

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE DATA?³¹

Using existing data capture tools better. Governments should ensure that they are using and compiling all available sources of migration data, including population and housing censuses, household surveys and administrative sources. Further, these existing data collection tools should collect as much meaningful migration data as possible. For example, censuses should collect information on country of birth, country of citizenship and year of arrival, and household surveys could include a set of core migration questions and periodic specialized migration modules. Administrative data tools should also ensure migration is considered effectively, for example by ensuring that data from population registers, work and residence permit databases, asylum applications, and border points collect adequate migration variables (CGD, 2009).

Optimizing data processes. Very often migration data are scattered between government agencies, making it difficult to gain an accurate overview of the situation and trends, and to assess the efficacy of a policy or programme. Administrative data may also be a useful tool for local government, who may collect relatively little statistical data. These sources could capture data on migrants' use of basic or other government services at a city or regional level. Governments benefit from sharing migration data and this improves the potential for policy coherence. Therefore, they could focus on increasing the integration of migration data from different sources, including surveys and administrative data from different agencies. Compiling data from different sources also helps build a richer picture of migration by capturing differ-

ent features and socioeconomic characteristics. Governments could also strengthen and expand integrated survey systems. Further, governments should consult what data other actors collect in their country – academia or international organizations may collect data at the local or national level on a variety of migration topics through their research or operations, which may be helpful for SDG monitoring. This can be done by including diverse actors in any data mapping exercise.

Mainstreaming migration. Working towards migration mainstreaming into local or national development planning can help improve migration data. If migration is integrated into local or national development plans, collecting migration data becomes more of a political priority, and more resources for migration data capacity-building could become available. Hence, aside from integrating migration into the SDGs, all relevant stakeholders should push for migration to be considered more systematically as a parameter in different development sectors going forward.

Tapping into non-traditional data sources. Governments can help efforts to increase the availability and quality of migration statistics that use innovative data sources. This could include untapped sources of big data. For example, in emergencies and post-disaster situations it is difficult to find accurate data on migration flows. Several recent studies have used call detail records (CDR) from mobile phone networks to track population movements in these scenarios.³²

EXAMPLE: MIGRATION DATA ANALYSIS UNIT, EGYPT

In April 2017, Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and IOM launched a Migration Data Analysis Unit. The Unit aims to fill information gaps on migration by conducting assessments and producing key statistics on migration issues to support the development of evidence-based policy and enhance overall migration management in Egypt. This will also help produce migration data relevant to the SDGs. IOM or-

ganized several trainings and a study visit to IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre for CAPMAS and other government officials, to build staff's capacity regarding migration data collection and management.³³ In this way, the Unit is helping fulfil migration-related SDG monitoring and reporting requirements, as well as introducing significant capacity-building efforts on migration data within the national statistical office.