The United Arab Emirates

Implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Voluntary National Report

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1. Methodology

At the Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakesh in December 2018, the UAE's statement to assembled Heads of State, Heads of Government and Ministers included the following quote:

> *As the host of the largest per-capita population of migrants in the world, the UAE is committed to continuing to improve migration governance standards in the years ahead. The Global Compact provides a valuable framework for guiding Member States in identifying priorities and building international cooperation. It provides global objectives, but also allows space for regional variation and national context to play their part.*
>
> *The principles underlying the Global Compact – its structure as a non-binding, state-led framework for cooperation – are the basis, we believe, for its ongoing success. Those principles acknowledge and foster the vital role that trust between governments plays in tackling the cross-border challenges that migration presents. It is important to note, of course, that although the Global Compact is a significant achievement in and of itself, it is the start of a process, and not the end. If the underlying principles continue to be upheld, then we believe that the goal of safe, orderly, and regular migration around the world can be achieved.*

This report reflects on the progress that the UAE has made since that meeting in Marrakesh in applying the twenty-three objectives of the Global Compact. It underlines the UAE's continued belief in the importance of the Global Compact and its understanding of the Global Compact as a compass by which Member States can navigate the challenges and opportunities arising from migration – in cooperation with one another and with other stakeholders.

This report is the product of a broad-based consultation that has been comprehensive in its scope. That consultation has drawn on the perspectives of diverse experts from the multiple ministries and national bodies whose portfolios touch on migration policy. It recognises that the successful management of migration cannot be the responsibility of one ministry, or one department, but rather requires a coherent view of all the ways in which government policy can impact migration outcomes. The following voluntary national report has consequently been drafted to account for a range of viewpoints, including the relationship between the GCM and the SGDs; the role of human rights in protecting migrants; and the role of business, civil society and local governments in successfully integrating and sustaining migrants and their communities.

It also draws on the UAE's extensive engagement in multilateral dialogues at a regional and global level, most notably the UAE's recent Chairmanships of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (2020 – 2021) and the Global Forum on Migration and Development (2020). Chairing these multilateral fora – which have, in turn, provided major platforms for inter-State discussion of the GCM, in partnership with stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and local administrations – has led to significant dialogue among UAE policymakers with regards to the Compact's twenty-three objectives, and furthered understanding of the GCM and its goals.

2. Policy & Enabling Environment

As a major destination for temporary migrant workers[i], the UAE's engagement in fora relating to the governance of migration has historically been focused on labour migration and has therefore been provided by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE), working in close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC). However, other ministries, executive bodies, and regulatory authorities also play a key role in migration management in the UAE, including the UAE Cabinet; the Ministry of Interior; the Education and Human Resources Council; the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security; the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking; and Emirate-level bodies (e.g. the General Directorates for Residency and Foreigners Affairs). Non-government entities, including the National Human Rights Institution, the Emirates Red Crescent and other independent organisations (referred to below) also have a role in shaping and enabling policy making. Together, these organisations, alongside civil society organisations and the private sector, oversee the management of the world's fifth largest stock of migrants, representing approximately 90% of the UAE's resident population.

The UAE's migration-related policies date back to 1971, with the introduction of a temporary guest worker programme soon after the UAE's federation. This programme was designed to provide sufficient manpower to sustain the UAE's rapid economic growth resulting from the discovery of oil, and the UAE's strategic position as a logistics, trade and destination hub. The result has been a rapid expansion of the population, as workers from around the world have arrived in the UAE to take up job opportunities across the skills spectrum. Initially, many of these migrant workers came from Asia, notably the sub-continent and south-east Asia. However, as the UAE has developed, the demographics of the UAE's migrant population has diversified, to include residents from every other nation on earth.

It is worth noting that the barriers to migrate to the UAE on a temporary basis are far lower than they typically are in other developed economies. A job offer from a recognised UAE entity (alongside certain health requirements and checks), remains the key criteria on which residency visas and work permits are offered to migrant workers. This is the result of a legislative and policy framework that focuses on prioritising a flexible, agile labour market that is suited to the needs of both employers and employees. In consequence, the UAE offers lower-skilled workers, particularly from poorer and rural backgrounds in developing countries, safe, orderly and regular migration pathways that they cannot access elsewhere. The outcome is not only the expansion of the UAE's economic and social fabric, but a vital flow of remittances, making a very large contribution to global development. According to World Bank data, the UAE was the second largest source of remittances after the United States in 2020, with UAE-based migrants remitting USD $43.24 billion over the year.

As the UAE establishes itself primarily as a knowledge economy, in line with the goals of the UAE Centennial 2071 vision, the legislative and policy structure around migration is evolving to include new models for work and residency. For example, the UAE has recently introduced long-

[i] In the UAE national context, the term 'temporary contractual worker' is generally used in preference to 'migrant', due to connotations of permanency in the Arabic word for migrant. In acknowledgement of internationally accepted terminology, this report uses 'migrant' and 'temporary contractual worker' interchangeably.

term residency visas available to individuals across a range of categories, including entrepreneurs, high-skilled workers and students, as well as retirees. These were further expanded in April 2022, strengthening residency rights across a broad range of categories (see under Objective 5). This expansion of the residency framework is not being implemented at the expense of lower-skilled migrant workers, but is designed to enable the UAE to become a leading global destination for talent. This programme has been accelerated by the recent introduction of Federal Decree-Law No. (33) of 2021 on Labour Relations, which is focused on creating greater flexibility in the labour market for all categories of employment, in addition to attracting highly skilled and qualified workers. The law also re-emphasised the importance of equal pay for equal work and introduced new employment rights, including paternity and study leave.

As UAE-based businesses respond to government incentives to focus on high-productivity economic activities, labour demands will likely change accordingly. To that end, the UAE works closely with countries of origin (COOs) to enable coordinated responses, with significant attention given at a multilateral level to the governance of labour migration in the context of changing employment landscapes; an issue which the UAE brought to the forefront of global discussions for the first time during its 2020 Chairmanship of the GFMD.

The UAE's migration policies take significant account of rights-based approaches. Key rights, including equality before the law, prohibitions on torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, and the protection of human rights, are enshrined within the UAE's constitution. Through the National Tolerance Programme, significant attention is given to fostering co-existence – particularly crucial with so many diverse communities living alongside one another. This is underpinned by legislation setting out prohibitions on discrimination and hatred, with recent provisions in the Federal Decree Law of 2021 on Labour Relations strengthening these prohibitions in the workplace. The UAE has also ratified nine conventions of the International Labour Organisation relating to the rights of workers. They are:

1. Forced Labour Convention, 1930
2. Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
3. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957
4. Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958
5. Minimum Age Convention, 1973
6. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999
7. Labour Inspection Convention, 1947
8. Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919
9. Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948

The UAE plays a very active role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals, with oversight provided by the National Committee on the SDGs. The committee facilitates the alignment of the SDGs, the sharing at a national level of information on the SDGs, and supports the implementation of the SDGs in an integrated manner. It has seventeen members from different government agencies, who are collectively responsible for national implementation, monitoring and reporting, as well as for stakeholder engagement.

3. Progress on GCM Objectives

Since the UAE endorsed the GCM at the 2018 Summit in Marrakesh, the Government of the United Arab Emirates has undertaken numerous reforms, engaged in multiple projects and partnerships, and supported a wide range of initiatives that relate to the governance of international migration. The following section addresses each of the twenty-three objectives in turn, outlining the general position of the UAE with regards to each, highlighting current policies and examples of best practices, and, where appropriate, pointing towards areas where further work is needed to meet the overall objective, within the parameters of the UAE's position with regards to that objective.

Objective 1: Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies

The Government of the UAE supports the collection and utilisation of disaggregated data as a critical input into the development of evidence-based policies relating to the management of migration. This includes data collection and utilisation at the local and national level, and, where appropriate, this data can inform dialogue and public understanding at the regional and global levels. As the convenor of the UN World Data Forum, in Dubai in 2018, the UAE encourages national and local bodies to regularly engage with international organisations to provide relevant data, in order to assist in the development of insights on policy making, while taking into account the high importance that the UAE places on data privacy and national data sovereignty.

