



**IOM  
STRATEGY  
FOR THE  
CARIBBEAN**

*Migration for Sustainable  
Development in the Caribbean*

**(2023 - 2026)**



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## Executive Summary

The history and development of the Caribbean is undeniably linked to human mobility. From its vibrant economies to the promise of greater political and economic integration, the unstoppable transformation of the region is intrinsically moulded by the movement of its people.

Both internally and internationally, human mobility can be a driver of sustainable development from which both Caribbean migrants and their communities can benefit. As such, migration and migrants are integral to the 2030 Agenda for the Caribbean and play a vital role in the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In alignment with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, understanding the contribution that migration can make is an essential element in enabling migration governance that effectively boosts social and economic development while preserving social cohesion. An example of this is how Caribbean labour migration is behind the success of many economies and productive systems both within and outside the region. Likewise, spread throughout the Americas and other European countries, the Caribbean diasporas add significantly to the gross domestic product (GDP) of their countries of origin (8.7%, World Bank, 2020).

Nonetheless, to truly harness the full potential of migration, priority must be given to the development of regular channels of migration that meet the needs of our times, in line with the promotion of human rights and the international rule of law, and as expressed in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2018. Irregular migration can often lead to death or disappearance at sea, often at the hands of unscrupulous smugglers and organized crime rings, resulting in the need for increased efforts to promote the security and governance of borders in the Caribbean. With an increase in illegal activities and associated violence throughout the Caribbean, there is a risk of witnessing deterioration of the conditions for successful integration of foreign nationals and reintegration of returnees.

As often happens in emerging economies, growth is accompanied by a demographic transition towards an ageing population which is significant in many of the small island developing states (SIDS) of the Caribbean. This situation could compromise the achievement of development plans due to a shrinking work force. In this adverse context, there is an urgent need for policies that combat the growing economic inequalities and ensure an equitable distribution of the benefits of development to all, reducing the perceived need to seek better economic opportunities abroad, especially among the well-educated. Equitable opportunities should include the



incorporation of migrants but also others that are at risk of being left behind, including women, youth, indigenous groups, LGBTQI+ persons and others.

At the same time, the SIDS of the Caribbean are facing an existential threat in the face of climate change and its adverse effects in terms of mobility, from the need for evacuation in the wake of a disaster to planned relocation away from highly hazardous or non-productive zones and other mobility-based adaptation strategies. While supporting efforts to reform the financial burden on countries affected by devastating disasters and long-term degradation of lands due to drought and sea-level rise, the region is still slowly recovering from the economic damage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this dynamic context, IOM is presenting its first Migration Strategy for the Caribbean (2023–2026). The goal of this IOM strategy is to contribute towards enhanced resilience, well-managed mobility, and governance in the context of migration in the English- and the Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries (Aruba, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, The Bahamas, Belize, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sint Maarten, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago) and overseas territories (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Monserrat, Saba, Turks and Caicos Islands), (from now on referred to as 'The Caribbean').

Aligned with the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2022-2026) and in close consultation with our partners, IOM has identified four interrelated areas for cooperation to build resilience and better manage mobility, capturing IOM's analysis of the current state of human mobility in the Caribbean and in response to the evolution of migration trends in the region. In line with the IOM Strategic Vision, the IOM Strategy for the Caribbean is also underpinned by a third governance pillar, cross-cutting in nature and responding to the need for evidence-based policy and communication as well as genuine collaborative partnerships. The four interconnected priority areas are:

1. Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility
2. Resilience to negative socio-economic drivers of migration
3. Protection of people on the move and humane governance of borders
4. Labour mobility and human development

In its analysis, IOM also includes cross-cutting elements to ensure synergies and complementarity with the work of governments and partners committed to addressing the unique challenges and opportunities essential to making migration work for sustainable development in the Caribbean. In the Caribbean context, IOM has identified the following: cross cutting elements:

- Diasporas
- Localization
- Youth and gender
- Social protection
- Human rights
- People living with disabilities
- Security

This Strategy recognizes the importance for IOM to strengthen localization and active engagement with civil society organizations (CSOs) and communities at the sub-national level as key actors to share lessons learnt, best practices, and strategies.

As the fifth largest UN agency in the region<sup>1</sup>, IOM is well-positioned to play a critical role in the regional architecture of the Caribbean. Leveraging its comprehensive roles as the principal UN agency supporting implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration (GCM), Coordinator and secretariat of the UN Network on Migration (UNNM), IOM also acts as the focal point for migration in the United Nations Country and Sub-Regional Teams (UNCTs and UNSTs) in the Caribbean.

## Acronyms

<b>AAP</b>	Accountability to Affected Populations	<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>ACS</b>	Association of Caribbean States	<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>AOSIS</b>	Alliance of Small Island States	<b>IMPACS</b>	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
<b>BHA</b>	United States Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs	<b>INL</b>	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community	<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>CCA</b>	Climate Change Adaptation	<b>IPCC</b>	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
<b>CCCC</b>	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre	<b>IRCCC</b>	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
<b>CCCM</b>	Camp Coordination and Camp Management	<b>IsDB</b>	Islamic Development Bank
<b>CDB</b>	Caribbean Development Bank	<b>J-TIP</b>	Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons in the United States Department of State
<b>CDEMA</b>	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency	<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>CICC</b>	Committee of Chiefs of Immigration and Controllers of Customs	<b>LGBTIQ+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Intersexual, Queer or gender diverse
<b>CIP</b>	Country Implementation Plan	<b>MAEDI</b>	French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
<b>CMC</b>	Caribbean Migration Consultations	<b>MECC</b>	Migration, Environment and Climate Change
<b>CMCA</b>	Common Multi-country Analysis	<b>MGI</b>	Migration Governance Indicators
<b>COP</b>	Conference of Parties	<b>MHPSS</b>	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>MICIC</b>	Migrants in Countries in Crisis
<b>C-TIP</b>	Counter Trafficking in Persons	<b>MiGOF</b>	Migration Governance Framework
<b>DRM</b>	Disaster Risk Management	<b>MIRAC</b>	Migration Resource Allocation Committee
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>DTM</b>	Displacement Tracking Matrix	<b>MPI</b>	Migration Policy Institute
<b>ECEU</b>	Eastern Caribbean Economic Union	<b>MPTF</b>	Multi-Purpose Trust Fund
<b>ECLAC</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	<b>MSDCF</b>	Multi-country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
<b>EU</b>	European Union	<b>NEMA</b>	National Emergency Management Agency
<b>EVA</b>	Emergency Victim Assistance	<b>OAS</b>	Organization of American States
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization	<b>OECS</b>	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
<b>FBO</b>	Faith-Based Organizations	<b>PAHO</b>	Pan-American Health Organization
<b>GBV</b>	Gender Based Violence	<b>PDD</b>	Platform for Disaster Displacement
<b>GCM</b>	Global Compact for Migration	<b>PSEA</b>	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product	<b>R4V</b>	Resources for Venezuelans
<b>HDPN</b>	Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus	<b>RC</b>	Resident Coordinator
<b>HLP</b>	Housing, Land and Property		
<b>IaDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank		
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee		

<b>RRR</b>	Return, Readmission and Reintegration
<b>RQN</b>	Return of Qualified Nationals
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIDS</b>	Small island developing states
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium-size Enterprises
<b>S/NFI</b>	Shelter and Non-Food Items
<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNDRR</b>	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Program
<b>UNFCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Populations Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UNNM</b>	United Nations Network on Migration
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNST</b>	United Nations Sub-regional Team
<b>U.S.</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>UWI</b>	University of Western Indies
<b>VOT</b>	Victims of Trafficking
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WHP</b>	Western Hemisphere Program



# O I

## Introduction

Migration in the Caribbean has been and continues to be an extraordinary driving force in shaping the region's identity. From the tragedy of slavery to today's vibrant diasporas at the forefront of cultural innovation, the Caribbean has unique features where mobility is as much a coping strategy as an aspiration. Migration outside the region, while still dominant and ongoing, coexists alongside increased intra-Caribbean mobility, and recognizing that in the future, to address demographic gaps, the region may have to seek to attract migrants.

In this Migration Strategy for the Caribbean (2023-2026), embedded within the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the goal of IOM in the region is to contribute to enhanced resilience, well-managed mobility, and improved governance of migration in the region. These three pillars align with the global IOM Strategic Vision, an institutional cornerstone that also structures IOM's Strategy for Central and North America, and the Caribbean.

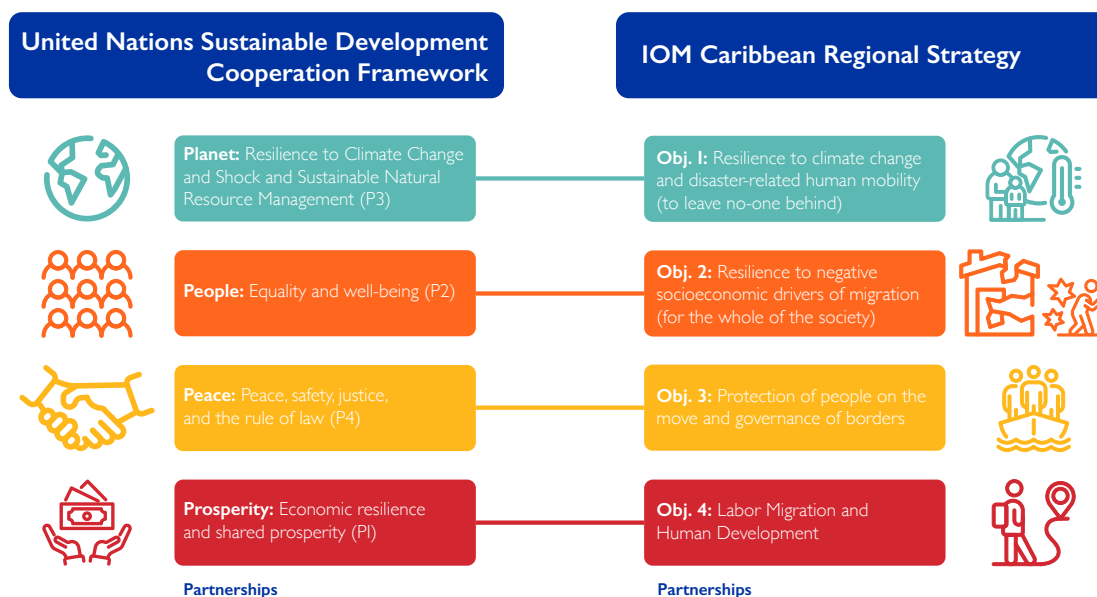
The IOM Strategy for the Caribbean has been developed with the clear purpose of facilitating the full integration of migration governance within the UN system-wide support to the SDGs and is therefore aligned with the UN Multi-country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) mission of transforming the Caribbean into *a region where people choose to live and can reach their full potential*.

## IOM Strategy for the Caribbean: embedded in the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNMSDCF)

The IOM Strategy for the Caribbean aims to facilitate the full incorporation of migration governance factors and considerations within the UN system's efforts and provide wide support to Governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs. As such, the objectives set under each priority area have been developed based on thorough stakeholder consultation and are carefully aligned with the goals established within the UNMSDCF for the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean (2022–2026). (See Figure 1- Linkages between IOM Strategy for the Caribbean and UNMSDCF).

IOM is committed to working hand in hand with UN agencies and humanitarian and development partners to support Caribbean governments in the consideration of mobility factors to ensure the sustainability of their national development plans and Country Implementation Plans (CIP). At the same time, IOM is committed to contributing to highly efficient and better coordinated regional structures addressing human mobility that are more responsive to the needs of Caribbean people.

**Figure 1: Linkages between IOM Strategy for the Caribbean and the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework – The English and Dutch Speaking Caribbean (UN MSDCF)**



### Leaving no one behind

Understanding the many positive links between migration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) may be challenging, yet effective migration governance can contribute to every one of the 17 SDGs. While IOM works primarily to achieve SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) through target 10.7 on facilitating safe, regular and orderly migration, **to leave no one behind**, migrants must be considered across efforts to achieve the SDGs.

In announcing the SDGs and their associated targets, UN Member States committed to cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly, and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of refugees, displaced persons, and migrants regardless of migration status.

Founded in human rights and as a core principle of the GCM, IOM will apply human rights-based non-discriminatory, inclusive, and participatory approaches in the prioritization, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant policies and programs. IOM will consider key guiding principles of gender equality and women's empowerment, resilience, sustainability, and accountability.

## IOM in the Caribbean: a long-standing presence

Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, international, civil society, and community partners. In the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, IOM has the fifth largest UN presence under its Coordination Office, based in Barbados and Guyana. IOM has a physical presence in nine of the 22 countries and territories of the English and Dutch Caribbean: Aruba, Barbados, Belize, Curaçao, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Throughout the region, IOM also provides support to the governments of other countries and territories in which there is no physical presence, including The Bahamas, Grenada, and Antigua and Barbuda, to name a few.

