manner; however, that is often limited to adopting a “color-blind approach” (which, more often than not, will only be fully respected in early search-and-rescue work). Presenting evidence from case studies counterparts can actually relate to (e.g. emergencies that have hit the country or the region in the past, or that have affected their nationals abroad, and which have affected migrants disproportionately) can help to this end. It can also help to present cases from countries that are considered as advanced in matters related to emergency management (e.g. USA, Australia or Japan) – which allow to highlight that migrants' specific conditions of vulnerability are likely to be observed in any context. It can also be useful to raise the personnel's awareness on specific provisions that require them to work in a non-discriminatory manner (e.g. the country's constitution, emergency management law, or the text regulating the organization of the emergency management system, and to show migrants' contributions to the country's well-being (e.g. the taxes they pay, the income their activities generate, their role in emergency response and recovery). Finally, it is useful to remind them that assisting migrants, especially when they constitute a significant share of the affected population, is essential to resolving a crisis situation, and to ensuring that the health, livelihood and social impacts they suffer do not extend over time and to their host communities. Such awareness raising activities may be needed for personnel at all levels (e.g. senior management, operational staff).

- Even when working with senior officials from the main counterparts (and definitely when working with operational staff), it is often more important to highlight the concrete need for migrants' inclusion in their work than to highlight the high-level policy framework in which such activities take place.
- As most emergency management actors have structures in place to train their staff and volunteers, including the topic of "cultural competence" / "migrants' integration" within existing training curricula and opportunities can be a good way to maximize impact, and ensure sustainability, of these efforts.
- MICIC initiatives are not standalone activities. Activities can be mainstreamed into existing emergency response mechanisms at national and sub national levels. This helps to allay cost implication fears on the part of governments and other stakeholders. Exploring the opportunity to implement trainings and ToTs with the "Staff development" or "learning" unit of emergency management institutions can be a good way to ensure sustainability of any capacity building effort. Such institutions may exist at the regional level, too.
- Existing materials should be used for the audiences and workshops they have been designed to support. However, they can be adapted to account for local specificities (e.g. priorities, hazards, migrants' presence and characteristics, existing structures and mechanisms). Consulting local counterparts throughout this process is also a good way to build their ownership of the issue.
- The training methodologies are highly interactive and mostly based on group work and group discussions. In the event of trainings with participants with different language skills, methodologies may need to be adapted.

## HOME COUNTRIES - Protecting nationals abroad in emergencies

### ■ Main objective

In migrants' home countries (i.e. the country from which migrants originate, and of which they are citizens), the main objective of MICIC-related activities is to improve the awareness of foreign service personnel on the unique challenges their nationals living, working or travelling abroad can face when their host country is affected by a crisis, and to build their capacity to address the surge of specific requests for assistance that such situations often induce.

### ■ Main counterparts

#### Foreign services

All countries have a structure in place to provide basic, day-to-day services to nationals abroad (e.g. documentation, legalizations, protection of their interests abroad, circulation of information on locally-available services and opportunities, sometimes even basic integration services in the host country). In most cases, these services are provided by foreign posts (consulates and diplomatic missions) in the host country. Such institutions are mostly attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of the home country, often through a directorate/division responsible for consular affairs.

The services these institutions provide can be key to reducing the vulnerability of nationals abroad in emergencies, as crisis-affected countries often do not have capacity or willingness to respond to the needs of non-nationals. While some countries have greatly scaled-up their capacity to protect their nationals abroad and can count on strong field representations and well-structured assistance procedures and systems, in many countries foreign services are under-staffed or under-resourced to face major crisis situations affecting their nationals abroad. This applies both to coordination capacity at capital level and operational capacity at post level. To address this situation, foreign services personnel, based both at capital level and post level, will benefit from participating in targeted capacity building activities.

### **Dedicated crisis response institutions**

A number of countries, both in the global North and South, have set up bodies dedicated to responding to crises affecting nationals abroad (e.g. Rapid Response Teams, Crisis Cells). These are commonly based and operate at capital level or in regional coordination locations. When working in countries that have such structures in place, it is essential to involve them in planning and implementation of relevant activities. While it is possible that countries that have already set up such institutions don't need further capacity building support, they may still find specific products and tools useful.