The UAE collects and analyses data across a broad range of subject matter areas relating to migration, including entry and exit and visa issuance, with a particular focus on labour migration-related data, including the issuance of work permits, salary payments, inspections and remittances. The UAE disaggregates data for the purpose of its own policy making, including by age, sex, nationality, and migration status.

The Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre is the UAE Government authority responsible for national statistics across all sectors. The FCSC was established to develop and enhance the UAE's performance in the areas of global competitiveness, statistics and data, and to support the UAE Centennial Plan 2071. The FCSC is engaged in building an integrated national statistics system, and has the express goal of supporting the UAE's contributions to the SDGs in its capacity as General Secretariat of the National Committee for the Sustainable Development Goals. The FCSC maintains an SDG Data Hub, which provides significant amounts of open data on SDG indicators, as well as illustrating data in an engaging way.

The UAE has also made significant efforts to open data up for public use through digital platforms, including Bayanat, the Federal Government's open data portal. Bayanat is managed by the FCSC and reflects the Government's intention to enhance sustainable communities based on participation and transparency. The Bayanat platform provides open disaggregated data across a range of subject matter with relevance to migration. This is complemented at a local level by the Abu Dhabi Open Data portal, Dubai Pulse, and Ajman Data, among others.

The UAE's approach to data is strictly regulated by the Federal Data Protection Law, which came into force in January 2022. The law prohibits the processing of personal data without the specific,

clear and unambiguous consent of data subjects, and gives data subjects rights over their personal data, including the right to access their personal data, request its transfer, to have their personal data amended or erased, and to object to automatic processing. Organisations are required to make clear why personal data is being collected and processed and to provide an opt-out for data subjects to withdraw their consent.

The UAE Government maintains a number of vital databases and information dashboards to enable integrated policy making. These include an integrated labour market information system and an international knowledge transfer platform, both intended to equip decisionmakers and policymakers with the information needed to improve governance outcomes. The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation and the Central Bank also manage the Wage Protection System, which provides monitoring of information related to the payment of wages, and initiates action under circumstances of non-compliance.

Objective 2: Minimise the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin

The UAE believes that the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals will substantially reduce the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their countries of origin. At the UN Sustainable Development Summit in 2015, the UAE highlighted access to clean energy, alongside sufficient and affordable food, quality education and healthcare, sustainable economic growth, healthy ecosystems and increased resource efficiencies as issues that resonate strongly with its own policy priorities. The UAE has pledged to 'leave no one behind' and to 'shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path'.

To coordinate the UAE's response, a National Committee on SDGs was formed in January 2017 by decree of the UAE Cabinet. The Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and the Future, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and fifteen other Federal-level government organisations are also members, with responsibility for the national implementation of the SDGs. Due to the importance of young people in achieving the SDGs, the UAE National Committee announced the establishment of a Youth Advisory Council during the 2018 World Data Forum. The Youth Advisory Council is closely engaged with the UN's "Youth 2030: Working with and For Youth" strategy, and provides a platform for young people to exchange views on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and help to shape national policies. The UAE also provides space for private sector leaders to engage on the implementation of the SDGs.

The UAE recognises that climate change is one of the key adverse drivers of irregular migration. In 2021, the UAE announced its commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, making it the first country in the Middle East and North Africa to do so. The UAE's Net Zero 2050 initiative aligns with the Paris Agreement, which calls on countries to prepare long-term strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 C compared to pre-industrial levels. The deployment and use of clean energy solutions is one of the main pillars of the UAE's commitment, with over USD $40 billion invested in the sector to date. The UAE also contributes to supporting green infrastructure worldwide, investing in renewable energy ventures worth around $16.8 billion in 70 countries, with a focus on developing nations. It has also provided more than $400 million in aid and soft loans for clean energy projects.

The UAE plays a significant role in responding to humanitarian crises and threats that lead to irregular migration, as well as providing development assistance that provides opportunities to individuals and communities. Between 2010 and 2021, the UAE's foreign aid totalled $56.14 billion. The UAE has implemented an effective and well-funded development aid policy that provides assistance to least developed countries (LDCs) in the form of direct assistance grants, and loans through government and non-governmental institutions. These policies are not limited by the geography, race, colour, or religion of the beneficiaries. Over forty UAE charities, foundations, government entities and private companies have provided humanitarian aid to those in need. UAE development programmes have focused on areas including the eradication of poverty, food insecurity, cultural development, job creation, promoting gender balance, investing in human capital development and education and economic growth; all of which contribute to minimising the adverse drivers of migration. From 2016 to 2020, over $1.68 billion was allocated to women's empowerment and protection, accounting for 6.2 percent of the UAE's total foreign development assistance.

In addition, the UAE is host to International Humanitarian City (IHC), a global hub for humanitarian emergency preparedness and response. IHC hosts nine United Nations agencies and more than 85 NGOs and commercial entities engaged in delivering humanitarian aid and to support economic development. This has included playing a leading role in supporting the WHO's COVAX initiative, with over 150 million COVID-19 vaccine doses distributed to 80 global destinations through IHC's partnership with Emirates and DP World. This partnership has been matched by the Hope Consortium of Abu Dhabi-based entities, which is focused on providing a complete supply chain for global vaccine delivery. Over 2250 tonnes of medical aid was also sent to nearly 136 countries during the COVID-19 pandemic by the UAE. The UAE supported the World Health Organisation and World Food Programme by providing 500,000 PCR test kits, valued at around USD $10 million, in addition to aiding in the transport of two field hospitals from Norway and Belgium to Ghana and Ethiopia at a cost of USD $4 million. Additionally, the UAE has established field hospitals in Jordan, Guinea Conakry, Sudan, Mauritania, Lebanon and Sierra Leone. These measures are critical in helping local populations and communities recover from crises and disasters and help reduce the push factors behind irregular migration.

Objective 3: Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration

The provision of accurate and timely information is one of the UAE Government's migration management policy priorities.

The UAE makes use of multiple channels in order to provide guidance and raise awareness of migrant rights. Official channels providing information on migration and residency include: (a). the official website of the Government of the UAE, which provides information on residency and work; (b) the website of the Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship, which has information on the categories and conditions of residency; (c) the website of the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, which provides information relating to the categories and conditions of employment; (d) the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, which provides general information on residency and employment, as well as information on requirements for the accreditation of skills and the equivalency of certificates; and (e) the website

of the Ministry of Justice, which provides information on the country's laws and regulations and means of accessing dispute resolution. The provision of this information is in line with the UAE Government's commitment to digital transformation and the making information and data available online.

In the context of labour migration, ensuring that both parties to the employment relationship have a clear understanding of the rights and obligations that they owe to one another is an important preventative measure. To that end, the UAE has established Tawjeeh Centres to provide mandatory orientation services. Information sessions are provided on relevant regulations and aim to improve communication between workers and employers, as well as raise awareness of available dispute resolution mechanisms. As part of the orientation training, an awareness film has been developed in the form of a drama series that features a migrant worker arriving in the UAE. It presents the following topics and programmes:

1. An introduction to the United Arab Emirates, the country's culture, welcome to the worker
2. The UAE's focus on the issue of labour rights
3. An overview of the UAE's labour law
4. Policies pertaining to job offers and employment contracts
5. Policies pertaining to salaries and wages
6. Health and safety policies
7. Savings policies
8. Awareness messages by collaborating with local authorities in the country

For example, in 2021, 1,924,317 workers received orientation and induction training in the UAE. Literature on the rights and obligations of the two parties in the labour relationship is available in sixteen commonly used languages. During the orientation process, a SIM card is made available free of charge to participants by Tawjeeh, allowing workers to connect with the Ministry.

Since 2016, the UAE, under the umbrella of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), has spearheaded the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme (CIOP), which centres on the premise that accurate and tailored orientation programmes for temporary contractual labour should be aligned across all stages of the migration cycle. The CIOP programme, which incorporates the involvement of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and the UAE, and is managed with the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), was established to bring coherence to the information delivered by countries of origin, transit and destination. It aims to enable aspiring migrant workers to make well-informed decisions; support the development of realistic expectations regarding overseas employment; equip migrant workers to recognise and avoid illegal and exploitative practices; provide an overview of the rights framework and social and cultural practices in destination countries; and highlight the services and resources that are available to migrant workers.

