

IOM MESSAGES FOR THE 2023 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS SUMMIT

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1. BACKGROUND

The 2023 Sustainable Development Goal Summit ([SDG Summit](#)) will take place on 18 and 19 September, during the high-level week of the seventy-eighth session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), at the UN Headquarters in New York.

Marking the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and three years into the [Decade of Action](#), the Summit comes at a time of unprecedented challenges. According to the UN Secretary General¹ (SG), just 12 percent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets are on track; progress on a further 50 percent is weak and insufficient; and we have stalled or gone into reverse on more than 30 percent of the SDGs. During the Summit, Heads of State and Government will review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and provide high-level political guidance on the actions that will be needed in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The outcome of the Summit will be a negotiated [political declaration](#), led by two co-facilitator States, Qatar and Ireland.

IOM's active participation in the SDG Summit is a whole-of-Organization priority for 2023. IOM's overarching objective is to ensure that the full spectrum of human mobility (international migration, internal migration, and displacement) is incorporated into discussions and outcomes of the SDG Summit, including key commitments to accelerate the contribution of human mobility to development.

IOM will engage throughout the preparations for the SDG Summit: please refer to the background note for more information on the process [here](#). IOM's contributions to the SDG Summit will draw on its extensive technical and field expertise as lead UN Migration Agency working across the full spectrum of human mobility, as well as Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration (UNNM).

The Principals of the UNNM's Executive Committee² have endorsed a series of [key messages](#) in a note outlining the contribution of the UNNM to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the SDG Summit, which will be used by all Executive Committee entities. They reflect a system-wide expression of the core hopes that migration and migrants are included in our common future vision for the SDGs. They can guide IOM's engagement and messaging in inter-agency fora at country or regional level, for instance in SDG Summit related preparations in UN Country Teams (UNCTs).

The below "top line" and "Acceleration Actions" messages, drafted to align with and complement the UNNM messaging, offer greater detail about IOM's approach to advocacy and outreach. They provide general lines to take on human mobility in general and messaging focused on specific groups of people on the move (international migrants, internal migrants, displaced persons).

¹ See more in the [SG Special Report on Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals](#).

² The Executive Committee consists of IOM, ILO, OHCHR, UN-Women, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, World Bank, UNODC, and UNDESA.

These should be used by all IOM offices as may be relevant to a given context, including Regional and Country Offices, with their regional and national counterparts and other stakeholders, including CSOs, local governments, and the private sector.

2. WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Ministries in charge of foreign affairs, or planning (this may vary from country to country) will prepare their own key messages and national positions heading into the event. This offers an opportunity for IOM to contribute messaging related to migration and human mobility. Closer to the Summit, IOM Missions will also be able to engage with designated participants to support on the preparation of their talking points or statements.

Additionally, from May 2023, discussions on UN System support to host governments as they prepare for the Summit are likely to be on the agenda of UN Country Teams (UNCTs). Resident Coordinators (RCs) have [been tasked by the Deputy Secretary General](#) regarding the major role that RCs and UNCTs are expected to play in helping to deliver the “SDG Rescue Plan” – by putting the Summit on the agenda of political leaders; supporting governments in their preparations; socializing the Summit domestically; and activating both traditional and new stakeholders around SDG action.

IOM engagement through these different opportunities will contribute to:

- **IN THE IMMEDIATE:**

- Advocate for the inclusion of positive human mobility considerations in national positions and contributions in preparatory events (notably VNR reports presentation³ and statements during the HLPF) and towards the SDG Summit.

- **BY THE SUMMIT:**

- Rally support and build alliances with key stakeholders to back and bolster IOM key advocacy efforts and messages during the summit.

- **AFTER THE SUMMIT:**

- Help governments make more inclusive policy choices that benefit migrants and societies alike, leveraging the principles of the GCM to attain the SDGs.

³ [IOM Internal Guidance on Supporting the Member States in the preparation of VNRs](#)

3. IOM TOP-LINE MESSAGES FOR THE SDG SUMMIT⁴

The **2030 Agenda and the SDGs** will not be achieved without due consideration of human mobility. People on the move – one in eight people in the world – are part of the solution.

Managed well, migration can be a **cornerstone of sustainable development**, prosperity, and progress.

The **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)** offers a 360-degree vision to optimize the overall benefits of migration for sustainable development.

The Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement **can transform the way displacement** crises are resolved, prevented and addressed.

⁴ The top-line IOM messages for the SDG Summit build off on the general messaging on migration and sustainable development presented in the [Migration and Sustainable Development Communications Guide for IOM Staff released in December 2021](#) (see resources at the end of this document).

4. IOM ACCELERATION ACTIONS

SDG “Acceleration Actions” are initiatives voluntarily undertaken to accelerate SDG implementation. Any new action or those that builds on existing efforts (scaling up, new phase, etc.) related to the achievement of one or more of the 17 SDGs or addressing the interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda can be considered an SDG Acceleration Action⁵.

IOM is proposing 6 Acceleration Actions that can be acted upon by governments – individually or in partnership with other stakeholders. They directly address foundational drivers to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

For each Acceleration Action identified, governments can build on existing innovative policy and operational practice⁶ and take bold commitments that could trigger the positive and knock-on effect of the Acceleration Action on various SDG⁷. A non-exhaustive list of possible policy interventions are presented under each of the Acceleration Action.

ACCELERATION ACTIONS



Extend social protection and universal health coverage to all migrants and displaced persons, with a specific focus on youth and women, in order to **reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities** and enable their active participation and contribution to societies.



To realise this, governments can commit to:

- Extend non-discriminatory national social protection systems, including social protection floors for migrants and displaced persons; develop legal frameworks, policies and practices to remove legal and practical obstacles to social protection in accordance with international norms and guidelines; leverage innovative informal social protection schemes as complements of public forms of social protection where appropriate and feasible; bridge the information gaps related to migrants and social protection.

⁵ Read more on the conceptualization of “Acceleration Actions” [here](#).

⁶ IOM is already providing support to Governments and other stakeholders across the 6 Acceleration Actions through its different programmes and projects that span the thematic work across the humanitarian, development and peace dimensions. The upcoming IOM flagship report for the SDG Summit will provide further evidence of IOM support and flagship initiatives.

⁷ More on the evidence behind the Accelerations Actions can be found [here](#).

- Conclude bilateral and multilateral social security agreements and bilateral labour migration agreements along key migration corridors and within regional groupings of States, in accordance with guiding global and regional frameworks, providing for flexible and incremental arrangements; and implement initiatives that strengthen the voice and representation of migrants and displaced persons in social protection arrangements and mechanisms.
- During times of crisis and immediate post-crisis (eg, pandemics, disasters), strengthen vertical coordination between national, sub-national and local/community authorities to enhance the accessibility of social protection schemes for all; work more closely with humanitarian agencies to ensure transition measures from cash-based humanitarian systems towards sustainable social protection systems.
- Provide all migrants, including displaced populations, with safe access to basic care services, regardless of their migration status, in line with Universal Health Coverage; and incorporate the health needs of people on the move in national and local health care policies and plans.
- Advance multisectoral and international collaboration to build and strengthen capacities for public health surveillance, detection and reporting systems, especially at points of entry.



Develop safe and regular migration pathways across borders, reduce remittances transaction costs, and integrate the human and financial capital of diasporas in trade systems to **boost global value chains and meet the needs for sustainable development finance.**



To realise this, governments can commit to:

- Support diasporas to engage with their communities of origin and destination in a way that assists them to harness their social, economic, human and cultural capital, which is a principal objective of the Dublin Declaration – which resulted from the first Global Diaspora Summit in 2022.
- Establish an enabling environment to reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances to less than 3 per cent and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent by 2030 in line with target 10.c of the 2030 Agenda; including by implementing conducive policy and regulatory framework, and promote innovation and competition by permitting non-bank providers of remittance services.
- Work with industry stakeholders to bring to scale innovative technological solutions for remittance transfers.

- Invest in programmes, instruments and platforms that proactively engage diaspora to become investors in the peace and development of their communities of origin, that direct remittances to investment; and that transfer and connect knowledge and human capital for innovation in local development and entrepreneurship in countries of origin, and in particular to support the green transition.
- Address barriers to free movement that are hindering the free trade agenda through legitimate cross-border and regional trade of goods and services to boost local and regional value chains, support empowerment of border communities, inclusive of small-scale cross-border traders, and offer solutions that enhance coordinated and integrated border management processes that are rights- based, equitable, and dignified.
- Adopt multistakeholder strategies to strengthen migrant worker protection in the context of global value chains, including policies and programming addressed to small and medium-sized enterprises and production and services across national markets. This includes strategic public-private partnerships with chambers of commerce, employer organisations and industry bodies as well as invaluable civil society engagement to enhance the reach and sustainability of interventions.
- Increase bilateral and IFI investments foresight, early warning, climate adaptation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and armed conflicts on migration.