## **■ Proposed activities**

### **Awareness raising of key personnel**

In order to engage the main counterparts and build their ownership of the issue of managing crises affecting nationals abroad, it can be useful to kick-start activities through an awareness raising meeting for representatives of the most relevant institutions. In addition to representatives of MOFA and crisis management bodies, this could include, for instance, the Ministry of Labour, authorities and actors involved in international transportation, the political and operational entities responsible for the integration of migrants returning back home from crisis-affected areas, and employers of nationals abroad. Such events can be helpful to take stock of existing actors and clarify respective roles, capacities and responsibilities.

### **Dedicated research activities**

A good way to build awareness on the topic and to identify critical areas of work is to gather evidence on nationals' presence abroad, and how they, due to their geographical distribution, movement and characteristics, are likely to be affected by potential, future emergencies in their host locations. Such a study can build on existing data on risks abroad and migration (even though such data is often incomplete or not up-to-date) and should take stock of existing laws, structures and resources relevant to assisting nationals abroad in crises. This kind of studies can also help identify past crises affecting foreign countries in which nationals were living or transiting, and the challenges migrants have encountered in accessing information and resources needed for crisis preparedness, response and recovery – including, crucially, the obstacles encountered

by their own foreign services in assisting them. The evidence gathered through these activities can help support all other components (i.e. awareness raising, identification of priorities and key locations for capacity building activities).

### **Capacity building of foreign service staff**

Personnel of foreign services, both at capital level and in field locations, can receive specific training with the aim to: 1) build awareness on the crises that may affect migrants' countries of transit and destination, and how such crises can affect consular business continuity and relevant institutions' capacity to assist them; and 2) identify options they can pursue to address the specific information and assistance needs of their nationals facing crises abroad. This often means setting up dedicated information collection operations, procedures and structures – however, such activities do not need be complicated or costly, and can often be built on existing initiatives and data.

A number of options can be considered for capacity building initiatives targeting representatives of foreign services, which are described in more details in the section on tools:

- Adoption of the MICIC eLearning course for foreign services personnel
- National level workshops and trainings (e.g. presentations during annual consular meetings, face-to-face trainings)
- Regional level workshops and trainings (e.g. presentations during meetings of regional consular networks, trainings for consular staff of different countries in a region)
- Workshops and trainings for country-based consular representations (events for the diplomatic representatives of different countries based in a specific location to discuss common challenges and address coordination opportunities). If the context allows, these meetings can include representatives of the host country's emergency management authority and other stakeholders.

### **Building coordination mechanisms among home country actors**

In most countries, different institutions will be responsible for different areas of work that are relevant to the protection of nationals abroad (e.g. consular services, evacuation, reintegration assistance). If a dedicated coordination structure to manage specifically crisis situations affecting nationals abroad does not already exist, it can be established or supported – by convening one or more meetings among relevant actors, identifying focal points and providing a forum for a community of practice.

In addition, such events can be organized at regional level, for instance providing fora for representatives of different foreign services (from field locations or capital) to share experiences and build emergency management coordination structures.

### **Coordination among home and host country actors**

Depending on the operational context, foreign post personnel can be included in host country's emergency management coordination structures and procedures – if that is not already the case. Such coordination mechanisms can be established or supported, by convening one or more multi-stakeholder meetings, and creating exchange and communication among relevant focal points.

### **Raising migrants' awareness on risks and options for engagement in emergency management**

Nationals abroad are not always adequately aware of potential emergencies they may face in their destination, recommended preparedness and response actions, and relevant actors and options that are available to provide services and assistance. This lack of awareness may be one of the essential elements compounding their vulnerability, but can be addressed by providing some targeted information on their destination. Setting up structures to ensure that nationals going abroad systematically receive this information, including as part of more comprehensive orientation packages, is important to strengthen their ability to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies.

## Emergency preparedness activities

In addition to the above, a variety of other activities can be rolled out to increase the capacity of home country institutions to assist their nationals abroad, including:

- Development of protocols for preparedness to crisis at the foreign post level;
- Development of consular contingency plans;
- Emergency drills at the foreign post level and capital level;
- Creation of information databases on local response actors;
- Mapping of nationals' presence and characteristics in the area;

All these activities need to be tailored to the specificities of the local context.