While the IOM Strategy for the Caribbean covers the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean region, it coordinates and works closely with Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic which are covered under this strategy only when migration or other factors impact the rest of the Caribbean.

This strategy recognizes the need for IOM to strengthen localization and active engagement with local governments, CSOs and communities at the sub-national level to share best practices, lessons learnt and strategies. IOM works in a unique space with stakeholders at all levels, prioritizing integrated operations and interventions that can be effectively scaled across countries.

IOM has also served as a partner in response to disasters, such as Hurricanes Irma (2017), Maria (2017) and Dorian (2019), as well as the La Soufriere volcano eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2021). IOM works closely with the UN Humanitarian System in its preparedness efforts, including through the prepositioning of relief items and capacity building initiatives. From these humanitarian responses, where IOM has focused on supporting Governments in addressing the needs of internally displaced populations (IDPs), the Organization has established longstanding partnerships with these governments, facilitating a transition towards issues of migration governance.

Recognizing the importance of coordination and coherence in addressing regional issues, IOM plays a critical role in the Caribbean regional institutional architecture. At the UN level, to foster coordination and the incorporation of migration issues into programming, IOM regularly participates in all UN Country Teams (UNCTs) (Guyana, Suriname, and Belize) and UN Sub-regional teams (UNSTs) in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago, including the Dutch Caribbean islands, and Jamaica, The Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, Bermuda and the Cayman Islands. Moreover, to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in addressing migration challenges, IOM has also established dedicated UN Migration Networks (UNMNs) in Belize and Trinidad and Tobago and is pursuing initiatives towards strengthening UN regional capacities in the Caribbean on migration governance.

IOM has a long history of cooperating with CARICOM and its community institutions and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). In recent years, cooperation has deepened with memorandums of understanding (MoU) established with the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) and between IOM and the OECS. IOM provides technical assistance and other support to regional forums such as the IMPACS Standing Committee of Chiefs of Immigration and Comptrollers of Customs (CICC). It has also supported meetings of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and Councils of Ministers of the OECS. In September 2022, IOM formalized a partnership with CDEMA around all aspects of human mobility before, during and after crises including evacuations, emergency shelters and data analysis. IOM also participates in the bi-annual General Meeting Between the Caribbean Community and Associated Institutions and the United Nations System.

IOM, along with other UN agencies, from 2016-2019 supported the Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC), a critical and inclusive forum that brought migration matters to intergovernmental discussions among countries in the region. Currently, IOM is supporting CARICOM to develop a regional approach for a migration policy, inspired by the work of the CMC.



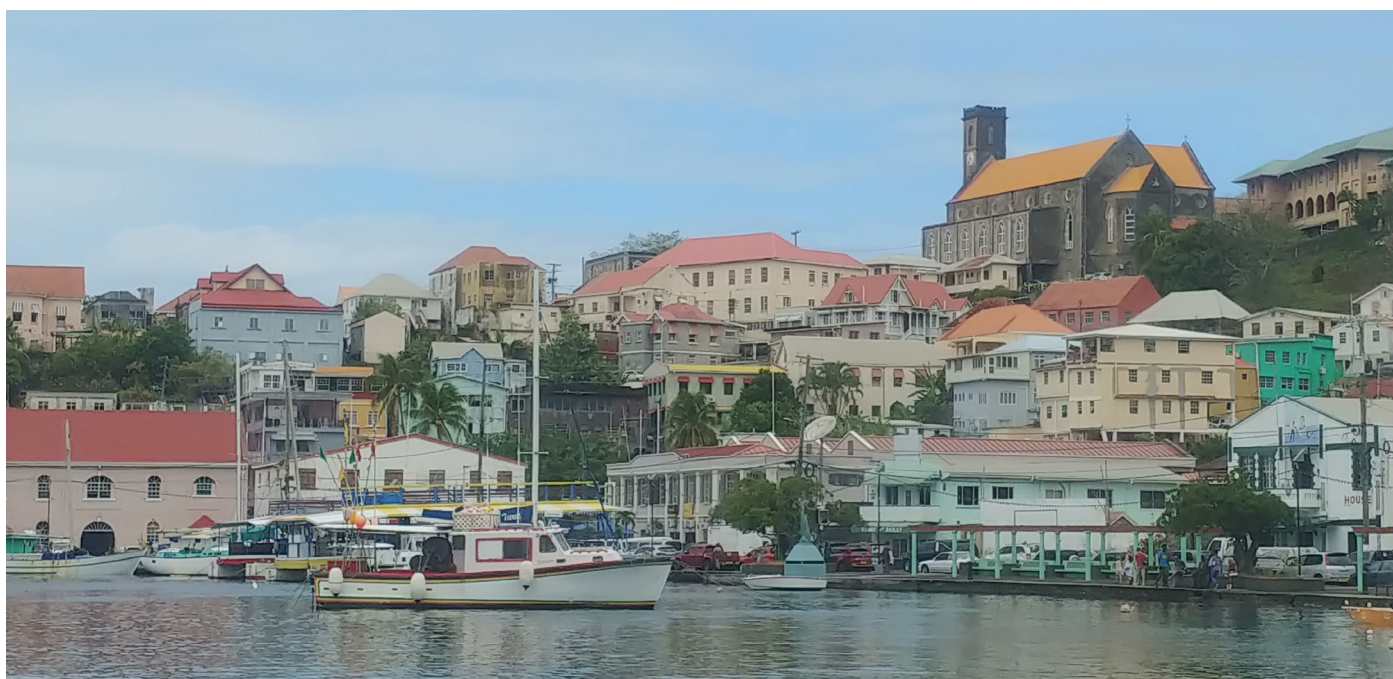
### ***Some highlights of IOM activities in the Caribbean***

The U.S.-funded Western Hemisphere Program, since 2018, has supported national and regional policy dialogues and development, research in a variety of areas, as well as promoted regional partnerships between IOM and the regional institutions.

In the field of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, IOM currently supports implementation of global policies in the Caribbean (such as the UNFCCC Paris Agreement, the GCM, the Sendai Framework and the Nansen Agenda) to address the challenges of migration in the context of sudden-onset and slow-onset disasters through the support of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MAEDI) and through the Migration Resource Allocation Committee (MIRAC). IOM continues to expand support for Caribbean preparedness capacity through capacity building of key personnel in the region, and the prepositioning of critical humanitarian assistance (NFIs), ready to be distributed, should a disaster occur.

Moreover, IOM has been supporting Governments in implementing counter-trafficking in persons (C-TIP) projects and over the years has implemented key interventions, including the facilitation of inter-governmental C-TIP discussions through the CMC, the provision of direct assistance to victims of trafficking (VOTs), and the development and delivery of capacity building and awareness-raising programs, inter alia. Regarding direct assistance, with funding from the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons of the United States Department of State (J-TIP), IOM manages an Emergency Victim Assistance (EVA) Fund, which has supported VOTs in the Caribbean and remains available.

As of 2023, IOM has supported nine Caribbean countries in implementing the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) assessment, a tool that supports governments in taking stock of the comprehensiveness of their migration policies, as well as in identifying gaps and areas that could be strengthened and aligned to the GCM, according to governmental priorities. This process complements other efforts to support countries to meet their reporting commitments under the GCM, through the Regional and International Migration Review Forums on the GCM.



The Carenage, St. Georges, Grenada. © (IOM 2019/Estela ARAGON)

## Theory of change: articulating migration and sustainable development in the Caribbean

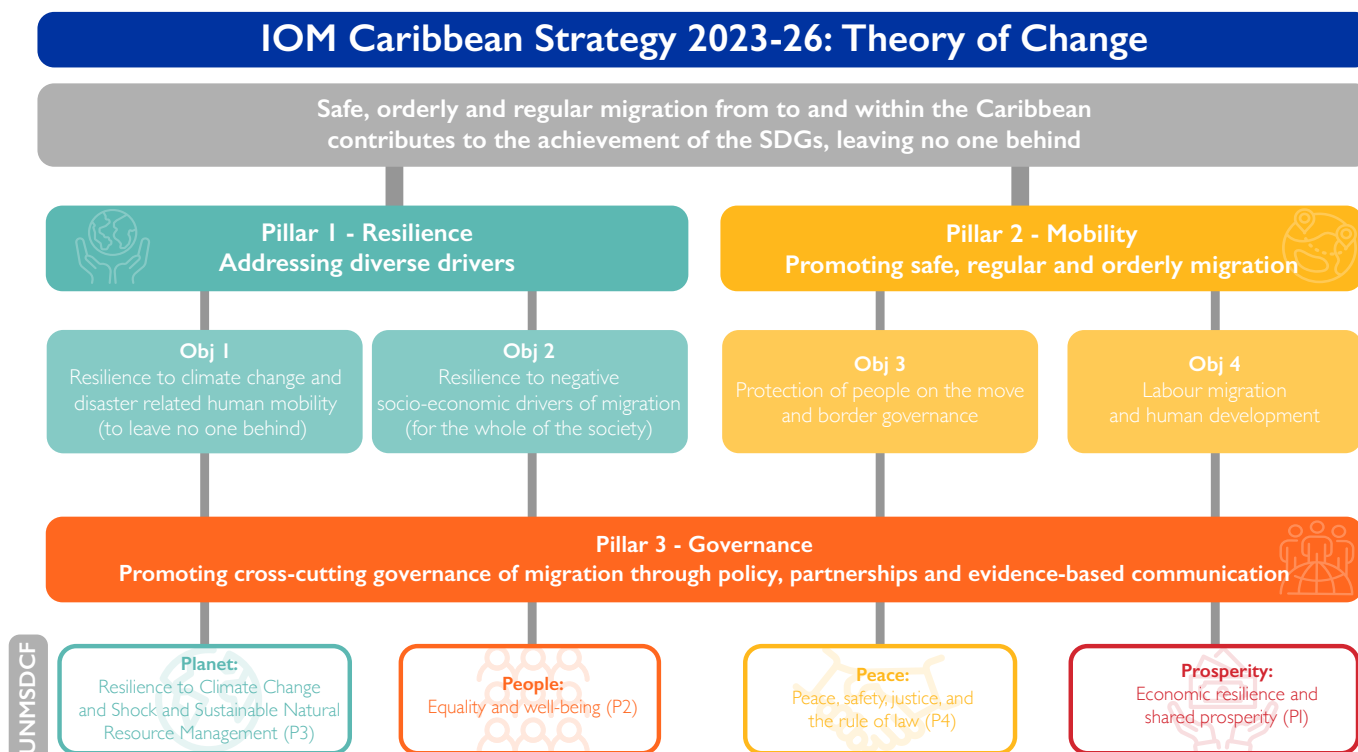
The theory of change (ToC) is a tool to communicate internally, and to all stakeholders, the pathway and assumptions underpinning our rationale of how IOM and partner contributions will lead to positive change.

It clarifies the priorities and needs we are focusing on addressing, the actions in our area of expertise which we plan to undertake, and how this will lead to the achievement of the overarching strategic goal.