The CIOP programme harmonises the provision of this information through three stages: pre-employment orientation; pre-departure orientation; and post-arrival orientation. Pre-employment orientation equips prospective migrant workers and family members to make an informed decision about whether foreign employment is a realistic and adequate option. Pre-departures orientation focuses on adjusting to a new working environment, and provides

guidance on ways to access support channels and grievance mechanisms. Post-arrival orientation provides further information on local labour laws, socio-cultural norms, workplace expectations and guidance on good conduct. The CIOP programme takes a sector- and corridor-specific approach, with the UAE's CIOP products focused on harmonising information for hospitality workers from the Philippines and Sri Lanka. The programme has been supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The UAE also regularly carries out in-country information campaigns, including the 'Know Your Rights' campaign, delivering literature in 11 relevant languages (including Arabic, English, Hindi, Urdu, Malayalam, Sinhalese, Nepalese, Tamil and Bengali) to workplaces and workers' accommodation sites. Information on worker rights is also provided through the website of the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, which also maintains a hotline for enquiries. This information includes helping migrant workers understand available mechanisms for the resolution of labour disputes. Other government organisations, including the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security also provide relevant information to UAE-based migrant workers.

Objective 4: Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation

Emirates ID is the UAE Government-issued identity card for UAE citizens and residents alike. It is mandatory for all UAE citizens and residents to apply for and hold an Emirates ID. It is issued by the Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship (FAIC). Emirates ID cards contain biometric information and are used to access government services; as a travel document for UAE nationals to travel within the GCC; and as a document for all holders, including foreign residents, to enter the country and pass immigration through eGates and other smart gates at several UAE airports. To receive an Emirates ID card, an applicant must fill in a form, either through an authorised typing centre or online on the website of the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security (FAIC). An SMS about when and where to register will follow the application. FAIC offers services for new-born children and foreign prospective students arriving in the UAE. Employers are obligated to meet the cost of issuing Emirates IDs to migrant workers.

Children born to non-nationals in the UAE are entitled to a UAE birth certificate. After a child is born, government hospitals will issue a birth certificate. For children born in private hospitals, the hospital issues a birth notification and the parents must apply to the Ministry for Health and Prevention or the health authority in their Emirate of residence, using the birth notification issued by the hospital as proof of birth. The UAE recently removed the requirement for parents to be married as a pre-requisite for a child's legal recognition, instead requiring that parents either singly or jointly acknowledge the child.

The right of migrants to retain possession of their personal identification documents, including their passport and their Emirates ID, is protected under both UAE Law No. (33) of 2021 on the Regulation of Labour Relations and the UAE law on domestic workers. Article 13, Clause 2 of the UAE Law of 2021 on Labour Relations forbids the 'withholding of official documents of the worker'. Retention of these documents by an employer is a criminal offence. Where an employer confiscates relevant ID documents, the migrant worker has the right to seek support in filing a

complaint and refer their employer to the courts. Under such circumstances, judicial authorities will require employers to return identification documents to the worker, and the employer can face a fine and /or criminal sanctions.

Objective 5: Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration

As noted above, barriers to regular migration to the United Arab Emirates are among the lowest in the world. Non-citizens who are employed by a business or organisation registered in the UAE, or by a UAE Federal or Emirate-level Government entity, will have their residency status regularised. With some additional conditions, the following categories can also regularise their status by applying for residency visas:

- Investors in a business registered in the UAE
- Owners of property in the UAE
- Dependents of:
    - a UAE-based employee
    - an investor in a UAE-based business
    - an owner of a UAE property
- University students
- Retired residents

In May 2019, the UAE introduced the Golden Visa system, with the aim of expanding regular migration pathways and increasing flexibility of entry. The Golden Visa offers ten and five-year long-term residency rights, in line with the applicants' eligibility. Also in 2019, the UAE amended requirements to allow all visa holders who meet a minimum income level to sponsor the residency of immediate family members, regardless of professional standing or qualifications, further broadening categories eligible for family reunification. Family members are issued visas for one, two or three years, depending on the nature of the work and labour contract of the sponsoring family member.

In April 2022, the UAE Cabinet approved significant changes to strengthen the laws on entry and residence requirement and expand regular pathways to foreign citizens. These reforms include:

- Allowing Golden Visa holders to sponsor children regardless of age. Restrictions on the maximum duration of stay outside the UAE in order to maintain the validity of the visa have been removed. Family members resident under the visa are granted rights to remain in the UAE in the event of the primary visa holder's death, until the expiry of the permit.

- Expanding Golden Visa availability to scientists and researchers holding a PhD or master's degree (from world-leading universities) in a broader range of categories.

- Expanding Golden Visa availability to highly skilled workers in professional categories, including medicine, sciences, engineering, information technology, business and administration, education, law, culture and social sciences.

- Expanding Golden Visa availability to outstanding students and recent graduates of UAE secondary schools and universities, as well as outstanding recent graduates of the top 100 universities worldwide.

- Reforms to the 5-year residency visa, to include a flexible grace period of up to six months stay in the UAE after the permit is cancelled or expired, in addition to facilitating and simplifying the requirements for all residency

- Introduction of a 5-year residency visa for skilled employees, without the requirement for a sponsor or employer, for applicants holding a valid employment contract, as well as a bachelor's degree and minimum salary level.

- Introduction of a 5-year residency visa for freelancers and self-employed individuals, enabling self-sponsorship. Applicants must obtain a freelance / self-employment permit from the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, hold a bachelor's degree or specialised diploma, and a minimum annual income over the previous two years.

- Raising the age that children are eligible to be sponsored by a parent to 24 years, with no limit for unmarried daughters. Children with disabilities are granted residency permits regardless of age.

- Improvements to the visa-issuance system, offering flexible duration of stay, and making available both single and multiple entry visas that can renewed.

- Introduction of a job-exploration visa, allowing recent graduates to enter the UAE and explore job opportunities without the need for a host or sponsor. It is granted to recent graduates from the top 500 universities in the world and a minimum educational level of a bachelor's degree or its equivalent.

- Introduction of a business entry visa, enabling individuals to explore business and investment opportunities in the UAE, without the need for a host or sponsor.

- Introduction of a temporary work mission visa, intended for those who have a temporary work assignment, sponsored by their employer.

- Introduction of an entry permit for study and training, for those attending courses or participating in internships. Sponsors can be universities or educational and research institutions or private businesses.

Together, these reforms constitute an extremely significant expansion of pathways for regular migration and residency.

All residence visa holders who are 18 or older are required to undergo a medical test, pass a security check, and must apply for an Emirates ID card from the Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship.

The UAE regularly enters into Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with counterparty nations in order to facilitate the recruitment and mobilisation of migrant workers. These MoUs reflect the

UAE's labour and contracting laws and set out the terms for government-to-government cooperation, including on exchange visits and mutual consultation, and information sharing and knowledge development, particularly in relation to job creation. The UAE typically establishes government-to-government joint committees for the implementation of the MoUs, to review job opportunities and the availability of corresponding skills in the counterparty nation; to interpret the provisions; and to settle any difficulties that may arise in implementation. These MoUs are in line with ILO conventions ratified by the UAE.

The UAE Government is of the view that regular migration pathways should be considered as central to addressing the adverse drivers of migration, given the developmental benefits that accrue to labour-sending communities and nations. The UAE's open policies also reduce migratory pressure on other receiving countries, by providing opportunities to workers who may otherwise seek to irregularly migrate elsewhere.

The UAE offers survivors of human trafficking and gender-based violence the opportunity to apply for a work permit and adjust their residency status in applicable situations. Individuals in the UAE on a tourist visa who are offered a job are eligible to change their residency status in line with the conditions outlined above. Furthermore, the UAE recently adopted Federal Decree-Law No. (33) of 2021 on the Regulation of Labour Relations, which allows workers in an abusive employment relationship to terminate their employment and report the case, without prejudice to their employment rights, and apply for a new work permit with another employer.

Objective 6: Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work

The UAE takes significant action to ensure that recruitment processes are fair and ethical and that workers are protected from unscrupulous practices arising from the cross-border nature of international recruitment, including payment-for-recruitment and contract substitution, both of which are illegal under UAE law. UAE legislation prohibits licensed recruitment agencies from soliciting or accepting any fees from workers. Historically, this legislation was brought in through the Labour Law of 1980, and has been regularly re-emphasised since then through Ministerial Decree No. 52 of 1989, Ministerial Decree No. 1283 of 2010, Cabinet Decision No. 40 of 2014, Ministerial Decree No. 764 of 2015, Federal Law No. 10 of 2017 on Domestic Workers, and the Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Labour Relations.