## ■ Tools available

### eLearning course for consular staff

An eLearning course for foreign service staff on “Assisting nationals affected by crises abroad” is available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.<sup>9</sup> This 4 to 6-hour modular course offers information, tools and experiences from a variety of contexts and recent crises. It aims to improve consular staff's capacity to: communicate with nationals abroad before and during crises; directly provide key services and assistance to nationals in the affected area; and facilitate the evacuation of nationals from crisis affected area, if needed.

The course is available for free on IOM's Learning Management System to external users (registration needed),<sup>10</sup> as well as on the Learning Platform of IOM's Mesoamerica Program.

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<sup>9</sup> More information on this tool is available at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/e-learning-consular-staff>

<sup>10</sup> Participants can enroll at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/enroll-micic-e-learning-consular-staff>

The global eLearning course can (and should) be adapted and translated into different languages. The adaptation of the content is a key step in order to make the course truly relevant for the consular staff of each country, as it needs to reflect its operational reality and priorities. To this end, IOM can share with governmental counterparts the eLearning source materials, free of charge, for their revision and integrations. IOM can also provide support to this adaptation process through targeted research and technical assistance, upon request. Adaptations may include, for instance: complementing existing information to reflect each country's relevant institutions, capacities and systems; including case studies that are more relevant to the major destinations of the country's nationals; modifying the graphic identity and adding country-specific logos and images.

Once adapted, the course can be transferred to the counterpart organization for their use. IOM encourages the inclusion of the course in standard training packages for personnel before or upon deployment in high risk areas.

### **Package for face-to-face events with consular staff**

A package to organize training, awareness raising events and consultation events with home country actors (e.g. representatives of various consular posts, or of different institutions – both from a single country and from different countries) is available in English and Spanish.<sup>11</sup> This also includes a set of Power Points presentations that cover the whole content of the eLearning course, as well as a Reference Manual on “Reducing the vulnerability of nationals abroad in crises” (only available in English).<sup>12</sup>

The package allows to run a variety of events, ranging from 2-hour demonstrations on selected topic and awareness raising events to 2-day coordination and training workshops.

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<sup>11</sup> In order to request this package, please contact the MICIC team at: [micicsecretariat@iom.int](mailto:micicsecretariat@iom.int)

<sup>12</sup> The manual can be consulted at: [https://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/reference\\_manual\\_elearning\\_web.pdf](https://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/default/files/reference_manual_elearning_web.pdf)

## Smartphone app for consular services and travel advice

IOM, and specifically its offices in Central America, has developed expertise in developing smartphone Apps that can be used by foreign services to establish a two-way communication with nationals abroad, reaching out to them and receiving requests of assistance in normal times and in times of crisis. IOM can therefore propose the development of similar Apps in other contexts. This means providing guidance and funding for the development of the App and of the back-end platform. Once developed the App is transferred to national authorities who take up full ownership of the product and are responsible to manage incoming data and requests for assistance, and populate the tool with relevant information on a day-to-day basis.<sup>13</sup>

## Pre-departure or post-arrival awareness-raising module

IOM has developed a full set of training materials to conduct 2-hour awareness sessions on main hazards that may affect a specific destination, recommended preparedness and response measures, and relevant actors and options to get support. The materials can be used to run pre-departure or post-arrival awareness sessions, for nationals planning on travelling abroad, or who have just arrived in a foreign country. The module can be delivered as a standalone session or integrated in more comprehensive orientation workshops to support nationals' adjustment in their host country – ideally by including it in Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) or Pre-Arrival Orientation (PAO) courses that are systematically delivered to a country's nationals by relevant actors in the home country (e.g. labour authorities, recruiters) or in the host country (e.g. foreign posts, employers).<sup>14</sup>

## Home country toolbox

A set of tools is available in English, Spanish, French, Russian and Arabic to support key operations,<sup>15</sup> including:

- A template contingency plan to be used to draft plans at the consular post level.
- A reference checklist for the evacuation of migrant children.

