

Panel 3: International cooperation and governance of migration on returns, readmission, integration, and reintegration

We are pleased that this panel is highlighting the work of Regional Consultative Processes. As a 2010 assessment of RCPs¹ noted, they contribute to migration governance by offering an informal venue that builds trust among participating states, facilitating collaboration.

How can we bring the spirit of informal conversations to the compact process? We believe by focusing on concrete action items rather than grand concepts.

- 1. First, the Compact should support state cooperation on returns.** This is a highly contentious issue but approaching it with the lessons learned through Regional Consultative Processes can help states work toward the ultimate goal of ensuring cooperation on humane and dignified returns, while upholding the principle of non-refoulement. Canada supports the Sutherland Report recommendation of using existing regional and inter-regional forums to bring together countries of origin, transit and destination to discuss and ultimately develop shared practices and standards on these types of difficult issues. The Global RCP meetings organized by the IOM provide an opportunity to share outcomes between regions as well.
- 2. Let's explore how states can be better supported to issue appropriate documentation, including identity documents, to returning nationals.** Countries with biometrics systems in place, assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs, identity verification practices, and bilateral readmission agreements can share lessons learned and provide capacity building² to help those who lack such systems. For a number of reasons, it can be difficult for some states to provide documentation. We have found that bilateral approaches can be effective but we would be interested to learn from others their approaches to addressing this issue in a way that, at the same time, ensures humane readmission and upholds the human rights of those returning.
- 3. The Compact should promote effective reintegration initiatives, supported by evaluations of these initiatives.** Lessons learned from voluntary return and reintegration programs should be shared as part of the reporting we all commit to under the Compact and used to support improvements and implementation in other countries. For example, returnees will have better outcomes if programs anticipate they will likely migrate again or, if they do remain, that they will likely live in an urban centre rather than their original community.

¹ Hansen, Randall. *An Assessment of Principle Regional Consultative Processes on Migration*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2010. https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/ICP/RCP/mrs_38_en.pdf

² We recommend that states include systematic and regular cycles of evaluation in order to inform both policy development and program implementation as an integral part of any capacity building activities to allow for lessons learned, to determine gaps and identify areas for improvement.

Linking returnees to sustainable development initiatives can help provide them real opportunities upon their return. Countries funding reintegration should consider engagement with civil society organizations, employers and other community actors as their expertise can support policy development, programming and monitoring.