In the implementation of this legislation, with regards to recruitment practices, the UAE's Ministry of Human Resources places considerable emphasis on ensuring pre-employment and pre-departure contract transparency for migrant workers, in order to allow the worker to make an informed decision on whether or not to accept a UAE-based role. The UAE has adopted a series of measures, including: (a) the obligation of the employer to inform the worker about the conditions of work before he/she leaves the country (the job offer); (b) the adoption of a Standard Employment Contract and its registration in the database of the Ministry of Human Resources; (c) verification by the Ministry of the terms of the Standard Employment Contract to ensure that it is aligned with the terms of the job offer; (d) the translation of the Standard Employment Contract into three languages (Arabic, English and the mother tongue of the worker) as well as eleven of the most prevalent languages for migrant workers; and (e) the prohibition for either

party to amend any clauses adopted in the Standard Employment Contract without explicit authorisation from the Ministry. Any discrepancies identified will be adjusted in the worker's favour.

In 2017, the UAE Government took the decision to strengthen controls over the overseas recruitment of domestic workers and restrict businesses offering these services. Consequently, since 2018, all overseas recruitment of domestic workers is limited to services provided by accredited and licenced recruitment centres, which were established as public-private partnerships on a highly regulated basis, in line with the Domestic Workers Law of 2017. The UAE Government regularly takes action to suspend the licences of non-compliant domestic worker recruitment agents, including eighty-four centres that had their licences revoked in 2021. The high number of revocations in 2021 reflects a strengthening in licensing requirements and compliance monitoring.

Facilitating fair and ethical recruitment is also a focus of the UAE's activities at a regional level, with significant attention given to it under the auspices of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. For example, in 2014, the UAE, as part of its engagement with the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, commissioned a study from IOM on recruitment practices in the Kerala-UAE and Nepal-UAE labour migration corridors. That study found significant numbers of workers reporting discrepancies between their job offer and employment contract. The study proposed that increased transparency and dialogue between stakeholders was critical.

Subsequently, work has been undertaken in the context of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue with labour sending countries to improve recruitment practices. For example, the UAE has been involved in a pilot project with the Government of the Philippines to create and test an alternative recruitment model, to enable joint government oversight and monitoring of the recruitment process between the two countries. The purpose of the pilot was to determine the extent to which strengthened government oversight and monitoring helps to minimise malpractice in the recruitment of overseas workers, addressing issues including transparency, informed consent, payment-for-recruitment and contract substitution. The pilot also sought to establish a platform into which to integrate other avenues of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including the provision of CIOP and the certification and joint recognition of skills. It should be noted that although such programmes can have benefits, they can also raise the barriers to regular migration by reducing opportunities for private sector participants to play a role in the recruitment of workers.

Objective 7: Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

There are, in the UAE, a number of organisations providing services focused on protecting individuals that are vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

This includes the Ewa'a shelters, which are dedicated to protecting and assisting the victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The first was established in 2008 in Abu Dhabi, where the Abu Dhabi Shelter and Humanitarian Care Centre, an affiliate of the Department of Community Development, is responsible for providing care, safe shelter, health services and psychological care to victims of human trafficking, in addition to other forms of domestic violence.

The centre's responsibilities include developing awareness programmes to prevent human trafficking, in coordination with other relevant organisations.

In Dubai, the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC) provides similar services to women and children who are victims of domestic violence, abuse and human trafficking. It was established in 2007 to offer victims protection and support services, in line with international human rights obligations. The foundation provides free services, including a helpline, a shelter, case management, medical care, psychological support, counselling and legal, consular and immigration assistance. Secondary support services include children's education, recreational activities, vocational services, and skills training.

Similar services are provided in Sharjah through the Women's Protection Centre, managed by the Government of Sharjah's Social Services Department. These include social, psychological and legal services and counselling. The SSSD also provides family consultations through its website.

These services are provided regardless of nationality or residency status. In addition to these services, there are several social support centres under the supervision of the Abu Dhabi Police, which look after the victims of human trafficking. In Dubai, a General Directorate for Human Rights Protection works to provide psychological, social and legal support to human trafficking victims, and provides services including shelter, temporary visas and return air tickets home.

A dedicated national hotline facilitates the reporting of cases of human trafficking and enables victims to request protection from the relevant UAE and Emirate-level authorities by calling 800SAVE. Qualified staff receive and handle calls in a variety of languages, including Arabic, English, Urdu and Russian. The Ministry of Interior has developed a smart application for children's communications called 'Protection'. Cases of child harassment and abuse can be reported through the hotline 116111, in addition to through the website moi-cpc.ae.

Furthermore, Dubai Police General H.Q. has launched the Happy Worker Safe Society Program, focused on the protection and care of migrant workers, through which complaints about exploitative conditions can be fielded, including any form of human trafficking. The program also provides a number of services to workers, in partnership with the private sector.

Legislation relating to the management of labour and conditions of work are regularly reviewed to identify and effectively address workplace-related vulnerabilities and abuses of migrant workers at all skills levels. Federal Law No. (10) of 2017 on domestic workers was introduced in order to create a framework for governing labour relations in the home. The law asserted a number of key rights for domestic workers and established a new system for the recruitment and deployment of domestic workers to minimise the risks of contract substitution and payment for recruitment. The UAE Government also reviewed labour regulations for the private sector in 2021, introducing Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2021 on the Regulation of Labour Relations. The law created significantly greater flexibility for workers, introducing new types of work permits, and bringing coherence to a number of regulatory requirements. The law also strengthened anti-discriminatory protections. In reviewing and introducing these legislative changes, the UAE works closely with a broad range of stakeholders, including the private sector.

The Federal Law of 2017 on domestic workers set out in detail the responsibilities that recruitment agents owe to domestic workers. These responsibilities begin prior to the worker's departure from their country of origin, with the recruitment agency required to work only with authorised and licenced overseas recruitment agencies, and to take appropriate steps to verify the age of the worker and that the worker has received a copy of the relevant job offer and its terms and conditions in advance of departure. Upon arrival in the UAE and prior to the worker's signing of a contract with an employer, the recruitment agent's responsibilities include meeting the worker at the airport, providing decent accommodation and food, ensuring that they are protected from any abuses and harm, providing the worker information regarding their labour rights and obligations in the UAE, and ensuring that all costs are covered by the employer. The agent is forbidden from seeking to recover recruitment costs from the worker.

Other key protection mechanisms employed by the UAE Government to strengthen protections and reduce vulnerabilities in migration include the Wages Protection System and the Taa-meen insurance system. Further information on these mechanisms, and others, are dealt with under Objective 22.

Objective 8: Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants

UAE authorities regularly coordinate with Embassies and Consulates based in the UAE, as well as authorities in the capitals of counterparty governments, on the issue of missing migrants. The UAE lends all necessary assistance in identifying and locating missing persons and maintains details of and statistics on missing persons. Relatives and friends of missing individuals are encouraged to share as much information as possible directly with police, coastguards and other relevant authorities. These authorities will liaise closely with the government of the country of origin of the missing person to ensure that information is provided to families in a timely and sensitive manner. Emirate-level police authorities and the UAE coastguard regularly engage with and support relevant international organisations with expertise in missing persons.

Objective 9: Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants

The UAE is committed to the fight against human trafficking and has been proactive in the global fight to combat the smuggling of migrants.

Federal Law No. 51 of 2006 (as amended by Federal Law No. 1 of 2015) established the UAE's official initiatives to combat human trafficking locally and to enhance the UAE's role in international efforts aimed at eliminating trafficking crimes. The law defines human trafficking as recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring, or receiving persons by means of threat or the use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.