The ToC supporting IOM Strategy for the Caribbean reads as follows:

*Leaving no one behind, IOM will promote safe, regular, and orderly migration in the Caribbean contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, by mitigating the adverse drivers of migration; protecting migrants on the move and in their place of destination; systematically highlighting the positive elements of migration from, to and within the Caribbean; and by promoting the cross-cutting governance of migration through policy, partnerships and evidence-based communication.*

Figure II: IOM’s Theory of change for the Caribbean (Vertical Logic)



Through an extensive consultation process with partners and stakeholders, IOM has identified **four areas of cooperation to build resilience** and better manage **mobility** in the Caribbean. In line with the IOM Strategic Vision, the IOM Strategy for the Caribbean also highlights

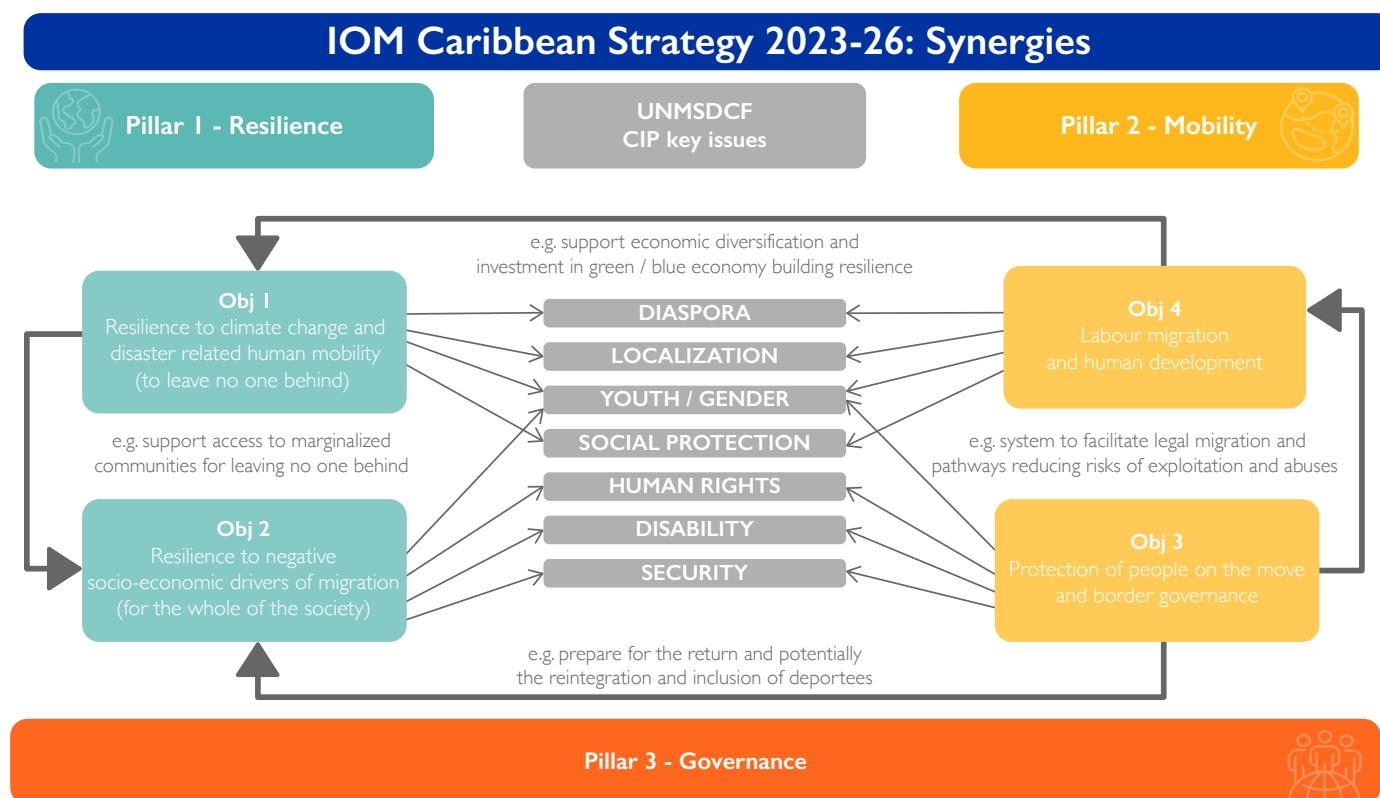
improved **governance** as a cross-cutting pillar responding to the need for evidence-based policy and communication as well as genuine partnerships. This institutional cornerstone is also embedded in IOM’s Regional Strategy for Central and North America and the Caribbean.

Through its vertical logic, IOM's ToC for the Caribbean incorporates the key principles of the main strategic global frameworks guiding the work of humanitarian and development partners in the field of migration, such as the GCM, and is committed to the central and transformative promise of Leaving No One Behind, at the core of the 2030 Agenda.

In a complementary manner, through the horizontal logic of IOM's ToC for the Caribbean, IOM has ensured that this approach responds to the development needs and objectives described in CIPs of relevant Caribbean countries, in line with the priorities of the UN in the Caribbean, which were developed through the Caribbean Common Multi-Country Analysis (CMCA) and expressed in the MSDCF.

In particular, it shows how the different objectives support **cross-cutting issues** such as engaging with diasporas, localization, youth and gender, social protection as well as disability inclusion and human rights and human security in the region. While the diagram helps to visualize IOM's programming approach, migration drivers are complex and usually interrelated. Thus, it is important to note what the different objectives are and how they can reinforce each other. For instance, supporting the access of marginalized Caribbean communities to sustainable livelihoods and quality services (objective 2) will serve to ensure that no one is left behind (objective 1). Similarly, by enhancing systems to facilitate legal migration in the region (objective 3), the risks of migrant exploitation and abuse can be significantly reduced (objective 4).

Figure III: IOM's Theory of change for the Caribbean (Horizontal Logic)



The above represents IOM's ToC for the Caribbean and is a living document that may be updated to ensure the Strategy remains aligned to regional, international, and IOM developments and areas of priority, as they evolve.

It facilitates later evaluation of the effectiveness of the Strategy, specifically by allowing us to interrogate assumptions and change pathways.



In response to sub-regional needs and stemming from the four identified *priority areas*, the *strategic objectives of IOM's multi-country program* in the Caribbean are:

### Pillar 1: RESILIENCE

- **Priority area: Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility**

**Objective 1:** Communities and authorities across the Caribbean demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility.

- **Priority area: Resilience to negative socio-economic drivers of migration**

**Objective 2:** Communities across the Caribbean experience reduced levels of adverse socio-economic drivers of migration compounded by insecurity and violence.

### Pillar 2: MOBILITY

- **Priority area: Protection of people on the move and governance of borders**

**Objective 3:** Caribbean countries have developed evidence-based policies and capacities to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability while promoting safe migration and borders.

- **Priority area: Labour mobility and human development**

**Objective 4:** Labour migrants, their families and communities' benefit from adaptive and ethical labour mobility policies and programs contributing to human development.

### Pillar 3: GOVERNANCE

- **Evidence-based communication:** Communication on migration issues is based on sound data and evidence.
- **Policy development and implementation:** Migration is integrated within relevant policies and implemented at the local, national and regional levels.
- **Collaborative partnerships:** Government, regional entities, UN, development partners, CSOs, private sector and academia understand and respond to migration issues in a collective manner.







Fresh Water Lake and Morne Trois Pitons National Park, UNESCO World Heritage Site, Dominica © (IOM 2019/Estela ARAGON)



# 02

## Caribbean Migration Context

### Migration Outlook in the Caribbean

Human mobility has long played a role in shaping the realities of the modern-day Caribbean, be it through colonial ties or other historic push and pull factors. In recent decades, the migration landscape in the region has been influenced in part by climate change, natural disasters, political instability in some countries within and outside the broader Caribbean region as well as the search for economic opportunities and higher standards of living. Regional agreements have emerged to encourage integration and mobility within the region under CARICOM and the OECS, as further discussed below. Yet, as highlighted in the UN MSDCF, in addition to the inherent structural challenges of SIDS (relatively small size, limited resource base), the Caribbean has been beset by youth unemployment, over-reliance on tourism, and limited economic opportunities, compounded by violence, including gender-based violence and organized crime. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities, poverty, and unemployment, with youth, women, refugees, and migrants experiencing the greatest job losses due to the pandemic.<sup>2</sup> Such challenges continue to affect development in the Caribbean and thereby influence migration trends.

The Caribbean is characterized by emigration, demonstrated by a negative net migration rate<sup>3</sup> in most Caribbean countries, with emigration outflows surpassing that of immigration inflows. In 2020, approximately nine million Caribbean migrants were residing abroad, of which 90 per cent had moved outside of the Caribbean. Moreover, Caribbean emigrants comprised predominantly adults within the working and reproductive age with women representing the larger proportion of migrants from the region, except in the case of Haiti.<sup>4</sup> This is taking place within an adverse demographic context affecting most Caribbean nations which are experiencing an ageing population and a shrinking work force. The old age dependency ratio for the Caribbean increased from 10 in 2000, to 14 in 2020 and will increase to 20 by 2030 and 28 by 2045.<sup>5</sup>

Owing to emigration of highly skilled individuals, skill gaps have appeared in sectors such as education, health, information technology, agriculture, and construction. Caribbean countries face the loss of highly educated human capital, resulting in limited economies of scale in skill-intensive activities, fiscal implications and lowering the returns of tertiary education. In addition to channelling financial support, emigrants, and their descendants, comprising the diasporas, are recognized for their potential role in the development of their countries of origin through strengthening professional networks, business development, and job creation. In this sense, migration can serve as a connection among countries, communities and individuals through transnational ties.

One noteworthy trend is that of increasing intra-regional migration, which stood at 859,400 migrants in 2020. Similar to global migration patterns, migrants within the Caribbean generally tend towards countries with stronger economies and better labour opportunities<sup>6</sup>. Within the Caribbean, the free movement of people is a critical component of regional integration, enshrined in the OECS's Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU) and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). The ECEU allows for the full free movement of Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) nationals along with work privileges. The CSME allows for the movement of CARICOM nationals under a "Facilitation of Travel" framework and includes Skills Certificates according to 12 categories for nationals to access the labour market in addition to facilitating the movement of service providers and those establishing businesses. During the period 2013-2017, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines were major origin countries whereas Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago were principal destination countries of CARICOM nationals entering under the CSME facilitation of travel.

In the coming years, drivers of mobility in the Caribbean are expected to intensify. The negative impacts of climate change and slow onset environmental degradation are likely to grow and may play an even bigger role in migration patterns. It is forecasted that sea-level rise and coastal degradation will continue, in addition to more frequent and intense weather events<sup>7</sup>, resulting in displacement, planned relocation and migration. Additionally, new economic opportunities due to oil and gas exploration in Guyana have the potential to reshape regional mobility patterns. Employment in the sector is expected to grow by 50 per cent<sup>8</sup>, creating an environment conducive for labour migration that could benefit Caribbean countries, in the same way they have

benefitted from migration from Guyana over the past decades. Accordingly, intra-regional migration represents an opportunity for sustainable development and economic growth if well-managed yet has the potential to challenge the economies and social systems of countries which do not have effective migration management mechanisms in place.

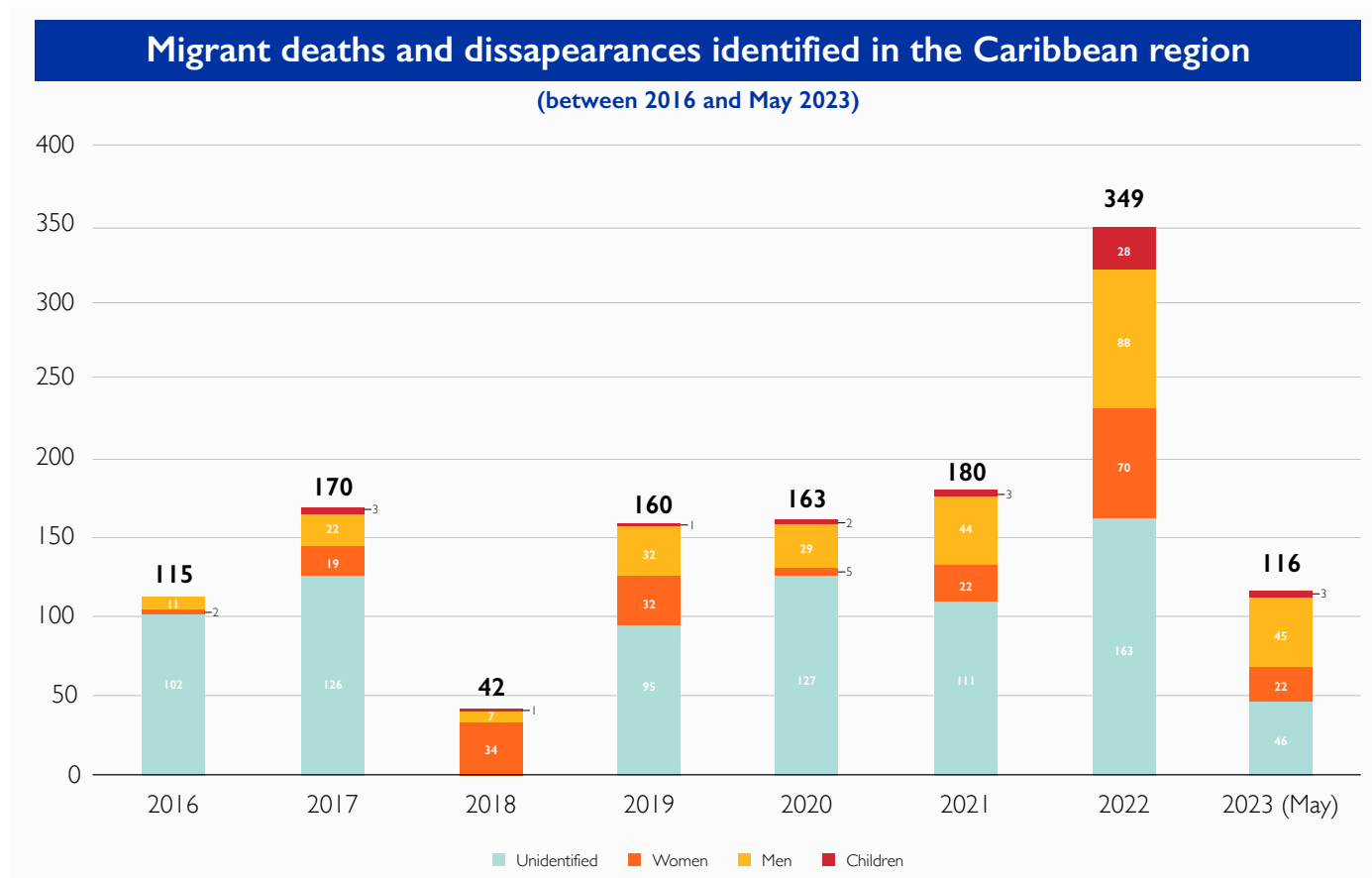
In 2020, it was reported that the Caribbean was home to approximately 1.7 million migrants, representing about four per cent of the Caribbean population. In Antigua and Barbuda, immigrants comprised as much as 30 per cent of the population<sup>9</sup>. There have also been notable surges in the populations of extra-regional immigrants in some countries, with Venezuelan nationals representing a large share, particularly in Aruba, Curaçao, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago. Likewise, in recent years, Caribbean countries have reported an increase in the presence of Haitian and Cuban migrants in their territories. Return migration is also believed to be taking place at a significant scale in the region. In Saint Lucia, for instance, 11 per cent of the population declared having lived abroad and returned home according to the Population and Housing Census of 2010.<sup>10</sup>

Lastly, continued inflows of irregular migrants impact domestic security concerns of Caribbean countries. Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, related transnational crime and community-level violence and their evolving modalities challenge local law enforcement efforts within the Caribbean, many of which are reported as countries of destination. The Caribbean has become a major origin, transit and destination point for irregular migration flows, predominantly from neighbouring countries, and motivated by poverty, unstable political situations or disasters.<sup>6</sup> Irregular migration exacerbates the socio-economic vulnerabilities of migrants and results in higher protection risk factors as irregular migrants are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and many work in informal sectors with limited social protection.