Include migrants' voices and integrate 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.**



To realise this, governments can commit to:

- Enhance efforts to develop and implement evidence based and rights-based migration policies that advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including by reviewing existing national frameworks of relevance to migration governance through Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) assessments.
- Significantly enlarge and systematize a space for- and systems of engagement for stakeholders to ensure horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government as it is indispensable to reap the benefits around well-managed human mobility, as a global phenomenon, yet largely a local-to-local reality.
- Creating community participatory mechanisms whereby migrants and displaced people have an equal say in decisions made about and by the community, including local rural and urban policies, plans and interventions.

- Prioritize funding and support for communities who are co-creating (with migrants and displaced people) and innovating new solutions to social cohesion, peace and development challenges such as: eliminating the barriers for people on the move to access urban and community services, connecting rural and urban communities, enhancing equal employment opportunities that harness the talent of all community members, etc.
- Holistically address the needs of entire communities, including specific barriers that may limit the contributions of those at risk of being left behind, by integrating migration and displacement into all sectors of community life, including health, employment, housing, education, and more.
- Working with the media, private sector, educational institutions and community centers to bring communities together rather than divide, based on an understanding that diversity, human mobility and the exchange of new ideas and people are what make communities thrive, grow and prosper.



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.



To realise this, governments can commit to:

- Beef up the evidence base and capacities of national institutions to collect data from administrative sources in destination and origin countries for labour market and mobility analysis; and improve data collection and analysis to mapping skills gaps globally and improve comparability of skills and qualifications to facilitate skills portability, transparency and recognition, moving towards common skill taxonomies and harmonization templates.
- Support convergence and further alignment of national skills classification, standardization, and recognition systems, and engage in inter-State cooperation on their recognition and legal certification.
- Support and convene relevant public and private stakeholders, including from the education sector, trade unions, migrant associations and non-governmental organizations working in rights protection, employers, multinational corporations, small and medium-sized enterprises and their networks; for drawing up and implementing market-driven and mobility-sensitive skills development policies that improve employability while meeting people on the move's aspirations, plans, personal and family circumstances; and at a fairly distributed cost among all benefitting stakeholders.

- Scale up and replicate innovative tools such as the Skills Mobility Partnerships (SMPs) model as a forward-looking solution that is centered around cooperative skills development and the building of meaningful partnerships between migrants, states, employers, training and education institutions and civil society in origin and destination communities to share the benefits of labour mobility.
- Facilitate the sustainable reintegration of returning migrants into community life by providing them equal access to social protection and services, vocational training, employment opportunities and decent work, recognition of skills acquired abroad, and financial services, in order to fully build upon their entrepreneurship, skills and human capital as active members of society and contributors to sustainable development in the country of origin upon return.



Reduce the digital access gap for people on the move and use digitalization of economies to effectively **leverage migrants and displaced persons' entrepreneurship, including for green transition and climate action**



To realise this, governments can commit to:

- Prioritize and invest in the development of digital services that are inclusive and accessible for migrants and displaced populations by adopting a human-centered design approach that incorporate their needs and perspectives and expand across the various touchpoints of the migrant journey to ensure that the services are secure, respect privacy, and easy to use; and promote collaboration among various stakeholders leveraging organizational resources, experience, and strengths to develop digital tools and services rooted in the actual use of technology by migrants and displaced populations to maximize accessibility and usage.
- Ensure that migrants and displaced persons are present and included in digital cooperation discussions and are specifically accounted for in the global efforts to set metrics to measure digital inclusion for evidence-based policymaking.
- Facilitate more inclusive and quality education to hard-to-reach migrants and displaced persons by leveraging appropriate age- and gender-sensitive digital tools for early childhood development, formal schooling, non-formal education programmes, on-the-job and vocational training, technical education, language training, and lifelong learning, as a foundational basis for empowering individuals to meet their development potential.