Under the law, human trafficking includes all forms of sexual exploitation, engaging others in prostitution, servitude, forced labour, organ-trafficking, coerced service, enslavement, begging

and quasi-slavery practices. The law ensures that anyone aware of human trafficking crimes who fails to report it can be punished. The law stipulates a minimum fine of AED 100,000 and a minimum of five years in prison for offenders. However, this penalty is increased to life imprisonment if there are aggravating circumstances, including the creation, leadership, or organisation of a trafficking network; if the victim is a woman, child or disabled person; the crime was committed through deception or force or threats of force; the crime was committed by two or more persons or an armed group; if the person is a member of a criminal organisation or participated in acts of the group; if the perpetrator is the spouse of the victim or has any authority over him/her; the perpetrator is a public servant or in charge of a public service; or the crime was transnational in nature.

Objective 10: Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration

The UAE is a signatory to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime. The UAE ratified the protocol in 2009.

Under the provisions of Federal Law No. 51 of 2006 (see above for more details), the UAE established the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking. The Committee was created to bring a whole-of-government approach to the issue of trafficking, and comprises representatives from across the UAE Government, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, the Ministry of Community Development, the Ministry of Health and Prevention, State Security and the UAE Red Crescent Society.

The Committee is tasked with a number of key objectives. These include studying and revising human trafficking legislation, with a view to enhancing and securing the necessary protections in accordance with international standards; preparing reports on efforts taken by the UAE to fight human trafficking, in coordination with other concerned bodies in the UAE; and studying best practice reports relating to human trafficking and taking relevant action towards achieving their recommendations. The committee also promotes public awareness of issues relating to human trafficking through conferences, seminars, brochures, training, and participates in international conferences and forums relating to combatting human trafficking to set out the UAE's position on related international discussions. In 2020, the Committee's messages relating to trafficking reached over 1,600,000 people in the UAE.

The NCCHT has implemented a five-point strategy to fight trafficking, comprising: prevention, prosecution, punishment, protection and the promotion of international cooperation. The committee intensified its efforts to provide health and legal care to victims and support their psychological welfare during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A key part of the NCCHT's strategy is to strengthen international cooperation. To that end, the UAE has signed several Memoranda of Understanding on cooperation in combatting human trafficking and protecting its victims. These MOUs define frameworks and areas of cooperation between both parties and focus on exchanging information and best practice. Countries that the

UAE has signed MOUs with are Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand, covering a significant proportion of the migrant workers in the UAE.

At a multilateral level, the UAE was a co-founder, in 2010, of the 'Group of Friends United Against Human Trafficking", which held its first meetings on the sidelines of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly. The Group aims to strengthen the role of the UN in coordinating and consolidating efforts globally to help combat human trafficking. The UAE also hosted the Second Government Forum against Human Trafficking in the Middle East, from 19 – 20 October 2020, with the participation of numerous countries, as well as representatives of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and IOM. The forum is considered an important platform for the discussion of efforts relating to combatting trafficking, with challenges discussed including those relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. The UAE also participates in meetings of the Working Group on Human Trafficking Crimes, organised by the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes in Vienna. The UAE has also regularly participated in meetings of the Bali Process, and has facilitated regular exchanges of information between the Bali Process and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue.

Objective 11: Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner

The UAE maintains the integrity of its borders through the integrated application of technology, intelligence gathering, and human capability development. The entities involved in border management include the General Authority of Ports, Borders and Free Zone Security, as well as other federal groups and entities from the seven Emirates. In line with the UAE's Vision 2030, investments in natively developed technology applications are essential to UAE border security, protecting land and coastal borders as well as sovereign airspace. These investments facilitate the security of and speed at which legitimate travellers can cross international borders into the UAE. This includes Smart Gate technology at some UAE airports, integrated with the Emirates ID system for citizens and residents.

The Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports has worked cooperatively to strengthen human capacity, including a recent partnership with the UK's National Economic Crime Centre to toughen border controls.

Objective 12: Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral

Information regarding migration procedures, including requirements for entry, admission, stay, work, study and other activities is easily accessible worldwide to potential migrant workers, in multiple languages, including Arabic and English. For example, the website u.ae consolidates online information and links for users seeking further information on visas and the Emirates ID, entry requirements, access to jobs, education and skilling, as well as healthcare, housing, and justice. This is in-line with the UAE's efforts to provide advanced digital services, accessible from anywhere and at any time, as set out in the UAE Strategy for Government Services, the Unified Digital Platform Policy, the Digital Customer and Digital Government Service Policy.

Migration-related services that are available online include: the issuance of an entry permit; the issuance and renewal of a residency permit; the issuance and renewal of a work permit; the

issuance and renewal of a work contract; and the issuance and renewal of an Emirates ID card. These are available through the Smartservices website, and also through a mobile-based application, using the UAE Pass (a digital identification service that is accessible to citizens, residents and visitors).

The UAE has in place multiple measures to assist in screening, assessment and referral. These have been developed with the support of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and are implemented in-line with best practices to facilitate entry and exit from the UAE. These include:

- Using criminal justice and Interpol systems I-24/7 to verify individuals at entry points
- Using iris scan and fingerprint technology to identify wanted persons, as well as facial recognition, to ensure that image and personal photos on passports are matching
- Using state-of-the-art equipment to detect fraud at entry points
- Developing entry permit regulations and sponsorship standards linked to family relationships or purpose in coming to the UAE, to reduce incidents of human trafficking
- Requiring that children hold independent passports, rather than travelling on their parents travel documents, to provide additional protection against exploitation
- Prohibiting persons added to other visit visas from entering the UAE
- The Ministry of Interior and the Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship are constantly improving skills and competencies for personnel involved in screening and assessment through courses and workshops

UAE authorities work closely with the Abu Dhabi Shelter and Humanitarian Care Centre, the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children, the Women's Protection Centre in Sharjah, the Ajman Centre for Women and Children, the Emirates Human Rights Association and the Emirates Red Crescent Society, as well as counterparty governments, in dealing with particularly vulnerable individuals, including children, at risk of exploitation. Representatives of these organisations have regularly participated in international fora alongside UAE government officials and play an active role in helping to shape policy.

Objective 13: Use of immigration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives

Migrants without the right to remain in the UAE will be returned to their country of origin, with an emphasis on encouraging voluntary return, rather than enforced return. However, the UAE maintains a regulatory framework in which migrants are afforded significant opportunities to regularise their residency status, with the vast majority who wish to remain in the UAE able to do so. Until recently, the UAE allowed those whose work permits had lapsed a grace period of thirty days in which to find an alternative job, to leave the country, or to face fines for overstaying their visa. However, it was announced in September 2021 that the grace period would be extended to up to 180 days before an individual's right to remain lapses. This announcement is intended to help the UAE retain key skills, but also benefits individuals who would otherwise fall into an irregular status. For those who do fall into irregularity, the UAE's immigration system imposes a penalty of AED 25 per day for the first six months, followed by AED 50 per day for the second six months and AED 100 per day after a year or more has passed. The UAE has, as in 2018, organised

amnesties for irregular migrants, allowing migrants to leave the country or regularise their status without facing fines.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the UAE took significant action to ensure that migrant workers did not fall into irregularity as a result of job losses. This began with reducing the risk of job losses and looking to place out-of-work migrant workers in alternative employment. Regulations set out a series of steps prior to redundancy, including remote work, paid leave, unpaid leave, and salary reductions. Employers who made workers redundant or placed them on unpaid leave were required to enrol these workers in the UAE's Virtual Labour Market, a government-run job matching and recruitment platform. Through the platform, 109,784 workers found alternative sources of employment between January and August 2020. The UAE also automatically extended all expiring residency visas over a significant period during the pandemic, to ensure that no one fell into irregularity as a result of the pandemic. The UAE Government made arrangements to ensure that the various services relating to workers' legal status were available by phone and online, and did not require in-person visits. All penalties associated with non-renewal of expired visas were waived and the medical testing requirement for visa renewal was temporarily halted.

During the pandemic, the UAE coordinated with countries of origin to allow those migrant workers that wished to do so to return home. No migrant worker was involuntarily returned in response to the pandemic, and many of them have since returned and re-established themselves in the UAE.