Moreover, irregular movements undertaken in desperation, often by sea, have led to a staggering increase in the number of people who have died or disappeared during their migration journeys. According to the Missing Migrants Project, migration routes in the Caribbean have the second highest number of migrant deaths and disappearances. Almost 1,180 migrants were reported dead or missing, with drowning accounting for 93 per cent of the total within the period 2016 – 2022, as seen in Figure IV. Notably, a record high was reached in 2022. The total reported numbers are most certainly an underestimate of actual losses.



Figure IV: Migrant deaths and disappearances identified in the Caribbean region, 2016 – 2023



Source: IOM, Missing Migrants Project – Americas, n.d. [25 May 2023].

### ***Migration trends within the Caribbean are largely influenced by conditions in Haiti, Cuba and Venezuela.***

**Cuba** is the main origin country of migrants in absolute terms in the Caribbean, with more than 1 million emigrants, accounting for around 10 to 15 per cent of the country's nationals living abroad. The United States, Mexico and Canada are the main countries of destination of recent Cuban emigration flows.<sup>11</sup> Cuba also supplies healthcare personnel to many countries including in the Caribbean. The country is also a major country of transit for continental and extra-continental migration flows and, in particular of Caribbean migrants in transit, intending to migrate primarily to the United States.

In **Haiti**, the high level of exposure to the negative effects of climate change, environmental degradation and other disasters adds to long-standing socio-political unrest, deterioration of the security situation, inter-gang violence, and the rising cost of living. This long-standing crisis has resulted in increased migration (regular and irregular) within and through the region, creating challenges to migration management including border governance, protection and social inclusion in host and transit countries in other Caribbean states.

In addition, the arrival of **Venezuelan** migrants and refugees has added to complex migration dynamics in the region, particularly in the Dominican Republic, and countries in the southern Caribbean that are close to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and that are facing important challenges to effectively respond to the rising needs, such as Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Aruba and Curaçao.<sup>12</sup>

## Migration-Related Priorities of Caribbean States

Well-managed migration and international protection require international, regional and bilateral cooperation and dialogue. Considering their shared geographic, demographic, economic, social and historical characteristics, Caribbean States, countries and territories can benefit from regional cooperation when confronting common modern and complex challenges related to human mobility. This includes adaptation to climate change, disaster and forced displacement, irregular migration as well as combatting human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and other transnational crimes, as well as harnessing the potential of migration for sustainable development.

IOM encourages and supports Member States for more concerted and cooperative action not only by governments but also, in an inclusive spirit of partnership, by the many non-state actors who have an essential role to play in good migration governance, including civil society, the private sector, worker unions, migrant and diaspora organizations, academia and migrants themselves, amongst others. In this context, IOM will engage more specifically around the following priority initiatives:

As one of the key migration-related priorities of Caribbean states, climate change was amongst the first issues the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** tackled when the coalition was formed in 1990. AOSIS has been instrumental in shaping the outcomes of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP) 23 and the Paris Agreement, ensuring a strong focus on SIDS. Following the **SAMOA Pathway**, SIDS are now gearing their efforts towards the 4th SIDS Conference to take place in 2024 in Antigua and Barbuda. This presents an opportunity to strengthen the role of mobility to address the unique challenges faced by SIDS and to support their development through coordinated advocacy work in favour of SIDS in partnership with relevant parts of the UN as well as with academia, civil society, foundations, media, and the mobilization of international support and resources.

According to the 2023 Financing for Sustainable Development Report, 52 low- and middle-income developing economies, including SIDS, are either in debt distress or at high risk of debt distress, accounting for more than 40 per cent of the world's poorest people<sup>13</sup>. In April 2023, The United Nations Secretary-General and the Prime Minister of Barbados joined forces under the **Bridgetown Initiative** to address

the immediate needs of countries facing debt distress and liquidity challenges, proposing a large-scale SDG Stimulus package to invest in the SDGs, while stressing the need for reform of the international financial architecture.

With regards to the protection of vulnerable migrants and their access to basic services, in 2022, the Heads of Government of Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Haiti and Jamaica joined their counterparts from Latin America, the United States and Canada in adopting the **Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection**, underscoring their commitment to “strengthen national, regional, and hemispheric efforts to create the conditions for safe, orderly, humane, and regular migration and to strengthen frameworks for international protection and cooperation”.

As CARICOM celebrates its 50th anniversary with activities in 2023 and 2024, this period presents an important opportunity to take stock of the willingness of CARICOM States to pursue regional integration. Under its free movement of persons protocol, CARICOM can deepen intra-Caribbean labour mobility while at the same time consolidating its capacities to manage humanely its internal and external borders. Moreover, in terms of regional security and consistent with the mandate of the Heads of State and Government of the countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA) and their counterparts in CARICOM, both mechanisms articulate actions in a common strategy to combat human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, with the bi-regional operation **CARISICA** in 2023. Countries of the OECS, already more integrated, have also expressed interest in further developing their cooperation towards better migration management.

Finally, the adoption of the GCM in December 2018 and the commitment by IOM Member States in the Caribbean herald a new dawn in the international approach to cooperation on international migration. IOM will be focusing its efforts to support States' participation in the upcoming Regional Voluntary Review (2024) and the next International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) (2026) on the Global Compact for Migration. Like with the first IMRF that took place in the UN General Assembly in 2022, States will be encouraged and supported in undertaking Voluntary National Reviews.



# 03

## Multi-country programming approach

IOM, in consultation with partners, has identified four interconnected areas for cooperation. These areas promote crosscutting approaches which reflect IOM's joint analysis of the current state of migration in the Caribbean and the organizational aim to address related opportunities and challenges. These four areas localize the global IOM Strategic Vision in the Caribbean and mark a clear shift away from strictly defined programmatic areas. IOM's humanitarian work complements long-term development planning in line with the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (HDPN), while migration governance needs to evolve to address challenges such as the impact of climate change and availability of health services in addition to maximizing human development opportunities created by labour mobility.

The four priority areas are underpinned by IOM's Strategic Vision, with two objectives under the resilience pillar, and two under the mobility pillar. The third pillar, governance, is transversal to the four objectives and serves as a fundamental means to achieve sustainable results in the four identified priority areas. These priority areas respond to Caribbean sustainable development needs and have been developed in alignment with the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNMSDCF).





## RESILIENCE

1. Resilience to climate change and disaster related human mobility
2. Resilience to negative socio-economic drivers of migration for the whole of the society



## MOBILITY

3. Protection of people on the move and governance of borders
4. Labour mobility and human development



## GOVERNANCE

Fundamental to the achievement of the four objectives set forth under each priority area of this strategy, IOM will use the following instruments in a cross-cutting manner:

- Evidence-based communication
- Policy development and implementation
- Collaborative partnerships

### ***The Centrality of Protection in the Caribbean***

Protection takes a central place in building resilience, fostering mobility, and governing migration in the Caribbean. As part of its response under this Strategy, IOM mainstreams protection by ensuring that the principle of Do No Harm prevails throughout its actions, by prioritizing the safety and dignity of individuals, as well as including participation and empowerment approaches at all times, and ensuring the integration of accountability mechanisms.

More particularly, IOM is committed to placing protection at the core of its actions, in line with the humanitarian system's Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Protection Policy. Overarching mechanisms, such as on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and the accountability to affected populations (AAP), are also inscribed within the field of protection.

IOM's specialized areas of protection are varied and include, for example: child protection; risk mitigation, response to and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV); action on housing, land, and property (HLP); and the inclusion of persons with disabilities, all of which entail protection specificities exacerbating the negative effects of socio-economic factors and the vulnerability of many communities in the region.





## PILLAR I: RESILIENCE



### Priority area I – Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility

**Objective I:** Communities and authorities across the Caribbean demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility.



The impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters are already manifesting across the Caribbean region. Aside from the related changes in ecological systems, the effects of extreme weather events and related disasters have been widely identified as contributing to humanitarian crises and posing threats to the security and the socio-economic wellbeing of communities and will become increasingly pronounced, with severe consequences for especially vulnerable areas of the Caribbean.

The Caribbean is comprised of countries and territories, many of which are SIDS, that are exposed and vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards, including sudden and slow onset processes. For instance, rising global temperatures are likely to increase the risk of drought and water scarcity in the Caribbean, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>14</sup>. As such, climate change is expected to influence mobility patterns in the Caribbean, both as a result of sudden-onset disasters as well as slower-onset processes, such as droughts and desertification, and sea level rise.

The recurrent threats and other shocks that SIDS face disproportionately impact their development and their attainment of the SDGs.

In addition to the adverse implications this will have for national economies and human development, climate change and disaster impacts may erode both environmental and social resilience, as well as undermine existing socio-economic safety nets in the short- to long-term. Climate change and disaster impacts can further contribute to displacement and drive migration within and across national borders. This in turn raises concerns regarding the potential of existing national systems, such as social protection schemes and how shock resistant they are to manage effectively large-scale population movements in the near future. At the same time, with countries still struggling to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, it is increasingly acknowledged that climate change and environmental degradation could also jeopardize the stabilization of vulnerable communities, challenging access to basic resources and services, and further challenging human security in the region.

In fact, the direct and indirect impacts of extreme weather events on communities in the region driven by climate change have been identified as major causes of loss and damage and the large-scale displacement of people. In the 10-year period between 2012 and 2021, 5.14 million new internal displacements caused by natural hazards were registered in the Caribbean (IOM, 2022). Leaders from the global south, including Caribbean SIDS, have expressed concerns with how the multilateral system is responding to the climate crises that are threatening to reverse decades of development, and have called for systemic reform at the UNFCCC COP 27<sup>15</sup>.

In the meantime, amidst climate and disaster risks in the Caribbean, vulnerable populations have not been passive victims; rather people have often adopted different response strategies, including migration, to recover from the impacts of climate and disasters on livelihoods and wellbeing. To foster the success of disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation strategies, the incorporation of local strategies and traditional knowledge into national and regional plans has proven to be key.

While mobility has the potential to save lives, improve resilience, and minimize risk through planned relocation, evacuations and the positive impacts of well-managed mobility, it can also make people susceptible and expose them to new threats. In this regard, localization is key in the identification of vulnerabilities, but not only. In some situations, migrant communities may require additional, specific attention, particularly those in an irregular migration situation. This was the case for certain groups, for example during the responses to hurricanes Maria (2017) and Dorian (2019).

Amongst others, these experiences highlighted the need to review the current inter- and intra-country evacuation plans and have brought to the table other outdated or underdeveloped strategies in the region, such as the planned relocation of populations highly exposed to the risks of natural disasters. Past disasters have also pointed to the need for greater collaboration between states, regional institutions and humanitarian agencies to ensure access to new or existing social protection systems, in line with the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) initiative and other best practices.



