



## Report of the Secretary-General on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027)

### Input from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – 2024

#### Overview: human mobility and poverty eradication

**Migration is an age-old coping and adaptation strategy that has lifted millions out of poverty.** It has the power to transform the lives of individuals, their families, their communities and societies for the better. After moving to a developed country, migrants from the poorest countries, on average, experienced a 15-fold increase in income, doubling of school enrolment rates, and 16-fold reduction in child mortality ([IOM, 2023](#)). Migration benefits communities of destination, as migrants buoy specific labour markets, lead to greater productivity and contribute to countries' fiscal budgets. It benefits communities of origin, where it is linked to increased innovation and entrepreneurship, and investment in businesses and human capital. Remittances – which reached a record USD 647 billion in 2022 and are the largest source of external finance flows to low-and middle-income countries other than China ([World Bank, 2016](#)) – finance sustainable development, climate adaptation and contribute to poverty reduction objectives. Without remittances, the proportion of the poor would be 10% higher in Bangladesh, 11% higher in Uganda and 12% higher in El Salvador ([IOM, 2023](#)).

**Yet, migrants are more likely than non-migrants to be in poverty.** Data from 36 countries around the world in 2015 showed that around 35% of international migrants were in or at risk of poverty, compared to just 23% of non-migrants. Due to different restrictions, many migrants have no access to social protection; approximately 22% of labour migrants are not covered and 55% cannot transfer their benefits home or to another country. Despite several international legal instruments recognizing the right to health for everyone, migrants have the same access to health services as nationals in only half of 84 countries surveyed in a study, while in 37% equal access is contingent on migrants' legal status ([IOM, 2023](#)) with untenable out-of-pocket payments for healthcare and contributing to further widen the poverty gap. Furthermore, inadequate regular migration pathways and protections leave people vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse. Migration remains far from safe: 60,000 migrants have been reported dead or missing along dangerous migratory routes in the last nine years, including more than 3,200 children ([IOM, 2024](#)); and the intersectionality of factors, such as age, ethnicity, gender and disability, leaves some individuals even more vulnerable to marginalization, exclusion, and harm.

**As millions of people are already moving globally – and as more will move, well-managed migration is part of the solution to accelerate global actions for a world without poverty.** Migration patterns are increasingly complex – driven and impacted by the changes we see in the world today. Conflict, climate change, environmental degradation and uneven development are driving more displacement and irregular migration. Internal displacement reached a new record level at the end of 2022. Over the past decade, climate-related events have caused over 200 million new displacements worldwide, a number that will only increase over the coming decades ([IOM, 2024](#)). At the same time, economic shifts are making migration increasingly necessary for countries at all income levels. Migrants are already adapting to shifting labour markets and new ways of working; and are ameliorating divergent demographic trends



within and across regions. Safe, orderly and regular migration pathways – implemented through integrated [acceleration actions](#) – can be harnessed to build the innovative and forward-looking development pathways that address multidimensional forms of poverty and work to the benefit of all.

### **IOM’s Work to Eradicate Poverty**

Since 2020, IOM has invested close to USD 11 billion through its programming in support of safe, orderly and regular migration. This investment has spanned the 17 SDGs and advanced 127 SDG targets; it encompasses programmes that directly contribute to the seven thematic policy areas under the UN System-wide Plan of Action for the Third UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (SWAP).

IOM works across varied development, humanitarian, and peace contexts, to ensure that human mobility is a choice. This requires addressing the adverse drivers that force people to move out of desperation. IOM assists governments and works with other partners to assess and address the drivers – such as poverty – and structural factors that compel people to move; by building resilience and coping capacities of populations along the migration cycle; and by creating opportunities so that people can move safely and regularly to fulfil their personal aspirations. IOM implements programs and projects that empower migrants and their families; through interventions that uphold and protect the rights of migrants and displaced populations; and that harness migrants’ economic and social capitals for broad based development. And IOM works to strengthen institutions and systems to institute good migration governance, advocating and supporting efforts towards policy coherence and migration mainstreaming, to harness the full and powerful force of migration for development.

The IOM flagship report “[Leveraging Human Mobility to Rescue the 2030 Agenda](#)” released on the eve of the SDG Summit – and which present six integrated and mobility-sensitive acceleration actions to put to practice the bold vision of the Summit’s Political Declaration; and the new [IOM Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028](#) released in January this year will further act as catalyst in the years ahead and for the remainder of the implementation of the SWAP – for IOM’s integrated solutions to eradicate poverty.

An example of this integrated work is the Joint [IOM-UNDP Making Migration Work for Sustainable Development global programme](#) (M4SD), which concluded at the end of 2023. It factored a contextualized assessment and understanding of what leads people to move, including multidimensional forms of poverty, and tailored whole-of-government and whole-of-society solutions with a focus on four priority sectors (health; education; social security and human rights; employment and economic inclusion). The programme has worked over its last phase of implementation 2019 – 2023 to make communities more inclusive and to create new opportunities for over 14,000 migrants and community members, so that everyone can thrive and no one is left behind in our quest for global prosperity, contributing to over 30 SDG targets.

### **Recommendations for the Secretary-General's Report**

This year’s Secretary-General’s report on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty should:

- Reiterate the importance and transversality of human mobility as a core development consideration, and as an accelerator to eradicate extreme poverty.



- Reiterate the centrality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the United Nations Secretary General Action Agenda on Internal Displacement as clear frameworks for harnessing the potential of migration and to resolve displacement crises and achieve a future where no one is left behind.
- Encourage Member States to take bold initiatives that have the potential to accelerate global efforts to reduce multidimensional poverty and have knock-on effects on various SDGs, including:
  - o Extend social protection and universal health coverage to all migrants and displaced persons, to reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities and enable their active participation in and contribution to societies
  - o Reduce remittance costs and leverage different types of diaspora contributions to boost sustainable development finance, trade systems and global value chains.
  - o Weave human mobility into development and urban planning, to increase social cohesion and boost development for all.
  - o Develop safe and regular migration pathways, invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications, to meet the needs of changing labour markets and divergent demographic trends.
  - o Reduce the digital access gap for people on the move, to improve integration and unlock innovative and green entrepreneurship.
  - o Integrate human mobility into national adaptation and climate change response plans, and invest in preparedness and loss and damages provisions, to forge impactful climate and peace action.
- Underpinning these messages is the urgent need to address the specifics of gender, age and diversity in order to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration, and this must be reflected in policy and practice.