Objective 14: Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle

The UAE invests significant resources in the provision of consular assistance to UAE nationals abroad. The UAE maintains a wide network of consular missions around the world, with an embassy presence in 99 countries in addition to other consular offices, in order to safeguard the rights and interests of UAE nationals at all times. These consular missions also play a key role in providing information and services to prospective migrants.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation facilitates communication with UAE nationals abroad through the 'Twajudi' service, providing them with assistance and coordinating their repatriation in case of an emergency or crisis. On arriving at their destination country, citizens who have signed up for the Twajudi service receive a text message on their registered UAE phone number. The text message contains phone numbers to be contacted in case of an emergency.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation also provides emergency medical travel insurance for nationals abroad. The insurance product – named 'Musafer' – is managed by the National Health Insurance Company, Daman. The programme aims to protect UAE nationals and their families from unexpected expenses due to a medical emergency abroad. The programme will cover emergency treatment in any international health facility and covers inpatient and outpatient medical emergency services. Under the programme, a yearly insurance plan costs AED 399 for adults (19 years and above) and AED 250 for children (18 years and below). The coverage is for one year and is applicable for trips of up to 90 days each.

UAE passports can be renewed on an emergency basis at Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi Airports, with the service available 24/7. If citizens damage or lose their passports abroad or if their passports have expired while being abroad, they can contact the UAE embassy of the country they are in. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation can issue a 'return document' or an emergency passport in such cases.

UAE overseas missions work actively and in close partnership with the authorities of the country they are in to ensure the wellbeing of nationals abroad. They also work to provide UAE entry visas to passport holders of countries that are ineligible for on-arrival visas.

Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants

The UAE works to ensure that no one is excluded from receiving healthcare or education, and provides significant resources to organisations that support the basic needs of vulnerable migrants, regardless of status.

Emergency medical treatment is available in the UAE in government hospitals regardless of capacity to pay, and patients will never be denied emergency care. Rules on the provision of health insurance are determined at an Emirate-level. For example, the Health Insurance Law of Dubai requires all residents and their dependents to have a level of insurance cover that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements laid out by the Dubai Health Authority. Responsibility for providing health insurance lies with the employer. The employer is obliged by law to cover the cost of providing health insurance to their employee and may not seek to recoup the costs of insurance from the employee. Similar laws apply in Abu Dhabi, with the exception that employees are expected to cover the cost of the fourth (and subsequent) dependent, while rules vary in other Emirates. Under Federal Law No. 10 of 2017 (On Domestic Workers), employers are required to bear the cost of medical insurance for all domestic workers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the UAE took the decision to offer treatment of the virus free to all, regardless of residency status or insurance coverage. Treatment is offered on a non-discriminatory basis, with residents, nationals and others benefiting from access to the same doctors, hospitals and medicines. Testing is provided for free to all those suffering from COVID-19 symptoms, the elderly and people with disabilities, and major campaigns have focused specifically on providing free and regular testing to vulnerable communities, including lower income migrant workers living in high density accommodation. These testing campaigns have been undertaken without regard to either the nationality or residency status of workers. Employers were also required, during the pandemic, to continue to provide essential needs, including food, accommodation, electricity etc., regardless of the employment status of the worker, until such time as the worker found alternative employment.

The UAE has also rolled out a non-discriminatory vaccine campaign, one of the fastest and most successful in the world. Five vaccines are available in the UAE against COVID-19: Sinopharm, Pfizer-BioNTech, Oxford-AstraZeneca, Sputnik and Moderna. The UAE offers these vaccines free of charge on a walk-in basis, with no requirement for an appointment.

The UAE has a leading educational ecosystem, covering pre-school, primary, secondary, higher and further education institutions. Education in the state sector is provided free to nationals and GCC citizens, with access to the same schools available to non-citizens on a fee-paying basis. UAE-regulated private schools also offer education at every price point for the dependents of residents. For those who are unable to afford the fees, a number of philanthropic programmes exist to ensure that children are able to access education. For example, in coordination with the Emirates Red Crescent, the Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair Refugee Education Fund has contributed an AED 25 million grant to educating around 400 children temporarily residing in the UAE after fleeing conflict or disasters in their home countries.

UAE organisations also make a significant contribution to the education of refugee children around the world. For example, Dubai Cares is a founding partner of Education Cannot Wait, which funds education in emergencies. Having committed USD $6.8 million over four years, Dubai Cares is a key financial contributor to the programme, and works with the United Nations and civil society organisations to meet emergency education needs around the world.

Objective 16: Empower migrants and societies to realise full inclusion and social cohesion

As one of the world's most diverse societies, the UAE places significant emphasis on social cohesion among its constituent communities. In 2020, the UAE ranked seventh in the Social Cohesion Index, according to the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook, and 11th in the Tolerance of Minorities Index, according to the INSEAD Global Talent Competitiveness Index. The World Competitiveness Yearbook also ranked the UAE 11th in the Resilience and Adaptation Index.

In 2016, the UAE Cabinet established the Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence. In the same year, the Cabinet launched the National Tolerance Programme, to boost the values of tolerance and coexistence and to fight discriminatory attitudes and beliefs. The National Tolerance Programme sets out five main objectives:

- Strengthen government's role as an incubator of tolerance
- Consolidate the role of the family in nation-building
- Promote tolerance among young people and prevent them turning to fanaticism and extremism
- Enrich scientific and cultural content
- Integrate international efforts to promote tolerance and highlight the leading role of the UAE in this area

The UAE has established numerous initiatives to facilitate tolerance and coexistence. For example, in December 2018, it was announced that 2019 would be the Year of Tolerance. The goals of the Year of Tolerance were to deepen the values of tolerance and co-existence among cultures; to strengthen the UAE as a global capital for tolerance; to implement multiple cultural programmes and contribute to building tolerant communities; to focus on legislative and policy-oriented objectives that contribute to inter-cultural and religious dialogue; and to promote tolerance through targeted media and initiatives. The Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence also sponsors a seven-day annual festival of tolerance, a national occasion to celebrate the 'International Day for Tolerance' and to promote key values. The festival is organised in

cooperation with several federal, local and private bodies, and incorporates the active participation of executive councils in all seven Emirates.

Multiple communities organise community centres and clubs throughout the UAE, where individuals are able to access assistance and advice on migration, integration and rights. The UAE has also established various centres to counter extremism, including the International Institute for Tolerance, the Hedayah Centre and the Sawab Centre.

Objective 17: Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration

Elements of anti-discriminatory policy have been a long-standing feature of the UAE's legislative and regulatory landscape and apply to all. These policies were consolidated in 2015 with the introduction of Federal Decree Law No. 2 of 2015 on Combatting Discrimination and Hatred. The law aims to protect everyone in the UAE from discriminatory behaviour and provide a solid legislative framework for encouraging tolerance, co-existence and inter-cultural and inter-religious acceptance. It aims to fight discrimination against individuals and groups on the basis of religion, caste, political opinion, race, colour or ethnic origin. The law criminalises any acts that trigger religious hatred, prohibits groups or entities that provoke religious hatred, and bars conferences and meetings in the UAE that are organised with the purpose of encouraging discrimination or hatred against individuals or groups.

Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Labour Relations also sets a framework for preventing discrimination in the workplace. The law prohibits any discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, national or social origin or disability which would have the effect of prejudicing employment or potential employment, and prohibits the termination of female workers due to pregnancy. The law also requires that women and men must be paid equally for equal work, reinforcing rules that were laid out in UAE law in 2018. Federal Law No. 10 of 2017 also prohibits discrimination against domestic workers on the basis of race, colour, gender, religion, political opinion and national or social origin.

Article 23 of the recent Cyber Crime Law of 2021 prohibits any person from establishing, operating or supervising an electronic site for the purpose of human trafficking and outlines punishments for such offences of imprisonment and a fine of not less than AED 500,000 and not more than AED 1,000,000.

As Permanent Secretariat of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the UAE has made significant efforts to promote regional dialogue relating to and strengthen Member State understanding of gender discrimination. This has included commissioning, in partnership with UN Women, gender-responsive research, based on sex-disaggregated data, in order to analyse the specific needs, opportunities and contributions of migrant women in Abu Dhabi Dialogue Member States.