- Build on initiatives and programmes that broaden usage of digital platforms and tools for access to information and guidance on safe, orderly and regular mobility opportunities (transparency and accessibility of migration procedures: requirements for entry, admission, stay, work, study or other activities); and that provide easily accessible information and guidance, including through digital platforms, as well as tailored mechanisms for the coordinated and effective financial, voluntary or philanthropic engagement of migrants and diasporas.
- Invest in systems that introduce technology to simplify international mobility and entry-procedures application procedures, in order to avoid unnecessary delays and expenses for States and migrants; and build appropriate structures and mechanisms that maximize the use of information and communication technology for streamlining border management processes, while upholding the principle of non-discrimination, respecting the right to privacy and protecting personal data.



Integrate human mobility into national adaptation plans, invest in preparedness and means to **address loss and damages, reduce conflict and climate induced displacement and build resilient and peaceful societies capable of adapting to the impacts of climate change and violence.**

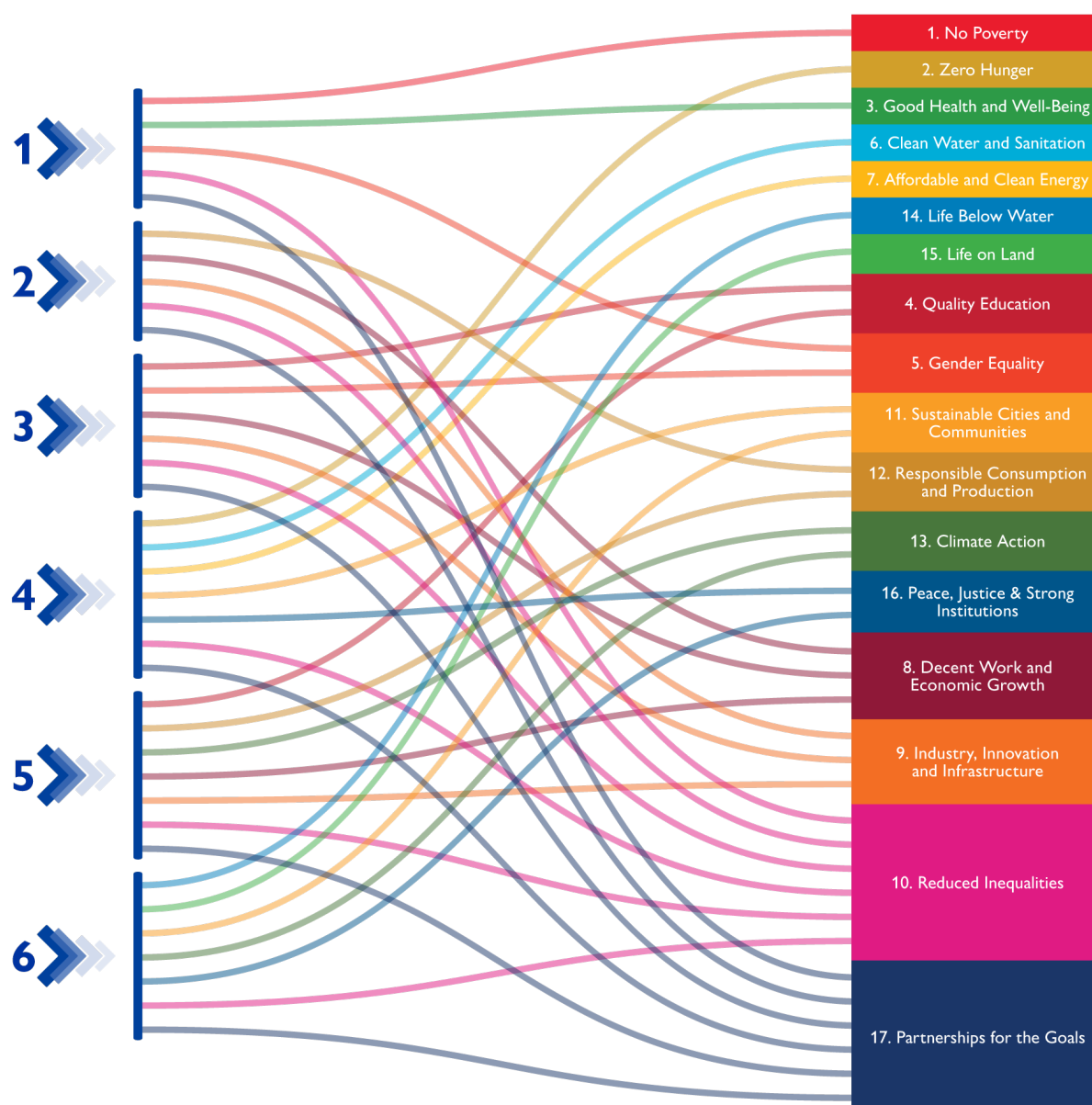


To realise this, governments can commit to:

- Develop and review urban development plans to prepare for internal and international mobility; to integrate human mobility in national policies and plans on climate change, disaster risk reduction and development; and integrate climate risks into humanitarian response plans and programming to ensure response to climate-related displacement.
- Facilitate the participation of migrants, displaced persons, diasporas and communities, especially the most vulnerable, in dialogue and peace processes as well as actions regarding climate change adaptation, mitigation and losses and damages.
- Provide solutions for people to move, including by developing regular migration pathways from climate vulnerable regions and disaster-prone areas; developing and implementing regional or bilateral transhumance frameworks to allow people to move, while facilitating livelihoods; and develop/update frameworks for planned relocation in a rights-based and participatory manner as a last resort option.

- Identify gaps and priorities in local peace and governance architectures as well as disaster risk reduction capacities and strengthen systems and policies to prevent and respond to future crises; and produce conflict and risk assessments to factor in current disaster risk and future climate change impacts to inform human mobility programming for emergency preparedness, conflict prevention and resolution, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.
- Promote and roll out durable solutions for disaster and conflict induced displacement; including through bold initiatives that grant, expedite, or waive visas and other entry requirements in situations of disasters and conflict, including through private sponsorships and family reunification; or by implementing non-return policies to ensure migrants are not returned to countries of origin which are experiencing disasters and violent conflict.

ACCELERATION ACTIONS LINKED WITH SDGs



5. WHAT IS IMPACTING OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA?

Human mobility in all its dimensions is essential to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda. Well-managed human mobility generates economic opportunities which can benefit societies overall. At the same time, human mobility patterns across the world are increasingly complex – driven and impacted by major global transformations⁸:



The world is growing less equal. The pandemic recovery is uneven, exacerbated by divergent levels of COVID-19 vaccine delivery. Jobs have been slower to recover in most developing countries. Growth in least developed countries (LDCs) is projected to be just 4.4 per cent in 2023⁹, significantly below the 7 per cent target set by SDG 8. At the same time, the LDCs face a huge responsibility supporting displaced persons, with more than half of the global IDP caseload.

Human mobility dynamics are the byproduct of individual, family, and community decisions, spurred by a desire to reduce perceived and actual inequalities. Governance structures, and access to food, justice, employment, and basic services, all influence the decision to move.



Changing demographics. The global population has just reached 8 billion people, including the largest generation of young people in history. Nearly 90 per cent of those young people live in developing countries¹⁰.

The great majority of people do not migrate across borders; much larger numbers migrate within countries. More than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas, including the majority of international migrants and internally displaced people.



Digitalization and the **reconceptualization of the nature of work** bring opportunities. They have the potential to boost inclusive and sustainable growth by spurring innovation, generating efficiencies, and improving the workplace. How people perform their jobs, and what skills are needed to perform those jobs is being transformed by artificial intelligence and automation.

But blurred employment relationships can pose further challenges, particularly to migrants who already have low social protection coverage. Evidence also suggests that persons on the move have less access to the internet and new technologies, which limit their information, educational and employment opportunities, and have further impacts on human mobility dynamics.

⁸ For more on the global transformations, see [IOM Submission to the 2023 HLPF](#).

⁹ [Sustainable Development Goals Report](#), SDG 8, DESA, 2022.

¹⁰ There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. For statistical purposes, however, the [UN](#) – without prejudice to any other definitions made by Member States – defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. For more on youth in the Least Developed Countries, see [here](#).



Mistrust, exclusion from decision-making and hyper individualism combined with the after-effects of a global pandemic have weakened social cohesion¹¹.