Migrant-inclusive community clean-up, Dominica © (UNDP 2023/Zaimis OLMOS)

## Outcomes and examples of actions under objective 1:

Priority area 1	Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility
Objective 1	Communities and authorities across the Caribbean demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility
Outcome 1.1	Improved disaster-management capabilities within governments and communities through available stocks, and clear operational frameworks and skills
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) capacity, provide support for nationally-owned <b>displacement tracking mechanisms</b> and climate mobility monitoring, to address emergency displacement and long-term mobility challenges relating to climate change.</li> <li>Support effective emergency shelter management capacities by making IOM global expertise in camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) available to Caribbean states to better respond to displacement, should a disaster occur.</li> <li>Support for disaster preparedness within communities and governments, paired with program structures that provide pre-designated <b>rapid response funding and support</b> to communities and governments as disasters occur, including the pre-positioning of shelter and non-food items.</li> <li>Facilitation of harmonized disaster <b>preparedness and response plans and integration of mobility dimensions</b>, recognizing that effective cross-sectoral and regional responses require common understanding of response procedures, coordination mechanisms, protection mechanisms, and concepts.</li> <li><b>Localization</b> of disaster preparedness initiatives, including locally-led planning, training and response.</li> </ul>
Outcome 1.2	Better responses by all stakeholders to protect more effectively migrants and their families, communities, and societies during life-threatening emergencies and through recovery
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the <b>mapping of vulnerable migrant communities</b> in the Caribbean and enable government and civil society actors to utilize data and evidence to inform their own advocacy priorities and actions.</li> <li>In close coordination with relevant governments, facilitate migrant's <b>access to consular services</b>, including the accommodation of biometrics enrolment for visa and entry clearance applications, the enhancement of existing government capacities and resources as well as the reduction of administrative workloads.</li> <li>Foster the establishment of <b>inclusive, shock-responsive social protection systems</b> to ensure access of migrants to critical services, such as health, including mental health and psychosocial support, and education among others, should a disaster occur.</li> </ul>
Outcome 1.3	Inter-governmental and regional climate-related research, policies and activities are effective in addressing mobility and disaster displacement
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide technical support to <b>policy development on migration, environment, and climate change issues</b>, and integrate human mobility dimensions in national climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks and policies, ensuring coherence across policy domains and under the framework of the UNFCCC.</li> <li>Increase disaster displacement response capacity in the Caribbean through the establishment of Public-Private agreements for the <b>intra and inter-island evacuation</b> of potentially displaced persons.</li> <li>Prioritizing areas identified as most vulnerable, explore with Caribbean governments innovative approaches to climate change adaptation and risk reduction through <b>planned relocation</b>.</li> <li>Support the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Environmental Migration in the Caribbean, grouping skilled knowledge workers that can provide Caribbean governments with best practices and lessons learned around environmental migration in the Caribbean.</li> <li>Harness the knowledge, experience, and on-the-ground capabilities of <b>civil society organizations</b> to multiply disaster response capacity and adaptation to climate change.</li> </ul>



## Governance pillar under this priority area:

### Evidence-based communication

Quality, accessible, reliable and timely research on climate change and disaster risk reduction, including disaggregated data, is essential to inform policies and actions as well as the general population before, during, and after a disaster occurs. IOM also builds on its established DTM capacity that gathers and analyses data and disseminates critical multi-layered information on the mobility, vulnerabilities, and needs of displaced populations. However, further inter-sectorial, longitudinal studies that encompass political, economic, and demographic factors is needed to understand more precisely processes through which environmental change influences decisions to migrate, and thus better inform decision-makers and communities.

### Policy

IOM aims to enhance the capacity of public and private stakeholders and individuals across the region to engage with, contribute to and develop policies, plans and frameworks to address the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation on human mobility. Policies developed will seek to address urbanization, land tenure and ownership policy, laws related to relocation and displacement, and livelihoods impacts, as well as address needs of vulnerable groups including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ community and the elderly. IOM policy work will be guided by broader climate change resilience and adaptation strategy, driven by the COP27, such as the Bridgetown Initiative and its ambition to reform and enhance climate financing in developing countries, with particular attention to migration challenges in small island States.

### Partnerships

Regional Organizations	In September 2022, IOM formalized a partnership with CDEMA around all aspects of human mobility before, during and after crises including evacuations, emergency shelter and data analysis. IOM will seek to enhance cooperation frameworks in the field of disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation with other relevant regional governmental structures such as the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), AOSIS and OECS.
Governments	Drawing on the resources and experiences of government stakeholders, IOM will ensure government ownership of results, support the development of inclusive and context-specific national policies and programs and prioritize mainstreaming of climate change and human mobility into national development planning.
United Nations	IOM is committed to work within the coordinated UN response by enhancing its strategic agreements with the most relevant agencies in the area of disaster risk management in the region such as the UN Emergency Technical Team (UNETT, including UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO/PAHO), while ensuring the creation of synergies with agencies addressing slow onset effects of climate change in the region, such as FAO, UNEP, UNFCCC, UN Habitat, UNDRR and UN Women as well as initiatives such as the Platform for Disaster Displacement (PDD).
Development and Humanitarian Partners	IOM will keep building on longstanding partnerships with relevant financing institutions in the field, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). IOM will also seek to establish new partnerships that contribute more effectively and synergistically to IOM's DRM and CCA programming, such the development banks, the Platform on Disaster Displacement, diplomatic missions with strong presence in the region, and the European Union through its various, specialized instruments.
Civil Society	Engagement with CSOs, FBOs, communities and traditional leaders will be prioritized ensuring local capacity building and sustainability of interventions. For example, IOM will continue its engagement under the French-funded migration, environment and climate change project, mapping and engaging CSOs for the implementation of climate change resilience-building interventions, paying special attention to the most affected groups, such as youth.
Private Sector	IOM sees the private sector in the Caribbean as a key stakeholder in escalating risk management and climate change adaptation strategies. IOM will seek engagement with the tourism industry to expand and enhance disaster responses, including support during intra and inter-island evacuations, or the provision of temporary shelter for displaced populations. In addition, through USA for IOM, IOM will carry out engagement with philanthropic actors, including those with Caribbean roots, to help mobilize resources during times of crisis.
Academia and Media	Partnerships with national and regional media are especially relevant in times of crisis, where media can play a vital role on informing, but also in combatting the rise of negative discourse and mis/disinformation. Similarly, academia can be of support in research activities, including the collection, analysis and sharing of data. IOM will target relevant institutions, such as the University of the West Indies, and will work towards the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in the Caribbean gathering relevant expertise around mobility in the context of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation.



## Priority area 2 – Resilience to negative socio-economic drivers of migration

**Objective 2:** Communities across the Caribbean experience reduced levels of adverse drivers of migration compound by insecurity and violence fostering social cohesion.



The Caribbean region’s capacity and ability to counter the negative drivers of migration requires a whole of society approach that is both agile and strategic in nature. Over the last five decades, Caribbean countries have seen millions of their nationals deciding to migrate, in the hope of improving the wellbeing for themselves, families and other loved ones they may have to leave behind, including young children.

The Common Multi-Country Analysis conducted in 2021 which served to inform the UN MSDCF highlighted that Caribbean countries have made progress in improving the quality of life and socioeconomic status of their people. The prevailing context of growing inequalities, however, amplified by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to increased deterioration of socio-economic fabrics, particularly in terms of growing insecurity, violence, and discrimination.

This, in turn, is considered as contributing to negative migratory drivers. In 2020, 10 countries within the region were in the top 20 countries known for their high levels of migration worldwide.

Among the adverse socio-economic drivers of migration identified were:

- inequalities and the prevalence of gender-based violence;
- lack of economic opportunities and availability of decent work;
- different forms of discrimination;
- high levels of informality in labour markets, poverty, and criminal activities, including gang violence.

The above-mentioned elements have also been recognized as protection risks and impeding factors when it comes to the potential for returnees to re-integrate in their society of origin as well as for migrants from the Caribbean or outside of the region to better integrate and more fully contribute to the development of their host communities. For instance, the increased availability and presence of firearms in the dynamics of gang-related violence in the region in turn contributes to a general sense of insecurity that can fuel the desire to migrate.

As elsewhere in the world, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, especially those who have an irregular status, or who work informally, are often vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, or even trafficking in persons. Access to protection and social security benefits (such as sickness benefits, maternity benefits, and pensions) is usually only available when a migrant is working legally within the country and contributing to the social security scheme. Language barriers and work permit processes limit migrants' employment in the formal economy. Situations of inequalities can also heighten negative perceptions of migrants as a "problem", contributing to the politicization of migration and the rise of xenophobic rhetoric that can affect social cohesion. Some patterns of exclusion and discrimination affecting other segments of the local population have also resulted in the marginalization of vulnerable migrants and refugees, along with indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ communities, and others.

Under Objective 2, IOM in the Caribbean recognizes the importance of the UN MSDCF as our common roadmap as it articulates a clear agenda for accelerating the implementation of the SDGs. At all levels of intervention, both in the region and in the respective countries, it is necessary to adopt agile and strategic measures to mitigate the impact of adverse factors that increase vulnerability (acting as risk factors) and thus increase resilience. In this respect, all SDGs are relevant in reducing or mitigating the negative drivers of migration. However, SDGs more directly related to improving overall standards of living along with fighting discrimination and inequalities are most relevant and will be prioritized under this IOM Strategy for the Caribbean. This includes sustained efforts around rule of law to ensure that the policy frameworks in the countries of the Caribbean are in line with international human rights standards. Of particular concern is the de facto practice of excluding migrant children from accessing education that has been witnessed in some countries in the Caribbean. As part of its Strategy for the Caribbean, IOM believes that a whole of society approach would improve adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights, and is thus committed to continue working with various stakeholders at both the micro and macro levels to participate and engage in processes that have the potential to reshape and redefine current migration norms, standards, and practices. This approach also will serve to ensure that social cohesion is preserved at all levels as access to the information and services conducive to integration will be available to facilitate planning, implementation and monitoring of migratory activities.



## Outcomes and examples of actions under objective 2:

Priority area 2	Resilience to negative socio-economic drivers of migration
Objective 2	Communities across the Caribbean experience reduced levels of adverse drivers of migration compounded by insecurity and violence fostering social cohesion.
Outcome 2.1	Adverse drivers of migration are identified and addressed within a whole-of-society approach to human rights and security
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to apply IOM's determinants of vulnerability model in framing programmatic responses and improve research and data to better identify the negative drivers of migration, both at the macro and micro levels<sup>6</sup>, to enable the development of programs that effectively address the needs of vulnerable migrant groups, with special attention to the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) and the incorporation of LGTBQ+ considerations and needs into IOM programming.</li> <li>• Enhance community-based programming to foster social cohesion, in particular in areas of high out-migration and in areas of settlement of returnees and migrants.</li> <li>• Strengthen collaboration with UN agencies and development partners to address the needs of children left behind and ensure their access to critical services such as health and education while mitigating potential risks of neglect or abuse.</li> </ul>
Outcome 2.2	Returnees, including deportees, are better supported in their efforts to reintegrate in their societies of origin
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support strengthened return and reintegration services, encompassing social, economic, and psychosocial elements at the individual level, the community level, and the structural level, and integrating traditional knowledge systems where possible.</li> <li>• Enhance pre-departure assistance for migrant returnees, including the development of programs for the cultural orientation of long-time overseas persons and of second and third generations to facilitate their integration into host societies.</li> <li>• In line with IOM's Policy on the full spectrum of Return, Readmission and Reintegration (RRR), work on return migration through a holistic, rights-based and sustainable development-oriented approach that facilitates safe and dignified return, readmission and sustainable reintegration, and ensures the protection of migrants' rights throughout the entire spectrum.</li> </ul>
Outcome 2.3	Migrants in the Caribbean have access to the information and services conducive to their integration while preserving social cohesion
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with Caribbean governments to ensure migrants and vulnerable groups' access to critical services, and advocate for the full respect of the human rights of migrants and their incorporation into national legislation and social security policy frameworks.</li> <li>• Extend social protection and universal health coverage, including MHPSS, to all migrants and displaced persons, without regard to their migration status, with a specific focus on youth and women, in order to reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities and enable their active participation and contribution to societies.</li> <li>• Establish information centres for migrants in key locations in the Caribbean and raise awareness on the risks related to irregular migration, provide accurate information and highlight the positive contributions of migrants in order to fight xenophobia in the Caribbean.</li> </ul>

## Governance pillar under this priority area:

### Evidence-based communication

The availability of quality data and better research and analysis is fundamental to identify the particular needs of vulnerable groups such as women, the LGTBQ+ community, people living with disabilities, and indigenous communities. It is also key to combat misinformation and the rising tide of xenophobia linked to the increase of irregular migrant populations in several countries

and territories in the region. Highlighting the need for IOM to invest in research and reliable studies, Caribbean states should strengthen evidence-based communication to foster coherent migration policies that are agile to meet the complex nature of migration, further contributing to the stabilization of the region.

