GCM Objective 8

Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants

Issues

Migrant women and girls, particularly those without access to safe and regular migration pathways, may embark on perilous and dangerous journeys and face high risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), exploitation, trafficking, injury and death.

Along certain routes, they may travel via land and encounter physical exhaustion, starvation and dehydration (particularly those walking long distances through deserts) or attacks by criminal gangs, who capture, torture, rape and hold women and girls hostage until ransoms are received from family members and friends. In cases where the ransom is unpaid, migrant women and girls often go missing, many feared dead. During sea crossings, women and girls are at increased risk of drowning as they are less likely than men and boys to be able to swim and their clothes may impede their movement. Women and girls often succumb to hypothermia sooner than men, highlighting the need for effective gender-responsive systems for search and rescue.

Measures

- Safe and regular migration pathways for all migrants, irrespective of gender
- Identification and assessment of gender-specific risks of all regular and irregular migration channels used by migrant women and girls, and implementation of measures to address these risks
- Systems to collect sex-disaggregated data at the national and/or regional level for those reported as dead or missing along specific migration routes and to share information with families regarding the status of missing migrants, with the

Copyright © UN Women 2026

participation of governments and non-State actors, including the United Nations system and migrant women's organizations
- Systems to collect sex-disaggregated data at the national level on those embarking on migration journeys to facilitate the identification of missing migrants
- Gender-responsive systems and procedures for effective search and rescue at sea, including identification of migrants who have lost their lives
- Support to families seeking information on missing migrants
- Capacity-building of search and rescue staff on the gender-specific vulnerabilities and needs of migrants in distress, and implementation of measures to address these in a gender-responsive manner

Copyright © UN Women 2026

Checklist

Question	Yes	Not yet
Does your State ensure that all migrants, irrespective of gender, have access to safe and regular migration pathways?	○	○
Does your State regularly carry out assessments of the gender-specific risks of regular and irregular migration channels?	○	○
• If yes, has your State adopted measures to address these gender-specific risks?	○	○
Has your State adopted a system to collect sex-disaggregated data at the national and/or regional level for those reported as dead or missing along specific migration routes?	○	○
• If yes, does you State share information with families regarding the status of missing migrants?	○	○
Has your State adopted a system to collect sex-disaggregated data at the national level on those embarking on migration journeys?	○	○
Has your State put in place gender-responsive systems and procedures for effective search and rescue at sea, including identification of migrants who have lost their lives?	○	○
Has your State provided capacity-building training for search and rescue staff on the gender-specific vulnerabilities and needs of migrants in distress and how to address these in a gender-responsive manner?	○	○

Copyright © UN Women 2026

Question	Yes	Not yet
Does your State provide support to families of missing migrants, including providing access to all available information?	○	○

Copyright © UN Women 2026