Attitudes towards people on the move tend to become more polarized in moments of economic uncertainty. Incidence of xenophobia and discrimination against migrants has increased worldwide¹². Governments can sometimes feel pressure to limit human mobility, even while labour market shortages persist, and despite recognition during the COVID-19 pandemic that migration is both necessary and valuable.



The world is experiencing the **highest number of violent conflicts** since the end of World War II. Stalled and recurrent conflicts are occurring more frequently, reversing progress toward the SDGs. This is even despite new types of integrated assistance that combine humanitarian and development approaches to achieve more sustainable solutions.

Conflict, violence, and disaster are the main drivers of internal displacement. The number of people living in displacement reached 60.9 million people in 2022, marking a new historic record.



Disasters, climate change and environmental degradation continue to contribute to large-scale population movements, mostly internal, as the lives, livelihoods, habitat, physical and mental health, and the enjoyment of human rights of affected populations, become adversely impacted.

The World Bank has predicted that up to 216 million people across six regions could move within their countries by 2050. In turn, human mobility can impact the environment, ecosystems, and the availability of natural resources. However, managed well, migration can also be part of the solution as a form of adaptation to environmental stressors.



Financial constraints. The international community is being called upon to do more with increasingly tight budgets, as multiple situations of acute humanitarian concern dominate calls for support. Funding is being squeezed in all directions, while some donors have introduced aid conditionality related to migration management.

Migrants' remittances and transfers are a lifeline during times of crisis, as shown during the COVID 19 pandemic and Ukraine war). Exceeding 1 trillion USD per annum globally (and not counting informal transfers), they have a knock-on effect on development and societies. They are greater and more stable than both foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA). Yet transfer costs remain excessively high.

¹¹ See more on social cohesion data, [here](#).

¹² "Sentiment towards Migration during COVID-19 What Twitter Data Can Tell Us", IOM, 2021.



The multilateral system is being challenged by a rising tendency towards nationalism and protectionism, with countries pulling back from international cooperation.

This could have negative impacts for cooperation on migration governance, and solidarity around displacement situations, even while the GCM has demonstrated the value of working across borders.

At the mid-way point of the 2030 Agenda, these challenges risk leaving hundreds of millions of international migrants, internal migrants, and displaced persons behind. That is one in every eight people in the world.

ANNEX: RESOURCES

- **On the SDG Summit and associated events:**

- UN resources:
 - [2023 SDG Summit](#)
 - [Special edition of the Annual Progress Report on the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
 - [Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 \(*which includes a textbox on human mobility drafted by IOM\)](#)
 - [2023 High Level Political Forum](#)
 - [SDG Summit and linkages to high-level events in September and across 2023: Narrative to guide the UN System](#)
 - [Guidance Note for RCs on the SDG Summit](#)
 - [Our Common Agenda](#)
 - Our Common Agenda Policy Briefs:
 - [Future generations](#)
 - [Emergency platform](#)
 - [Youth engagement](#)
 - Beyond gross domestic product (forthcoming)
 - Global digital compact (forthcoming)
 - Public information (forthcoming)
 - International financial architecture (forthcoming)
 - Outer space (forthcoming)
 - Towards a new agenda for peace (forthcoming)
 - Transforming education (forthcoming)
 - United Nations 2.0 (forthcoming)
 - [2024 Summit of the Future](#)
- IOM resources:
 - [Internal Background Note on the SDG Summit](#)
 - [IOM Submission to the 2023 HLPF](#)
- UNNM resources:
 - [UNNM Contributions to the 2023 HLPF and SDG Summit \(key messages\)](#)

- **On Migration and Sustainable Development**

- [Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development](#)
- [Migration Data Portal – Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [M4DNet](#)
- [Migration and the 2030 Agenda: Guide for Practitioners](#)
- [Migration and the SDGs: Measuring progress](#)
- [United Nations Development System Reform: A How-to Guide for IOM staff](#)

- [Mainstreaming migration into key international cooperation and development sectors](#)
- [Guide for IOM Staff: Communicating for sustainable development](#)
- [SDG Working Group](#)

- **Other resources:**

- General:
 - [MSD SharePoint](#)
 - [UNPD SharePoint](#)
- Relating to specific Acceleration Actions:
 - [On Migration and Universal Health Coverage](#)
 - [IDiaspora](#)
 - [MGI portal](#)
 - [People on the Move in a Changing Climate – Linking Policy, Evidence and Action](#)