Objective 18: Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences

The UAE has a well-developed national infrastructure for education and training. Beyond primary and secondary education, the UAE offers a range of institutions for further academic and vocational education. This includes three public institutions of higher learning (UAE University, Zayed University, and the Higher Colleges of Technology), enrolment at which is restricted to UAE nationals, as well as a number of private universities, including NYU Abu Dhabi, the American University of Sharjah, and the University of Sharjah, which are open on a fee-paying basis. Approximately 140,000 students are enrolled on an ongoing basis in further education. The system is overseen by the Ministry of Education, which holds responsibility for regulating higher education and scientific research in the UAE, including the licencing and accreditation of private institutes of higher education. In this, it is assisted by the Commission for Academic Accreditation, which is responsible for setting and maintaining standards for academic programmes, and the National Qualifications Centre, which is responsible for regulating technical and vocational education and training. The Ministry of Education has also established a National Authority for Scientific Research, to support innovation through the participation of institutes of higher education in the UAE.

The UAE has also worked to expand access to skills and lifelong learning through a number of programmes and initiatives that can be taken up outside of formal education, with particular application for migrant workers, including migrant workers from a low skilled background. This includes online platforms like the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority's Virtual Academy, which was launched to support e-learning and boost the growth of the UAE's ICT sector through the provision of more than 50 online courses. Also focused on the development of ICT skills is One Million Arab Coders, established by Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, which partners with global businesses to provide free programmes to individuals wanting to improve their skills. To date, more than 1,200,000 people have enrolled in one of these programmes. Other key initiatives include the Ibtekr platform, running free Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for Arabic speakers; the Badiri E-Academy, also offering MOOCs, with a particular focus on women's education; Madrasa, a free eLearning platform with 5,000 free videos covering STEM topics; and the annual UAE Hackathon, designed to integrate data analysis into skills portfolios. Further, in February 2022, H.H Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched 'Digital School', enrolling 20,000 students from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq Mauritania and Colombia, who face challenges in enrolling in irregular schools. The Digital School has the vision of enrolling one million students within five years.

Given the large population of lower-skilled migrant workers, the UAE also works to coordinate closely with countries of origin on skills and skills recognition. For example, the UAE has participated in a pilot programme run by the Abu Dhabi Dialogue focused on the Certification and Mutual Recognition of Skills. The programme attempts to determine the extent to which certified workers are more productive than their uncertified counterparts. This has led to the development of a joint UAE-India framework on skills recognition, under which the UAE may recognise an expanding set of Indian qualifications in a number of key sectors, backed by incentives to promote the employment of certified workers. The Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (AD QCC) and National Skills Development Corporation of India (NSDC) have undertaken a benchmarking process to review and align comparable occupational standards. To date, thirteen out of sixteen QCC Occupational Terms have been mapped to 15 NSDC Qualification Packs. This set of recognised occupational standards can be increased to encompass sectors including healthcare,

tourism, hospitality, security, domestic work, retail and 'future technologies' (e.g. blockchain etc.) This programme relies on work to align the incentives for key stakeholders – governments of origin and destination, employers and employees – to invest in skills development.

Objective 19: Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries

UAE-based diasporas make a significant contribution to the sustainable development of their home countries.

In 2020, the UAE introduced a Remote Work Visa, enabling employees from all over the world to work remotely from the UAE. The one-year visa enables individuals to enter the UAE under self-sponsorship and work in line with the terms and conditions issued with the visa, allowing migrant workers to continue to contribute to the development of their home country while taking advantage of the UAE's high standards of living and infrastructure. Individuals working on the Remote Work Visa are entitled the same services as other UAE residents, including telecommunications, utilities, medical treatment and schooling.

Objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster the financial inclusion of migration

As noted above, the UAE is the world's second largest source of remittances, after the United States, with migrant workers remitting USD $43.24 billion in 2020 according to World Bank data. That is a fourfold increase on the estimated USD $10.56 billion that was remitted from the UAE in 2010. The $43.24 billion remitted from the UAE represents a 12.2% share of GDP, third in the world after Timor-Leste and Luxembourg. The top five key remittance corridors in 2021 were India (33.6%), Pakistan (11.9%), Philippines (6.7%) and Egypt (6.5%) and Switzerland (4.4%). Consequently, the cost of remitting money from the UAE is among the lowest in the world, with costs varying between providers.

These costs are being driven down further by competition among remittance providers and the entry of new technologies to foster rapid international payments. In 2021, the UAE Central Bank announced an initiative in partnership with SWIFT to further enhance the speed and transparency of cross-border payments. The integration between the Central Bank's domestic UAE Funds Transfer System and SWIFT's gpi Tracker will allow financial institutions sending money internationally to benefit from increased transparency, certainty and transmission between the two payments systems. The UAE has also emerged as a global centre for cryptocurrency and blockchain technology, which can facilitate seamless international payments.

The UAE promotes financial literacy for migrants as part of its Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme, with a particular focus on domestic workers. This is in acknowledgement of the fact that women and girls often lack essential life skills and the autonomy to make informed financial decisions, in spite of the frequency with which they migrate and send home remittances. They can face particular barriers, including language barriers, lack of self-confidence, documentation requirements and safe and cost-effective remittance channels. The CIOP programme has sought to address these challenges, by incorporating information on

basic financial management pre-employment, information on the management of earning and remittances pre-departure, and further financial management post-arrival. Information provided includes orientation around basic financial concepts, and tailored sessions, with real-life samples and tools such as remittance slips, salary certificates, IEC material, simple budget templates and saving action plan samples.

The UAE Government has also sought to promote private sector financial services that are specifically tailored to the needs of lower-skilled migrant workers, in particular in the domestic sector. For example, in the context of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the UAE has promoted GoRise, which seeks to democratise access to essential financial services for low income migrants. GoRise's services include banking, insurance, and access to credit, while also providing financial literacy materials through their app. During its Chairmanship of the GFMD, the UAE also promoted the International Call to Action, "Remittances in Crisis: How to Keep Them Flowing", a joint initiative of the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Switzerland.

Objective 21: Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration

In addition to assisting in the voluntary return of workers to their home countries during the COVID-19 pandemic (see above), UAE consular authorities and officials also facilitated the return of UAE nationals who were stranded abroad. The UAE also worked to ensure that residents in critical situations (particularly where children were involved) were given assistance at times when border restrictions around the world made international travel complicated.

Where appropriate, the UAE embeds sustainable return and reintegration into its policy framework for migration. This includes, for example, in the design of the CIOP programme, designed to provide migrant workers with information on their return and reintegration into their home communities. The UAE ensures that migrants who do not have the legal right to stay in the UAE are treated in line with national law and that any return procedures are carried out by competent authorities. As noted above, the UAE encourages voluntary return, and ensures that barriers to legal residency are low.

Objective 22: Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits

Portability of benefits is extremely important for workers in the UAE, given that most will return to their home countries at the end of their employment. Other than for citizens, the UAE therefore employs an end-of-service gratuity system, in lieu of pensions. All workers who have completed one-year of services are entitled to an end-of-service gratuity payment upon completion of their contract, calculated on the basis of the worker's final basic salary. Employees in full time work that have served up to five years are entitled to twenty-one days' salary for each year of work. Employees in full time work that have served more than five years are entitled to thirty days' salary for each year of work following the first five years. Employers are also responsible for the provision of an air ticket to the migrant worker's home country at the end of service, as well as every two years.

Since 2018, the UAE has been introducing a mandatory insurance-based replacement for the AED 3,000 bank guarantee that previously covered the payment of end-of-service benefits in cases of employer insolvency. Nearly six million workers in the UAE are now covered by the Taa-meen insurance system, with new workers added to the system as their work contracts are renewed. The Taa-meen insurance policy currently costs up to AED 300 per person insured, which must be paid by the employer, and provides coverage valued at up to AED 20,000 against non-payment of entitlements, including gratuity, vacation allowances, overtime allowances, unpaid wages, a return air ticket and work injuries.

The UAE Government has in place robust mechanisms to ensure that migrant workers receive their dues and can seek redress in cases where these are in dispute. As noted above, the UAE Government monitors the payment of salaries by employers to workers through the Wage Protection System, which regulates 98% of private companies in the UAE. Once salaries are 16 days overdue, and there is no record of the employer and worker mutually agreeing to unpaid leave, government authorities will take action to refer to employer to the labour courts, seek a travel ban on responsible parties, and freeze company assets. If, after 30 days, the salary payment remains outstanding, a fine of 1000 dirhams per unpaid worker is levied on the employer. When complaints are referred to the courts, the courts have successfully pursued employers for non-payment of salaries, including the recovery in August 2020 of 261 million dirhams in unpaid wages to 23,000 workers by the Abu Dhabi mobile courts.

