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Between 15% and 20% of migrants worldwide are in an irregular situation*, with no state permission to stay on, **invisibilized and unprotected**. Given this reality, regularization using clear criteria and accessible procedures benefits the entire society by:

- ▶ Reducing labor exploitation and fostering formal employment
- ▶ Easing migrants' fear of visiting health centers, thereby lowering the cost of emergency medical care
- ▶ Enabling the State to understand the reality and traits of all inhabitants for public policy design
- ▶ Reducing migrants' exclusion and marginalization, which contribute to situations of violence and discrimination
- ▶ Encouraging migrants to report crime and abuse, which ends up protecting us all.

The case of Fatima

As a young woman, Fatima decided to visit another country with visa in hand and her return scheduled for within two months. She was taken by the lifestyle and found work to be able to stay longer. Later, she fell in love and decided to have children. After more than 10 years, Fatima still has an irregular status. She could never regularize because she had no formal employment. At the same time, she couldn't get a formal job because she had no residency permit.

What can the State do?

- It can grant Fatima's regularization, **recognizing her contributions** and incorporating her into the formal employment system, allowing her to obtain banking services, facilitating her access to health care and strengthening her ability to defend herself in situations of abuse or discrimination. And her **family stays united** in the place where it has been flourishing.
- It can devote resources to identifying, apprehending and deporting Fatima, breaking up family ties and failing to capitalize on the efforts she has already made to contribute to society with her work and as a community member.

* Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. United Nations. The economic, social, and cultural rights of migrants in an irregular situation (2014).

How can states carry out regularization?

- 1** Simplify procedures so they are **clear, accessible and affordable**, and avoid bureaucratic obstacles that limit access to regularization.
- 2** Establish criteria that reflect the diverse realities of migrants, such as family unity, the length of stay, different work modalities and humanitarian grounds.
- 3** Provide adequate information and counseling to foster migratory regularization and prevent irregularity.

The Global Compact for migration cannot ignore the situation of at least 30 million people who live in the shadows in their destination countries, with limited possibilities for exercising their rights. States do not have the capacity to return all of these people. Deportation is a complex and costly procedure, and in many cases they would be expelling people who contribute to society. The Compact must include objectives and concrete measures for regularization, which is the most constructive response to this reality.