## Policy

Caribbean can effectively integrate migration and the basic needs of vulnerable populations into their public policies. Today, poor health and education services, limited economic opportunities for young people, combined with rising levels of violence and instability, force many in the Caribbean to seek a better life outside their country. These major push factors are areas in which, through policy reform, states and regional organizations have the capacity to act and mitigate.

IOM will support Caribbean governments in ensuring the mainstreaming of migration into national development agendas and policies to reduce the adverse socio-economic drivers of migration. Migration policies at the national, regional and international levels can facilitate and contribute to improved understandings of the multidimensional aspects of migration and leverage its positive contribution to the development of Caribbean societies.

## Partnerships

Regional Organizations	In an interconnected Caribbean economy, fostering regional cooperation is vital to address effectively the socio-economic challenges faced by Caribbean communities. IOM will engage primarily with CARICOM and OECS at the regional level on the identification of the main drivers of migration in the Caribbean to mainstream migration considerations in sectoral policies and their implementation. IOM will also seek enhanced partnerships with other inter-governmental and financing institutions such as CARIFORUM, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).
Governments	IOM will support governments in including migrants' voices and human mobility considerations into national and local development plans as well as urban planning efforts to achieve cohesive communities and sustainable rural and urban development. For example, IOM will engage with Caribbean governments for the incorporation of vulnerable groups within existing social protection frameworks, while closely collaborating with local authorities for the effective provision of assistance.
United Nations	In the Caribbean, the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on all 17 SDGs has shown that what began as a health crisis has quickly become a human and socio-economic crisis. IOM will seek to extend its partnerships with UN agencies under the leadership of the RC system, in line with the UNMSDCF and the CIPs to integrate migration considerations when and where relevant in SDG programming and as part of UN collective commitments to the Decade of Action.
Development Partners	In collaboration with other UN Agencies, IOM will explore funding opportunities within the United Nations Multi-purpose Trust Fund (MPTF) and its diverse thematic financial tools. Also, IOM will aim to engage development banks and diplomatic missions in the Caribbean to join the efforts currently put in place through the support of donors such as U.S. Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM).
Civil Society	With a view on localization of the SDGs, IOM will seek engagement and inclusion of local CSOs, FBOs, Caribbean communities and traditional leaders to ensure the adequation of programming to the realities of the field. For example, partners with strong operational capacity, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will be determining in the development and upscaling of migrant resource centres, pre-departure and reintegration assistance.
Private Sector	Engagement with local and regional private sector partners, such as Chambers of Commerce and other business associations, will facilitate the establishment of diverse program partnerships and support IOM's effort to explore new opportunities for investment and innovation to address the region's vulnerabilities and adverse drivers of migration.
Academia and Media	IOM is committed to working with the media on improving the discourse on migration through media training while expanding the scope of its studies with academia on push factors, demographics, and how to make the Caribbean more conducive environment for communities, migrants and returnees alike. To enhance access to data and evidence, IOM will also seek strategic partnerships with reference institutions such as the Migration Policy Institute (MPI).





## PILLAR 2: MOBILITY



### Priority area 3 – Protection of people on the move and governance of borders

**Objective 3:** Caribbean countries have developed evidence-based policies and capacities to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability while promoting safe migration and borders.

#### GCM



#### SDG



#### UNMSDCF



Human mobility dimensions are increasingly complex in the Caribbean as the migration landscape continues to evolve. Depending on the circumstance in origin, transit and destination countries, migration may, for example, be characterized by mixed flows of people migrating for different reasons and in different ways.<sup>17</sup> In some instances, this may include smuggled migrants who resort to illicit channels rather than regular routes as well as migrants who become targets of human traffickers,<sup>18</sup> noting that human trafficking has grown into a lucrative transnational business in the region. Vulnerable migrants may be subject to exploitation, abuse and discriminatory practices, resulting in higher risk and protection factors with a cascade of socio-economic effects. Such factors also negatively affect peace,

stability and social cohesion within communities. Moreover, irregular routes are inherently dangerous, demonstrated by the multiple deaths and disappearances of migrants who undertake these journeys in the Caribbean having reached a record high in 2022.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, both the protection of people on the move as well as governance of borders are especially critical to IOM's commitment to ensuring safe, orderly, and regular migration along the different migratory routes affecting the Caribbean. To ensure that Caribbean countries have the capacities to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability while simultaneously promoting safe migration and borders, a broad

coalition of partners is required. This includes government agencies responsible for law enforcement, as well as regional organizations such as CARICOM IMPACS and relevant UN agencies, such as UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC. Cooperation around counter-smuggling and counter-trafficking operations, such as the most recent CARISICA Operations, are adding enormous value in integrating a strong protection dimension into border management and border security approaches.

The governance of borders is key to addressing irregular migration to detect those responsible for smuggling, trafficking and related crimes and identifying the victims of such crimes or any other person in a vulnerable situation who needs immediate assistance and/or protection. In parallel, IOM provides specialized protection support such as child protection, risk mitigation and response to GBV, anti-trafficking in persons activities, and psycho-social services. As a specific protection activity, IOM also advocates for the protection of individuals, including advocating for placement in alternatives to immigration detention or for their humanitarian admission to a third country in cases where protection needs cannot be fulfilled in their origin or transit country. These protection activities require a specialized and trained workforce, such as protection officers and for some areas specific additional expertise is required, such as MHPPS.

Outcomes in this objective will also assist in reducing some of the gaps identified in the UN MSDCF relating to the rights of refugees and migrants in their access to legal identity, regularization of the status of migrants in the Caribbean, increasing social protection, and reducing inequalities. The protection of people on the move and governance of borders is therefore directly linked to UN MSDCF Pillar 4 on Peace, Safety, Justice and the Rule of Law and Pillar 2 on Equality, Well-being and Leaving No One Behind.

The development of measures to respond to challenges and mitigate risks related to border governance and people on the move depends on fostering regional collaboration, modernizing legislation, and sharing best practices and data. The development of appropriate regular pathways and identity management systems in alignment with a rights-based approach and the principle of rule of law must also be prioritized to allow for safe movement of people and equitable migration governance. IOM works to support

states in developing procedures and processes and can continue to do so with Caribbean countries through, for example, the provision and adoption of template legislation on migrant smuggling and respective standard operating procedures (SOPs).

While IOM's approach is guided by its Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) and international law, localization is key so that IOM's approaches can be applied to the situational realities of the Caribbean and the specific national priorities of the various governments. The considerable scale of migration from Venezuela and Haiti, often through irregular channels, has influenced mobility patterns in the region. The application of IOM's determinants of vulnerability model<sup>2</sup> which considers factors at the individual, household, community, and structural level plays a key role along with the findings of situational analyses in informing programming. Enhancing cross-border cooperation among law enforcement and justice officials/actors will be critical to addressing border management challenges in the Caribbean, such as promoting information exchange on transnational criminal networks associated with irregular routes, as well as increasing capacity to detect fraudulent documents. At the same time, to promote the protection of all migrants, IOM will advocate for placing a strong focus on enhancing the capacities of all stakeholders in areas such as human rights, gender-sensitive protection, and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPPS). IOM has raised concerns regarding the use of administrative detention for migrants apprehended in an irregular situation by advocating for alternatives to detention, while recognizing the legitimate interests of governments in ensuring that migrants subject to investigation, prosecution or deportation do not abscond in advance of their proceedings.

In light of IOM's approaches and commitment to partnerships in supporting effective migration governance and protection needs, it is envisioned that effective border governance and the protection of people on the move will be achieved through strategic actions. These actions focus on safe, orderly and regular migration, inclusive of, inter alia, identity management systems, border management information system, capacity building of governmental and civil society actors to identify and provide rights-based and gender-sensitive protection, as well as assistance, assessments, and screening, as identified below.



## Outcomes and examples of actions under objective 3:

Priority area 3	Protection of people on the move and governance of borders
Objective 3	Communities across the Caribbean experience reduced levels of adverse drivers of migration compounded by insecurity and violence fostering social cohesion.
Outcome 3.1	Strengthened capacities of governmental and civil society actors in the Caribbean to identify and provide rights-based and gender-sensitive protection and assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the capacities of Caribbean states to conduct migrant vulnerability screening and effectively identify and provide protection services in line with Do No Harm principle, at an adequate scale, within safe and easy reach for beneficiaries, while fostering inclusive participation in decision making processes.</li> <li>• Strengthen the capacity of Caribbean states to combat Trafficking in Persons and implement better coordinated responses, including enhanced information sharing between countries.</li> <li>• Support local actors, particularly women's organizations, to design, implement, and evaluate gender transformative, specialized GBV prevention and response services in every phase of emergency response, and ensure continuity of services post-emergency.</li> <li>• Continue advocacy and information efforts established through the Missing Migrants' Project since 2016 that record people who die or go missing in the process of migration towards an international destination, regardless of their legal status.</li> <li>• Raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration and inform about available, regular pathways to promote safe, regular, and orderly migration.</li> </ul>
Outcome 3.2	Safe and secure borders are established and promoted in the Caribbean through integrated border governance
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct border vulnerability assessments to bring to light any institutional gaps and existing risks for migrants, allowing for the implementation of tailored programming that contributes to safer borders.</li> <li>• Foster information-sharing among Caribbean states on matters related to migration and transnational crime, including the establishment of MoUs that enhance collaboration among relevant institutions and enable effective prosecution.</li> <li>• Support Caribbean states in (adapting and) implementing in domestic law the CARICOM template legislation on counter-smuggling of migrants, when and where relevant. Enhance their capacity to address the causes of migrant smuggling, disrupt the activity of migrant smugglers, and protect and assist smuggled migrants including through Search and Rescue at Sea operations.</li> <li>• Build capacity of Caribbean border authorities to detect potential health threats and promote access of vulnerable migrants to primary health services, regardless of their legal status.</li> </ul>
Outcome 3.3	Identity management systems and capacity are built among Caribbean countries and their partners and help foster regular pathways
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist Caribbean states in improving access to legal identity, as well as the security of identity documents, especially travel documents, including the digitalization of identity issuance and management systems, with a focus on effective, robust, and internationally compliant processes.</li> <li>• Support Caribbean states in the design and implementation of comprehensive and efficient visa policies and procedures, including training of national authorities, improvement of visa-related facilities and equipment, as well as the assessment and review of visa applications.</li> <li>• Provision of resettlement support for refugees and vulnerable persons of concern in the Caribbean, including pre-departure cultural orientation, health activities, MHPSS, and post-arrival integration support, and promote the establishment of regular pathways including as a complement to resettlement activities.</li> <li>• Support Caribbean state cooperation in the detection and sharing of information on fraudulent travel documents and imposters.</li> </ul>

## Governance pillar under this priority area:

### Evidence-based communication

IOM will work with stakeholders to contribute to comprehensive and evidence-based policies by enhancing their capacities to collect, analyse and disseminate information in areas such as human trafficking, migrant smuggling, the vulnerabilities of migrants on the move and irregular routes, missing migrants, etc. Currently, the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) plays a key role in capturing and communicating information on migration routes, migrant vulnerabilities, etc. However, further data is required and many gaps remain, such as research on emerging mobility patterns, alternative regular pathways and in-depth analysis of intra-regional movements within CARICOM and the OECS. Through the communication of credible and trustworthy information, with the use of data visualization and digitalization techniques, appropriate communication strategies will be applied to encourage exchange of information and best practices on regional movements, border management as well as ensure effective communication to disseminate timely and reliable information.

### Policy

IOM will continue to support Caribbean States to mainstream migration in national development plans and policies, and provide technical assistance in the revision or adoption of legislation and standard operating procedures (SOPs) relating to trafficking in persons (TiP) and migrant smuggling. Moreover, IOM will continue to assist countries in the development of processes that allow for effective identification and prosecution of migrant smugglers as well as enhance the availability, access to and use of regular migration pathways, incorporating protection of migrants on the move and alternatives to detention from a human rights and gendered perspective.