In 2020, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation established a dedicated virtual centre to deal with labour disputes. Access does not require the physical presence of workers in order for a complaint to be filed. Workers can flag labour rights violations online and through a phone hotline. Workers who make a complaint through these dispute systems can expect the Ministry to contact their employer within three days of a complaint being logged, with a follow up workplace inspection triggered after five days. In instances where the Ministry is unable to resolve a complaint, it will be referred to the labour courts. All workers have the right to have their dispute heard without payment of fees, at all levels of complaint settlement, from Ministry resolution through to the Court of Cassation. Translation services are provided for free, to ensure that claimants understand all stages of the proceedings.

Objective 23: Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

The United Arab Emirates plays a leading role in fostering international cooperation and partnerships on migration, at a bilateral, regional and a global level.

At a bilateral level, the UAE Government coordinates closely with foreign missions to the UAE, as well as capital-based authorities, in order to maintain direct and open channels of communications on issues that require a rapid and effective response. The UAE seeks to enable and empower Member States to provide consular protections to their nationals in the UAE.

At a regional level, the UAE was central to the establishment, in 2008, of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), one of the leading Inter-State Consultative Mechanisms on migration. The UAE's Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation makes a major contribution to the ADD by acting as the

Permanent Secretariat, and the UAE has chaired the ADD twice, most recently during the 2020 – 2021 cycle, following on from the Chairmanship of Sri Lanka. The ADD consists of the ten Member States of the Colombo Process, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, and six Gulf destination countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Malaysia. Regular observers include the IOM, ILO, as well as representatives from the private sector and civil society. Other ISCMs also participate as observers, in order to further the exchange of best practice and strengthen inter-regional cooperation on migration governance.

The ADD aims to enable safe, orderly and regular migration in some of the world's largest temporary migration corridors. Through multilateral dialogue and cooperation on the joint development of mobility-related programming, implementation and reporting, the ADD helps to ensure that Member States are in a position to learn from one another's experience. The ADD has developed a unique process that puts partnerships at the centre of its programming. Recent partnerships have focused on skills harmonisation and certification; orientation and information provision; alternative models of labour recruitment; the use of technology in the governance of labour mobility; and the future of domestic work in the Gulf. Under the UAE's recent Chairmanship of the ADD, a large programme of research was undertaken, which, in addition to these issues, also looked at options for strengthening inter-regional migration governance. In developing these programmes, the ADD builds on three pillars of effective governance: ensuring the protection of migrant workers; empowering workers to fulfil their goals and aspirations; and affording migrant workers the opportunity to benefit equitably from the outcomes of temporary labour migration.

The UAE also chaired the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in 2020, through a year of turbulence caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and a long-term decline in funds. The UAE has been a long-term major funder of the GFMD. The UAE's Chairmanship set out to rethink the GFMD process, to realign it in the context of the Global Compact. To that end, the UAE set out a vision document for its Chairmanship that facilitated regional inputs and activities and prioritised the formation of partnerships. The 2020 GFMD preparatory process was consequently designed around six regional consultations, each organised in cooperation with other international organisations with a focus on migration (the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the African Union, the Bali Process, the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation, and the Puebla Process). Half of each regional consultation was focused on discussion of the UAE's selected thematic priorities, while the other half was given over to the identification and discussion of possible partnerships. Over 800 senior government officials and other GFMD stakeholders participated in the regional consultations over the course of 2020.

The UAE's thematic selection for its 2020 Chairmanship introduced into the global discussion of migration governance, for the first time, a focus on the impact of the future of work on global labour migration patterns. This was developed alongside other thematic tracks, focused on skilling migrants for employment; leveraging new technologies to empower migrants; addressing gaps in migrant protection; discussing approaches to irregular migration; and fostering partnerships to realise migration-related Sustainable Development Goals. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UAE organised an online-only GFMD Summit in January 2021. For the first time, the entirety of the Summit was opened to all stakeholders, with over 2000 people participating over the Summit's seven days. Since the Summit, the UAE has also worked closely

with the GFMD Troika and Steering Group to restructure the GFMD and make it financially more sustainable. The result has been the interim appointment of IOM to assist GFMD stakeholders while discussions on more permanent arrangements are held in advance of the French-Senegalese Chairmanship. The UAE is of the view that the action taken has secured the long-term sustainability of the GFMD.

The UAE also participates regularly in and supports other international discussions on migration governance, including GRCPs, IDMs and the discussions of other ISCMs.

4. Means of Implementation

The UAE's implementation of the objectives of the Global Compact takes place at numerous levels and through multiple agencies, in line with the framework laid out in Section 2 of this report, on the Policy & Enabling Environment. This includes through the ongoing participation of and engagement with private sector and not-for-profit organisations.

The UAE will continue to take a joined-up approach to policy implementation, drawing on all relevant agencies with domain expertise and strengthening inter-agency coordination at a local and national level.

Continued international engagement at a bilateral and multilateral level is vital to national-level implementation. As is clear from the UAE's work to strengthen international cooperation and engagement through the Abu Dhabi Dialogue and the Global Forum on Migration and Development, highlighted above under Objective 23, the UAE sees particular value in the development of migration-related partnerships that are aligned with and tailored to the needs of their stakeholders. In particular, there is a need for ongoing research into and data on the evolution of labour migration in the Gulf-Asia corridors.

At the most recent Sixth Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, held in Dubai in October 2021, assembled Ministers adopted a programme of work that will form the basis for the next two-year cycle of the ADD under the Chairmanship of Pakistan, with the assistance of the UAE as Permanent Secretariat. The resulting Ministerial Declaration outlined five thematic priorities for the next two years, and made a series of recommendations for the elaboration of a collaborative agenda, including:

1. *On enabling and improving access to justice for temporary contractual workers:*
- A programme to share knowledge among Member States about the design principles for the effective management of dispute resolution systems
- An assessment of options for extending Wage Protection Systems to cover domestic service workers
2. *On facilitating and enhancing skills mobility between and among countries of origin and destination in response to changing employment landscapes:*
- A study to map best practices on current and past skills partnerships globally and regionally, analyse the lessons learned, with a particularly focus on the identification of skills demand, key actors and the alignment of incentives for their participation
- The development of a set of guidelines for designing regionally relevant skills partnerships that are tailored to the priorities of Member States
3. *Addressing COVID-19 challenges:*
- Exploring possibilities for developing platform(s) for sharing information on health requirements for the admission and return of temporary contractual workers in ADD corridors, in languages relevant to those workers
4. *On integrating gender into employment promotion policies:*
- Further research on the current and future labour market demand for women workers in technology-related and technology-facilitated and other relevant sectors

- Mapping and analysis of good practice to enhance the employability, mobility and labour force participation of women workers in ADD corridors

5. On fostering international, intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation:

- The identification of opportunities and actions to strengthen inter-regional cooperation with other State-led ISCMs and input into the thematic and programmatic agendas of global fora on migration
- The organisation of a multi-year programme of activities focused on national efforts to implement the GCM, to enable Member States to share information and experiences

Each of these themes are closely aligned with specific objectives of the GCM and will form a significant part of the UAE's implementation of the GCM over the next four-year period. Support in addressing these themes, through the provision of subject-matter expertise and research capability will be crucial.

5. Next Steps

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration encompasses a very broad range of proposals and objectives, with multiple thematic interlinkages between them. This review cannot address every aspect of the UAE's alignment with the aims and objectives of the GCM, but attempts to highlight some of the work that has been undertaken by the UAE Government and its partners in recent years to improve the governance of international migration. The process of governance improvement is never complete, but aims to drive forward changes that deliver substantive improvements to the lives of migrants and the developmental outcomes of migration, while at the same time responding flexibly to national economic and social needs.

The UAE looks forward to engaging in the International Migration Review Forum and to using the opportunity afforded by the IMRF to illustrate its experience, expertise and insights. As this report has underlined, temporary labour migration to the UAE makes a very substantive contribution to the world's efforts to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration pathways, creating opportunities for millions of people to live and work in one of the world's safest and most advanced economies, while underwriting a globally-significant contribution to development. The UAE remains committed to the objectives of the Global Compact and will continue to take them into account through our policies, our programmes and our partnerships.