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<sup>13</sup> More information on the MICIC Smartphone apps is available at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/micic-smartphone-application>

<sup>14</sup> The materials and additional information on this tool can be requested at: [micicsecretariat@iom.int](mailto:micicsecretariat@iom.int)

<sup>15</sup> The toolkit can be accessed at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/toolkit-home-countries>

- A community profiling tool to gather essential information on migrant groups;
- A tool to gather information on organizations and individuals that are key to communicate and coordinate with nationals in emergencies;
- A tool to gather information on interpreters and translators and create a database of volunteers and professionals to help translate products and messages in emergencies;
- A flyer and video of the MICIC eLearning course;
- Events toolkit, inclusive of template documents (agenda, concept note, certificates, feedback questionnaires) for the organization of events and consultations.

## ■ How to evaluate success of relevant efforts

Evaluation of progress on MICIC-activities can be performed at different levels. As part of training, coordination and awareness raising activities, it is recommended to consider the following elements:

- Participants' reactions to capacity building activities: whether people are satisfied with the training/workshop/eLearning course/event, as measured through perception surveys. An example of perception questionnaire is included in the training package for consular staff.
- Substantive learning: whether people have improved their knowledge on a specific topic through the training/workshop/eLearning course, as measured by a substantive assessment. Such an assessment is included in the final module of the eLearning course. Ideally, an initial assessment should be performed to help quantify participants' improved knowledge as a result of capacity building activities.

- Use of knowledge: whether people and institutions are actually using the knowledge they have acquired. This usually require longer-term evaluation efforts to quantify longer-lasting changes in behaviors, institutional structures, and resource allocation. Depending on the activities that have been rolled out, this can include looking at (among others):
  - Whether sessions, materials or courses on the protection of nationals abroad in crises are regularly being used by consular staff;
  - Whether people are downloading and using the smartphone app;
  - Whether consular posts have drafted or revised their contingency plans;
  - Whether foreign services have established other relevant initiatives (e.g. data collection on, or communication with, nationals abroad).

All these measures can be integrated in relevant activities' result matrixes. Assessing the actual impacts of such capacity building programmes on migrants' safety and well-being may be however extremely tricky: successful preparedness efforts may result in prevented/reduced damage to people and their assets, which is complex to quantify. It may be possible, however, to identify a number of final beneficiaries who are covered by updated consular contingency plans, or have received communications on a given risk or emergency preparedness measure.

## ■ Lessons learned and recommendations

- While the MICIC Guidelines explicitly focus on natural disasters and conflicts, the recommendations and measures covered by these capacity building products can be applied to a variety of crisis situations – notably economic crises, crackdown on irregular migrants, man-made disasters, epidemics and accidents. In fact, foreign services do not look exclusively at specific types of crises: a “crisis” might be any situation that triggers a surge in assistance needs by their nationals. Highlighting this fact can increase the interest of foreign services for the MICIC tools.

- In order for these activities to be sustainable, it is key to get the buy-in of a governmental institution that would lead in preparedness and response activities for the benefits of nationals abroad – most likely MOFA (or its consular direction) or a dedicated emergency management unit. Building this consensus may require months of dedicated efforts. Time and resources (i.e. staff, events, travel) needed to support this should be factored in when planning for projects and activities. It can be useful to have a champion (an individual, a key entity) in the country to support throughout the process.
- Engagement from counterparts means mostly allocating dedicated staff time for the revision of the materials and of the products, as well as for the management of the smartphone App platform.
- Many governments will likely have in place courses, training programmes or periodic face-to-face meetings for the benefit of their consular services. Mainstreaming the proposed capacity building activities in such processes can be a good way to ensure their sustainability and impact.
- Governments may not want to engage due to fear for the costs associated with supporting such capacity building activities in the longer term (e.g. maintenance of a learning management system to host the eLearning course or management of the back-end platform for the Smartphone App). It should always be highlighted that these activities are relatively low cost (between USD 5,000 and 20,000 for the adaptation and translation of the eLearning course, between USD 5,000 and 10,000 for the development of the App), and that IOM can help arrange cheaper hosting solutions.
- It should be noted that the translation (and even more the adaptation) of the eLearning course is a time-consuming process, as government counterparts may take a very long time to review and share comments and feedback on the existing materials and produce the new content. No less than 6 months should be allocated to the process. The same should be considered for the development of the Smartphone App.
- Governments may also be reluctant to engage for fear that IOM maintain some form of control on the materials and products: it is important to clarify that IOM supports and facilitates the development and adaptation of the products, which are then fully transferred to the Governmental counterparts for their use.
- It can be useful to show that many crisis preparedness activities (e.g. data collection on nationals abroad, coordination with migrant groups, representatives and NGOs) can be realized easily and at low costs, and can help managing a number of non-crisis activities in a more

effective manner (e.g. communications, basic service provision). This can increase the relevance of an investment on capacity building for the institutional counterparts: such activities would produce more tangible benefits, not limited to potential crisis scenarios.