### Partnerships

Regional Organizations	The complexity of trafficking routes, which often involve multiple countries, further strengthens the case for regional partnerships. Continued partnerships with regional organizations such as the OECS, CDEMA and CARICOM IMPACS are vital for effective international migration governance and can also be leveraged through existing initiatives such as CARISICA. The Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants in response to the Venezuelan crisis (R4V Platform) is also an important partner in this arena.
Governments	The engagement and buy-in of governments are critical through a whole of government approach which includes the agencies/ministries working in immigration, counter-trafficking, national security, social services, national planning and development, labour, among others. Partnerships with the relevant consular services are also important in terms of sharing information, best practices, and technology as well as identifying solutions for stranded migrants.
United Nations	IOM is committed with UNCTs, UNSTs and existing country-level UN Networks on Migration to actively seek partnerships in areas such as migrant protection, border governance, counter-trafficking, and counter-smuggling. Capitalizing on the capacities and expertise of various UN agencies, IOM will expand the reach of its programs targeting migrants through strong partnerships for the referral and provision of specialized services with special needs, such as UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WHO/PAHO.
Development Partners	The technical and material capacities of border management and protection actors in the Caribbean continue to require financial and operational support from international cooperation. IOM will reinforce the partnerships already established with U.S. donors such as the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and will seek to establish complementary alliances with donors from countries with special interest in this area, such as Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and diplomatic missions with a presence in the region and other funding structures such as the European Union.
Civil Society	Civil society organizations and faith-based organizations play an important role in conducting interventions to identify, support and provide assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability. IOM is committed to continue to build the capacity of these organizations to ensure sustainable interventions and seek partnerships for project implementation, both with CSOs at a national level and those operating on a multi-country basis.
Private Sector	Strong partnerships with the private sector are essential to address protection risks through, for example, combating occurrences of forced labour and human trafficking. Sectors such as the maritime industry and in particular in the fishing industry are vital actors to help address potential risks of trafficking and smuggling. The private sector is also instrumental in mobilizing support for programmatic activities as part of their philanthropic activities.
Academia and Media	Partnerships with media representatives are important from a communications perspective and to ensure appropriate, relevant, and accurate information is shared broadly. Academia is also a key partner in assisting with data collection strategies and analysis. As an international reference institution in the field of migration research, IOM will also seek to form partnerships with the EU-MPI.



## Priority area 4 – Labour mobility and human development

**Objective 4:** Labour migrants, their families and communities benefit from adaptive and ethical labour mobility policies and programs contributing to human development.

### GCM



### SDG



### UNMSDCF



With the increasing movement of migrants who are searching for better employment opportunities, their protection is fundamental to optimize the benefits of labour migration in both countries of origin and destination. In the Caribbean, this is increasingly important for the Caribbean diasporas since, as of 2020, there were a total of 9.08 million migrants from the Caribbean living outside their country or territory of origin, most of whom are in Northern America, Europe, and South America,<sup>20</sup> facilitating agreements that allow for regular movement of labour outside the region.

Moreover, the Caribbean is host of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU), two free movement regimes that include provisions for labour mobility. The CSME, established in 2001 with the signing of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, allows for the movement of nationals with verified skills certificates as well as people covered under the right of establishment and the provision of services.<sup>21</sup> The ECEU, established in 2010 under the Revised Treaty of Basseterre, allows for the full free movement of labour, where all Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) nationals can travel and work in any OECS Protocol Member State under the same conditions as nationals. An average of 66.2

per cent of the total employed labour force in the Caribbean engages in lower-skilled jobs in the service industry and data shows that a significant percentage of those emigrating outside the region are medium- and high-skilled workers.

The above highlights a gap between the needs of foreign labour markets and the profile of Caribbean migrant workers.<sup>22</sup> A good example of this can be found in countries such as Guyana and Suriname, which in recent years have experienced exponential economic growth mainly due to the exploitation of recently discovered primary resources such as oil and gas. However, as demonstrated in studies from ILO and IOM, the sustainability of this growth can be compromised by the lack of adequate skilled labour available in the country due to sustained brain-drain. Considering this, Guyana, Suriname, and other Caribbean governments have begun to explore new possibilities to engage with their diasporas through programs aimed at the return of qualified nationals (RQN), both temporarily and permanently. Notwithstanding that key economic sectors are bringing substantial foreign direct investment, deliberate action is also needed to ensure that benefits also flow into greater levels of domestic investment, particularly in non-traditional sectors where more decent work opportunities potentially lie.

While regimes and mechanisms for labour mobility exist, available data indicate that mechanisms in the region have not accomplished the desired effects for guiding labour migration and mobility flows, as more workers use alternative or irregular means for working abroad than formal labour migration mechanisms.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the 2021 Caribbean Country Analysis noted that migrants in the Caribbean are often subject to discrimination in workplaces, especially during periods of high unemployment or economic recession, and that government officials in various countries indicated that they do not report grievances in fear of adverse immigration consequences, especially if they are in an irregular migratory status.

Even though migrant workers contribute to the economies of their host countries and the remittances they send home help not only their families but also boost the economies of their countries of origin, they face many challenges - poor conditions of work, discrimination, little social protection and vulnerability to exploitation and human trafficking. These challenges especially affect migrants with irregular status or those who work informally. Furthermore, existing inequalities were exacerbated by COVID-19 with damages to key industries and a reduction of employment that affected youth, refugees and migrants who experienced the greatest job losses. However, even before the pandemic, there were already high levels of unemployment, especially among youth. In 2015, nearly one in every four young people in the Caribbean was unemployed, compared to 2 in every 25 adults. Additionally, unemployment among young women in the Caribbean is greater than 30 per cent, compared to 20 per cent for young men.<sup>24</sup>

Gaps in employment are often addressed through remittances that generate substantial welfare gains, in particular for the families of migrants. Rigorous empirical analysis of household survey data has found that remittances can be associated with declines in poverty, improved nutrition, and better schooling outcomes for children.<sup>25</sup> The Caribbean is primarily a net recipient of remittances, and the region has seen an increase in absolute remittance inflows every year since 2013.<sup>26</sup> The World Bank reported that in many countries, migrant remittances amount to 10 per cent of GDP or more, and often form a fundamental support and insurance mechanism for families and communities at home. However, high remittance transfer costs remain an obstacle for migrants sending money through official channels. In the fourth quarter of 2021, the average cost to remit US\$200 from the United States to Guyana and Jamaica was respectively 9.2 and 7.8 per cent of the remitted amount,<sup>27</sup> substantially higher than the global target of no more than 3 per cent.

Overall, strengthening labour mobility practices through regional and national mobility coordination systems will be key to ensuring more ethical recruitment practices that safeguard the human rights and security of migrants and harness human development. Additionally, diaspora communities can help leverage remittances, and lead to sustainable development.



Young participant at an outreach organized by the Archdiocesan Ministry for Migrants and Refugees (AMMR) at the Chaguanas R.C. Church, Trinidad. © (IOM 2020)

## Outcomes and examples of actions under objective 4:

Priority area 4	Labour mobility and human development
Objective 4	Labour migrants, their families and communities benefit from adaptive and ethical labour mobility policies and programs contributing to human development.
Outcome 4.1	Strengthened regional and national labour mobility governance and coordination systems, including for intra-Caribbean mobility
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Caribbean governments in the development of a regional labour mobility strategy and engage with relevant stakeholders at the regional and national levels to increase migrants' access to labour mobility initiatives and programs, including promotion of social protection and portability of social security benefits.</li> <li>• Conduct thorough assessment of intra-Caribbean labour needs and skill gaps as the base for the design and implementation of labour mobility programs that effectively respond to Caribbean economic and development needs.</li> <li>• Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of formal and informal skills, qualifications and competences of people on the move to meet the demands and needs of a changing global labour market and divergent demographic trends among countries.</li> </ul>
Outcome 4.2	Enhanced impact of diaspora communities and their remittances on sustainable development through genuine and mutually beneficial partnerships
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable, engage, and empower diasporas to leverage remittances, in support of Caribbean countries' development.</li> <li>• Advocate to facilitate the use of remittances and explore ways of reducing transaction costs to maximize impact on communities and local economies.</li> <li>• Identify and implement innovative engagement with Caribbean diasporas through capacity building of diaspora associations, including mapping and skill identification of diasporas.</li> </ul>
Outcome 4.3	Migration potential is harnessed as a contribution to human development
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the ethical recruitment of migrant workers, including respect for their rights, transparency and accountability in recruitment, and strengthening public policies, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms.</li> <li>• Support the establishment of regional student exchange programs in coordination with Caribbean states and relevant academic institutions.</li> <li>• In line with identified key skills gaps in Caribbean potentially impeding growth in Caribbean economies, develop ad-hoc programs for the (Temporary) Return of Qualified Nationals (T/RQN) that facilitate knowledge transfer and contribute to filling skills gaps.</li> <li>• Leverage partnerships with key private sectors entities for the creation of sustainable economic opportunities for migrants and vulnerable communities in the Caribbean.</li> <li>• Integrate the human and financial capital of diasporas in trade systems to boost global value chains and meet needs for sustainable development finance.</li> </ul>

## Governance pillar under this priority area:

### Evidence-based communication

There is a need for stronger data collection processes and capacities to disaggregate data to generate information that can inform labour mechanisms responsive to shifting contexts. For instance, exchange of information on skills-gaps between countries of origin and destination is crucial to ensure the effectiveness of labour mobility mechanisms and programs to respond to actual development needs of Caribbean countries. This

data will also be important to connect workers to appropriate skill-level jobs. Similarly, better data on remittances could help in directing contributions towards strategic development areas, and increased evidence of ethical recruitment practices and decent work opportunities can be used to encourage regional and extra-regional regular migration flows.

## Policy

Labour mobility is recognized as a critical issue in the Caribbean. Migrants are often a main source of labour in key economic sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and construction. Through its labour migration programming, IOM offers policy and technical advice to Caribbean governments for the development of policies, legislation and administrative structures that promote efficient, effective, and transparent migration flows.

As part of its focus on ethical recruitment, IOM aims to assist governments and the private sector in promoting safe migration practices for their nationals, facilitating the recruitment of workers (including pre-departure training and embarkation preparedness) and promoting the integration of labour migrants in their new workplaces and societies.

## Partnerships

Regional Organizations	Regional collaboration will be key to ensure an inclusive approach where all issues surrounding labour mobility can be discussed in a transparent and coordinated manner. IOM programming will be coordinated with CARICOM and OECS, representing all relevant Caribbean countries to improve the delivery of effective and safe Caribbean labour mobility schemes.
Governments	Coordination with Caribbean governments including relevant ministries and departments is fundamental to achieve the outcomes identified in objective 4. Strong relationships with the governments in migrant receiving countries, including through their seasonal labour mobility schemes, provides a strategic basis for engagement on improving labour mobility across the Caribbean.
United Nations	Collaboration with other UN bodies is key for creating synergies in programming efforts, internal cohesion, and avoidance of duplication. IOM will work closely with the International Labour Organization on promoting decent work for all migrant workers in the Caribbean, and with the World Bank on issues pertaining to skills gaps and addressing brain drain challenges in Caribbean economies. IOM will also seek alignment with other UN programming around human mobility in the region, such as UN Development Program.
Development Partners	The economic development of the region is subject to the capacity of Caribbean countries to raise and maintain quality skilled workers, and its achievement is of interest for both national and international actors. The donor community has the capacity to trigger new investments through the implementation of innovative and sustainable labour migration programs, tailored to the needs of the region. IOM will seek to engage with key institutions in the field of labour and human development, such as the World Bank and will also approach new potential donors with capacity and interest in the region, such as the IsDB, CDB and laDB.
Civil Society	Partnership with civil society, communities and traditional leaders will be particularly important for the development and upscaling of pre-departure and reintegration assistance, including support to small and medium-size enterprises (SME) as well as in diaspora engagement.
Private Sector	In the Caribbean, partnering with key Private Sector entities in sectors such as tourism, agriculture and construction turns fundamental for the creation of labour opportunities and sustainable livelihoods for migrants and vulnerable communities. Labour recruitment agencies can also be key to addressing recruitment fee issues and promoting ethical recruitment. But the potential of Caribbean private sector is not limited to the creation of sustainable jobs. IOM will seek strategic partnerships to work in relevant areas facilitating the effective contribution of migration to development, such as exploring ways to reduce de costs of diaspora remittances, or the access of the most vulnerable groups to digitalization, fostering their integration into society and facilitating their access to information, education and services, while tackling the challenges arising from localization.
Academia and Media	Academia and research bodies are key partners for strengthening research, data, and evidence on Caribbean labour mobility and diaspora engagement. In addition to the university institutions present in the region, IOM will seek to enhance the evidence base for its programs in collaboration with international institutions such as the Migration Policy Institute. Also, local media can be instrumental to enhance diaspora engagement and strength community awareness and engagement on labour mobility issues.





## PILLAR 3: GOVERNANCE



Transversal to the four objectives outlined under the Resilience and Mobility pillars, the Governance pillar articulates IOM engagement around **policy, partnership, and data**.

These three elements are in fact fundamental for the implementation of IOM programming and represent the backbone of this Strategy. While the specific areas of proposed engagement in policy, partnership and data have been succinctly mapped under each of the four objectives in the above section, IOM recognizes that there are cross-cutting and in some cases all-encompassing initiatives in the field of migration governance, outlined below.

- **Evidence-based communication:** Communication on migration issues is based on sound data and evidence.

High quality, accessible, reliable and timely research, including disaggregated data, is essential to inform policies, action and public opinion. This is key for the implementation of rights-based, people-centred migration governance. IOM has drawn upon its extensive expertise and proven practices to provide advisory support to Caribbean governments and regional entities to enable more informed decision-making on migration governance matters. For instance, effective disaster response depends on pre-existing data and data collection as well as their analysis.