- While most foreign services will have already faced crisis situations affecting their nationals abroad, and are likely to be aware of the implications such crises have for their work, presenting evidence from case studies they can actually relate to can be useful to ensure their buy-in in the programme. This should focus on operational challenges and the obstacles nationals faced in their host countries when trying to access essential information and assistance, without blaming home country institutions for their lack of capacity to adequately protect their nationals.
- Due to the level of awareness of the counterparts on such issues, it is not always necessary to focus in details on the MICIC Initiative and Guidelines as the framework in which IOM activities take place. However, the Guidelines can be helpful to show global concerns for the issue, as well as to identify potential areas of work.
- Existing materials should be used for the audiences and events they have been designed to support. However, they should be adapted to account for local specificities (e.g. priorities, hazards, migrants' presence and characteristics, existing structures and mechanisms). Consulting local counterparts throughout this process is also a good way to build their ownership of the issue.

## FAQs

### What is MICIC?

MICIC (Migrants In Countries In Crisis) designates a state-led policy initiative launched in 2014 to raise awareness on the specific challenges migrants face when the country they live and work in, or transit through, is affected by a conflict or natural disaster. Through a broad consultative process, the MICIC Initiative gathered evidence and formulated recommendations on how to effectively reduce the specific vulnerability of migrants in the context of crises. The policy initiative has come to an end in 2016, with the publication of the MICIC Guidelines.

However, the Guidelines highlight a number of operational options, in different areas of work related to crisis preparedness, response and recovery, that can be pursued to reduce the vulnerability of migrants in crises. These activities are often referred to as “MICIC” or “MICIC-related”.

### How does MICIC relate to global policy frameworks?

The protection of migrants affected by crises is very relevant to a number of global policy frameworks. It is mentioned in the New York Declaration (para 8n and 50),<sup>16</sup> and is being discussed as part of the process to establish a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.<sup>17</sup> MICIC-related activities directly contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Sendai Framework for DRR<sup>18</sup> (which calls for migrants' inclusion in DRR in paragraphs 27h and 36a) and the Paris Agreement<sup>19</sup> under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (which recommends migrants' inclusion in climate change work in its preamble) and support a number of SDG targets.

### How is MICIC relevant to our work?

Recent crises and the dissemination of the MICIC Guidelines have increased the interest of Governments all around the world to carry out MICIC-related projects and activities. A variety of opportunities have opened up to work with governments and non-governmental actors, both in countries of origin and destination, in areas that were not systematically covered by IOM programmes (such as capacity building

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<sup>16</sup> Available at: <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration>

<sup>17</sup> More information available at: <https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration>

<sup>18</sup> Available at: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>

<sup>19</sup> Text available at: [http://unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php)

on crisis management for consular staff or migrant-inclusive disaster preparedness). Due to its role throughout the Initiative and its recognized expertise in the field, IOM is uniquely placed to lead on these efforts – in fact, there is an expectation on the part of Governmental counterparts that IOM support such activities.

### **Who does MICIC in IOM?**

MICIC activities cut across the work of IOM and its thematic areas. The Department of Operations and Emergencies (DoE) hosts the MICIC Team, which works in coordination with other departments. At regional level, DOE Regional Thematic Specialists (RTSs) are the focal points for the endorsement of relevant project proposals and components and the interlocutors for all MICIC-related activities planned for and implemented under different thematic areas (for more information on the support role of the MICIC Team, please check the introductory section of this tool).

The publication and use of the MICIC Guidelines do not necessarily imply changes in the way missions, departments and divisions are already working: IOM has a comprehensive and long-standing experience working on the issue of migrants in crises, both at the policy and operational level, and the presence of a dedicated unit does not affect that in any way. However, communicating (and, if needed, coordinating) with the team on MICIC-related activities is highly recommended in order to improve visibility and coherence of programming, as well as help disseminate experience within IOM.