While progress continues to be made in collecting and analysing migration-related data in the region, including under initiatives promoted by ECLAC, the Caribbean is still facing challenges, particularly in ensuring appropriate understanding and use of these statistics. Continued emphasis is needed on harmonization of definitions and indicators; digitalization to improving administrative data collection and analysis; better use of census and survey data; and better utilization of data and statistics in national planning and budgetary processes.

Increasing the visibility of reliable, disaggregated, and comparable data in the Caribbean region can also contribute to build a more positive narrative on migration and migrant communities in the Caribbean and debunk many of the myths surrounding migrants and migration.

- **Policy development and implementation:** Migration is integrated within relevant sectoral and other policies and implemented at local, national, and regional levels.

In support of governmental partners, IOM works towards the effective incorporation of migration issues into relevant policies in the Caribbean. At the regional level, this is mainly carried out in collaboration with key intergovernmental structures, including OECS and CARICOM. At the national level, IOM supports Caribbean governments in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration (GCM) and collaborates with Caribbean countries in the GCM regional and global reviews expected for 2024 and 2026 respectively. IOM's policy work is also guided by other relevant initiatives such as those of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and fully aligns with the Los Angeles Declaration's commitment to work collaboratively to protect the dignity, life, and human rights of all migrants, regardless of migratory status.

As a flagship initiative under this strategy, IOM is committed to supporting CARICOM and its Member States as they embark on an ambitious path towards the development of a Regional Approach to Migration Policy (RAMP) in the Caribbean. This initiative resulted from a decision by Heads of Government at the Nineteenth Special Summit of CARICOM Heads of Government on Crime and Security, (Trinidad and Tobago, May 2019) which mandated the development of a migration policy in conjunction with relevant United Nations agencies. Subsequently, the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) (May 2021) agreed that the Community should consider the establishment of a CARICOM Group on Migration to engage in wide ranging discussions and exchange of information on migration issues affecting Member States. In September 2022, Community Institutions and UN agencies, supported by IOM, held a first meeting on developing a regional approach, resulting in a work plan that includes the formation of a steering committee, implementation of a priority survey with respective consultations, and a regional meeting to bring together national and regional stakeholders to lay out the next steps for the development of a regional migration policy and strategy. This multi-year initiative should pave the way for CARICOM countries to further identify their common priorities and interests in fostering collaboration on migration governance in the Caribbean.

- **Collaborative partnerships:** Governments, Regional entities, UN, Development Partners, CSOs, private sector and academia understand migrants and migration appropriately.

In the Caribbean, IOM will support governments and development partners in understanding migration issues and responding to them accordingly. At the UN level, IOM will work to ensure mainstreaming of migration across programming. Moreover, IOM will seek to boost financing and resources available through greater collaboration with relevant development banks with strong presence in the region, such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank. IOM will also proactively engage with traditional and non-traditional donors and will focus efforts on the development of partnerships of cooperation with the private sector.

Good migration governance also requires close cooperation with other actors. As urban populations fluctuate, and local authorities join front-line service providers, the political leadership of mayors and local leaders will be essential. In addition, academia plays an essential role in gathering, analysing, and sharing knowledge. Based on ongoing experience, such as in Belize, IOM will seek to expand partnerships with academic institutions for the development of migration-related curricula focusing on the Caribbean, with Caribbean universities such as UWI, as well as other institutions specialized in migration studies. Similarly, if the private sector is to contribute to socially cohesive and diverse societies, it will increasingly need the support and insight of organizations such as IOM. Migrants also need to participate in the development of immigration and integration policies that truly benefit all.

### **Private Sector Engagement**

Migration in the Caribbean is a complex phenomenon that significantly contributes to the development of countries' economies within the region. Given the impact that it has on the availability of the labour force, migration is of special relevance for private entities participating in the productive fabric of the Caribbean, as well as abroad.

IOM recognizes the potential of private sector collaboration to strengthen and scale up actions that contribute to ensuring safe, regular, and orderly migration in the region. IOM will work towards the establishment of innovative and mutually beneficial partnerships with private sector entities in areas such as:

- remittances to explore ways of reducing transaction costs and to directing investment towards green, blue and productive economies;
- labour migration, to promote the ethical recruitment of labour migrants, including in critical sectors such as the maritime and tourism industries;
- resilience, to generate durable economic opportunities that bring stability to vulnerable communities; and
- preparedness and response activities, to mobilize the philanthropic sector in the United States through USA for IOM.



# 04

## Monitoring, evaluation and resource framework

### Monitoring and Evaluation

#### Introduction of Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Tools

IOM is committed to accountability, learning, and results-based management. This Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Framework facilitates the achievement of these goals via a selection of key tools and evaluation processes. Further details on the function of each tool and process are outlined below in Figure V.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation Standards and Ethics

IOM is committed to quality monitoring and evaluation that is context-driven, and also aligned with global coordination mechanisms and best practice. To this end, monitoring and evaluation initiatives have been, and will continue to be, driven first and foremost by Caribbean needs, with an ambition to ensure alignment with key regional mechanisms such as the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the Dutch and English-speaking Caribbean. Simultaneously, the IOM Strategy for the Caribbean seeks to align with and contribute to global data initiatives including UNINFORM, to ensure Caribbean representation and assist in assuring that these global initiatives are adapted to the needs of this region.

Monitoring and evaluation activities will be aligned with IOM Data Protection Principles, IOM's Monitoring Policy 2018, IOM's Code of Conduct, principles of Do No Harm, and IOM safeguarding policies. In addition, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out in line with the IOM Evaluation Policy 2018, and the UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation.

All data collection will be conducted in accordance with best ethical practice in research, particularly with respect to ensuring participants' safety, anonymity, the protection of data, and risk mitigation. Both relational and procedural ethics will be addressed. Information will be provided to monitoring and evaluation practitioners and participants regarding avenues through which to raise ethical concerns, and how to report misconduct.

This Caribbean-focused strategy is aligned with IOM's global Office of the Inspector General Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy, which provides high-level support for quality monitoring and evaluation.

## Function of tools within the Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Framework

TOOL	FUNCTION
Theory of Change	The theory of change outlines the logic, rationale, and key assumptions behind the areas of programming prioritized under the strategy. It is thus a fundamental feature of later evaluations, specifically by allowing IOM to interrogate assumptions and change pathways.
Results and Resources Plan	A Results and Resources Plan provides an overview of the key resource inputs into each objective under the Strategy and the results expected to arise as a result of this resource and action. It thus improves external accountability at a strategic level and facilitates discussion over resourcing contributions and resulting outputs.
Results Matrix	The Results Matrix aims to provide routine monitoring and reporting of key information and support the identification of areas requiring additional attention or revision of approach at the earliest possible stage to adapt and improve IOM approaches. Annual results monitoring will be guided by the Results Matrix, and this data will also inform evaluations, and feed into the annual Cooperation Framework results. An internal living document, the results matrix is adaptable to changes in context as needed – for example, additional indicators may be added to ensure optimal alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.
Resources Matrix	The Resources Matrix facilitates planning and tracking of financial allocations toward specific objectives and outcomes. This ensures that we identify gaps and thus take action to balance resource allocations wherever needed, and at the earliest opportunity. As with the Results Matrix, the Resources Matrix will be reviewed at least annually, and will be adapted as necessary to ensure alignment with changes in context.
Mid-Term Evaluation	An internal mid-term evaluation will probe the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy. It will review alignment with the context and key strategies and policies published since the initial publication of the Migration Strategy for the Caribbean, including the forthcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027.
Final Evaluation	A final evaluation will evaluate the overall success of the strategy in achieving its goals, and answer questions as to why the strategy has or has not achieved its ambitions. This final evaluation will also identify and disseminate lessons learned and recommendations to inform the subsequent Migration Strategy for the Caribbean.

## Resource Requirements

To contribute towards Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration from, to, and within the Caribbean, leaving no one behind, IOM requires **USD\$ 62.5M** in resources to deliver multi-country initiatives for the period 2023-2026.

These resources will be split between the pillars outlined in this strategy document with \$36.4M to Pillar 1, \$23.8M to Pillar 2 and \$2.3M to Pillar 3 and have been formulated through consultations between all IOM country offices in the Caribbean region.

IOM will continue to facilitate programming in partnership with other UN agencies, civil society and regional organizations where appropriate. This collaborative, strengths-based approach to partnering with others is fundamental to the

practical realization of our commitments to localization, regionalism, and joint UN programming.

The budget figures above refer to multi-country programs on human mobility in the Caribbean where IOM is the or one of the main recipient organizations. The IOM Strategy for the Caribbean 2023-2026 outlines broad areas for cooperation as it forms the basis for IOM's multi-country programming in the Caribbean, based on a common set of IOM's institutional priorities.

Given IOM's projectized model of operation, multiple projects will be developed and implemented under the 4 objectives of the strategy, through different configurations of partnership with governments, agencies, civil society, and private sectors.



Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration from, to and within the Caribbean, leaving no one behind											
<b>Pillar 1 – Resilience</b> Addressing adverse drivers						<b>Pillar 2 – Mobility</b> Promote safe, orderly, and regular migration					
USD 36,375,000						USD 23,825,000					
<b>Priority area 1</b> Resilience to Climate Change and related Human Mobility			<b>Priority area 2</b> Resilience to negative socio-economic drivers of migration (for a whole-of-society approach)			<b>Priority area 3</b> Protection of people on the move and humane governance of borders			<b>Priority area 4</b> Labor Mobility and Human Development		
<b>Objective 1</b> Communities and authorities across the Caribbean demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility			<b>Objective 2</b> Communities across the Caribbean experience reduced levels of adverse drivers of migration compound by insecurity and violence while fostering social cohesion.			<b>Objective 3</b> Caribbean countries have developed evidence-based policies and capacities to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability while promoting safe migration and borders.			<b>Objective 4</b> Labour migrants, their families and communities benefit from adaptive and ethical labour mobility policies and programs contributing to human development.		
USD 19,875,000			USD 16,500,000			USD 13,885,000			USD 9,940,000		
<b>Outcome 1</b> Improved disaster-management capabilities within governments and communities through available stocks, and clear operational frameworks and skills.	<b>Outcome 1.2</b> Better responses by all stakeholders to protect migrants and their families, communities, and societies more effectively, during life-threatening emergencies and through recovery	<b>Outcome 1.3</b> Inter-governmental and regional climate-related research and policies are effective in addressing mobility and disaster displacement.	<b>Outcome 2.1</b> Adverse drivers are identified and addressed within a whole of society approach to human rights and security (in line with SDGs / UNMSDCF).	<b>Outcome 2.2</b> Returnees, including deportees, are better identified, and supported in their efforts to reintegrate in their societies of origin.	<b>Outcome 2.3</b> Migrants in the Caribbean have access to the information and services conducive to their integration and preserving social cohesion	<b>Outcome 3.1</b> Strengthened capacities of governmental and civil society actors in the Caribbean to identify and provide rights-based and gender-sensitive protection and assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability.	<b>Outcome 3.2</b> Safe and secure borders are established and promoted in the Caribbean through integrated border governance.	<b>Outcome 3.3</b> Identity management systems and capacity are built among Caribbean countries and their partners and help foster legal pathways.	<b>Outcome 4.1</b> Strengthened regional and national labor mobility governance and coordination systems, including for intra-Caribbean mobility.	<b>Outcome 4.2</b> Enhanced impact of diaspora communities and their remittances on sustainable development through genuine and mutually beneficial partnerships.	<b>Outcome 4.3</b> Migration potential is effectively harnessed as a contribution to human development.
<b>Pillar 3 – Governance</b> Good Migration Governance is promoted through policy, partnerships, and evidence-based communication											
USD 2,300,000											
<b>Evidence-based communication</b> Communication on migration issues is based on sound data and evidence.				<b>Policy Development and Implementation</b> Communication on migration issues is based on sound data and evidence.				<b>Partnerships</b> UN and Development Partners understand migrants and migration appropriately			
USD 1,500,000				USD 500,000				USD 300,000			

Figure V: Results and Resource Requirements

## References

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15. The Bridgetown Initiative was devised by a group led by Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Mottley and her climate finance envoy Avinash Persaud. The Bridgetown Initiative includes five proposals to address immediate liquidity challenges in the SIDS and to build a new international financial system that responds better to the climate and development crises for Frontline economies.
  16. IOM Essentials of Migration Management (EMM) 2.0 Handbook: There are five primary macro level drivers of migration – economics, demographics, social, political, and environmental. These provide the broad context in which people move from one location to another. In addition, there are micro level factors (such as age, gender, and income level) that determine how the macro factors influence migration decisions at the personal or household (micro) level.
  17. This may include, for example, a combination of regular and irregular migration flows
  18. “Smuggling of migrants” shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident. – Article 3, Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. “Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. – Article 3, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.
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