### **How is MICIC related to internal policy frameworks such as MCOF and MiGof?**

The MICIC Guidelines are not an IOM policy framework. They are the outcome document of the State-led MICIC Initiative, to which IOM contributed by providing substantive and technical advice based on its operational and policy expertise. The Guidelines are a voluntary document, and provide a series of recommendations to a wide range of actors (States, International Organizations including IOM, civil society and the private sector) on how to prepare and respond to crises in a way that better accounts for migrants' presence.

IOM's MICIC-related work fully fits within IOM's own existing policies and frameworks, and in particular the Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF) and the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF). It does not require the use or implementation of any new framework or strategic planning tool.

IOM's MICIC-related activities contribute to the achievement of MiGOF's objective 2, "Good migration governance is based on effective responses

to the mobility dimensions of crises". They also fit within MCOF's overall scope of managing the mobility dimensions of crises. When planning for, or intervening in, crises with a mobility dimension ("migration crises"), IOM should take into account the presence of international migrants among the affected populations: in order to respond to their specific needs (e.g. linked with language proficiency, cultural requirements, need for international evacuations, legal status in the host country and availability of documentation) IOM may need to carry out specific efforts, which can fit within different MCOF sectors of assistance (e.g. emergency consular assistance, transport assistance, camp management, DRR).

### **Do I need to plan for or report on MICIC?**

There is no separate mandatory planning requirement on MICIC. Reporting on MICIC does happen at global level as part of relevant IOM frameworks, through dedicated indicators (e.g. number of countries covered, number of professionals trained) as well as through specific programmes' or Divisions' indicators (e.g. migrant-inclusive disaster risk management under TRD/DRR).

In order to facilitate this task, as well as visibility and cross-fertilization of relevant experiences, it is recommended to keep DOE RTSs and the MICIC team informed of MICIC-related plans, projects, events, initiatives and documents your offices may be working on.

### **Is any funding available for MICIC activities?**

Proposals for MICIC-related capacity building activities can be included under the 5th pillar of PRM-funded programmes. In addition, capacity building work for inclusive emergency management, and in particular disaster management, can potentially be funded by donors interested in emergency preparedness/management (ECHO, OFDA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (including a variety of more development-oriented donors). IDF funding has supported consular crisis capacity building projects, notably in the Philippines and Vietnam.

It is recommended to have a clear budget strategy to be able to support follow-up work in case the partner institutions' interest in the topic increases – otherwise initial awareness raising and capacity building efforts may be quickly forgotten.

### **Do we work with ICMPD on MICIC?**

ICMPD has been heavily involved in MICIC-related activities ever since the inception of the Initiative. They have organized the MICIC Initiative regional consultations, carried out research in a number of countries, and have engaged in a series of capacity-building activities. In particular, they

offer Foreign Services courses and workshops on consular contingency planning, and they are now starting a new stream of work on coordination of (mainly) non-governmental actors for migrant-inclusive emergency response. Their activities have largely been complementary to IOM ones, and, wherever possible, we have tried to collaborate with them. The decision on joint initiatives has been taken on an ad-hoc basis by relevant country offices, and always considering the pre-existing relations among IOM and ICMPD in the area.

### **Where can I find the MICIC capacity building tools?**

Most tools are on the MICIC website, under the capacity building section (<https://micicinitiative.iom.int/capacity-building-tools>). The eLearning course is available on IOM's Learning Management System (<http://iom.central-lms.com/>). Other materials (e.g. training packages, methodologies) are available on demand.

### **How can I become a MICIC Trainer?**

The MICIC team has organized a series of ToTs on the MICIC capacity building tools and methodologies. More such events can be organized in the future, should the need arise and at the request of regional and country offices. The MICIC Team can also support follow-up initiatives by current trainers. In addition, the MICIC team can organize "on-the-job" trainings, involving interested colleagues in the planning and roll-out of upcoming capacity building initiatives.

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<https://micicinitiative.iom.int/>

**MICIC**  
MIGRANTS IN COUNTRIES IN CRISIS



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency