

No.29

## INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION

# YOUTH AND MIGRATION:

Engaging youth as key partners  
in migration governance

Unlocking the potential of youth  
to respond to the new challenges  
and opportunities of migration

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IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in the meeting of operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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*The primary goal of IOM is to facilitate the orderly and humane management of international migration... To achieve that goal, IOM will focus on the following activities, acting at the request of or in agreement with Member States:...*

*7. To promote, facilitate and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration, including through the International Dialogue on Migration, so as to advance understanding of the opportunities and challenges it presents, the identification and development of effective policies for addressing those challenges and to identify comprehensive approaches and measures for advancing international cooperation... (IOM Strategy, adopted by the IOM Council in 2007).*

IOM launched its International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) at the fiftieth anniversary session of the IOM Council in 2001, at the request of the Organization's membership. The purpose of the IDM, consistent with the mandate in IOM's constitution, is to provide a forum for Member States and Observers to identify and discuss major issues and challenges in the field of international migration, to contribute to a better understanding of migration and to strengthen cooperation on migration issues between governments and with other actors. The IDM is a platform for the Organization to listen and learn from its Member States and partners, and build evidence base for projects worldwide. The discussions also contribute to the overall implementation of sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly goal 10.7.

The inclusive, informal and constructive format of the IDM has helped to create a more open climate for migration policy debate and has served to build confidence among the various migration stakeholders. In combination with targeted research and policy analysis, the IDM is providing an open forum for debate and exchanges between all relevant stakeholders and has contributed to a better understanding of topical and emerging migration issues and their linkages with other policy domains. It has also facilitated the exchange of policy options and approaches among policymakers and practitioners, with a view towards more effective and humane governance of international migration. The IDM is organized by the IDM Unit of IOM's Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships.

The International Dialogue on Migration Publication Series (or “Red Book Series”) is designed to capture and review the results of the events and research carried out within the framework of the IDM. The Red Book Series is prepared and coordinated by the IDM Unit. More information on the IDM can be found at [www.iom.int/idm](http://www.iom.int/idm) or you can contact [idmworkshop@iom.int](mailto:idmworkshop@iom.int).

The publication presents a detailed report of the deliberations on the main issues discussed at the two sessions and offers a collection of experiences, best practices shared and recommendations made for strengthening cooperation and partnerships on migration at all levels and enhancing capacity development efforts for effective migration governance. In addition, the publication contains the agenda and summary of conclusions pertaining to each meeting.

IOM would like to express its great appreciation to the Government of Australia for its generous financial contribution which allowed the realization of the IDM 2019.

The report of the IDM 2019 was drafted by Rocio Sanz, independent consultant, under the direction of Bruna Brilhante Pelluso, Associate Policy Officer and Paula Benea, Migration Policy Officer, IDM Unit and overall supervision of Dejan Keserovic, Head of the Governing Bodies Division. Special thanks go to Chloe McCaw and Hannah Emerson, Interns, Governing Bodies Division, who assisted the review and editing of the content of the report.

The IDM 2019 was organized by the IDM Unit of IOM’s Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships. Thanks for their contribution to IDM 2019 are owed to colleagues in IOM field offices, the Department of Migration Management, the Migration Policy Research Division, IOM’s Office to the United Nations in New York, the Meetings Secretariat, the Translation Unit, the Publications Unit and the Media and Communications Unit.

# FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to present to you the official report of the 2019 International Dialogue on Migration (IDM), entitled Youth and migration: Engaging youth as key partners in migration governance Unlocking the potential of youth to respond to the new challenges and opportunities of migration.

Last year, IOM dedicated both sessions of the IDM to the role of youth in determining the future effectiveness of cooperation on migration around the world. Why is this important? Because the political, economic and social challenges that we face in the world today will have a defining impact on the next generation. Thus, it is essential to ensure that the 1.8 billion young people in the world today – aged between 10 and 24 years old – can be agents of that impact and can determine their own futures.

While the above statistic demonstrates the size of the young population, it also disguises a problem: currently, there is no universal definition of “youth”. As a result, it is extremely difficult to collect and analyse disaggregated data in origin, transit and destination countries in order to target policies at young people. Better knowledge and data analysis can help countries to ensure that skills development and recognition programming, education initiatives, and vocational opportunities are directed at those who need them most within the migrant population.

But it is not enough to aim policies at young migrants: to truly invest in the next generation is to involve young members of the diaspora in those policies. Their active participation in policy dialogue, social justice, inclusion and social cohesion will have a ripple effect that will endure long after you, and I, are gone. And this participation is needed. Some of the challenges facing the world in the next decades – including environmental, demographic and technological change – will require adaptation and innovation from all parts of society.

In order to make sure that the contribution of young migrants is fully realized, we also need to focus on key areas of support, from education

and skills training, through to addressing physical and psychosocial needs. And, at the same time, we need to build new narratives in order for a positive story to be told about the migration of young people and the potential that they hold. Giving a voice to youth is important. Amplifying the voices of migrant youth is essential, in part because those voices might have been stifled in the past. Last year, we began an important exercise in changing that discourse, developing channels for dialogue that can empower young people on the move.

This report outlines initiatives and projects that show what can be done when young people are actively involved in the conversation, as indeed they were during both sessions of the IDM. It offers a fresh perspective on migration, and tells us that, while more work will be needed, the future is young and, with migrants, can be bright.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'António Vitorino', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**António Vitorino**  
Director General



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## ABBREVIATIONS

BD4M	Big Data for Migration Alliance
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GMDAC	Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (IOM)
ICT	information and communication technology
IDM	International Dialogue for Migration
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JRC	Joint Research Centre, European Union
MFA	Migrant Forum in Asia
NGO	non-governmental organization
RIO	Refugee Integration Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



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**ANALYSIS OF THE TWO SESSIONS:**

28 February 2019,  
United Nations Headquarters, New York

15–16 October 2019,  
Centre International de Conférences, Geneva



# INTRODUCTION AND KEY THEMES

The **International Dialogue on Migration (IDM)**, an IOM-led multi-stakeholder forum for migration policy dialogue and main space for the analysis of overall migration governance at the global level, dedicated the 2019 sessions to discussing how to engage youth as a key partner in global processes on migration.

The focus on youth for **IDM 2019** was requested during the previous IDM sessions, held in 2018 in New York and Geneva, where participants called for greater engagement with youth in migration governance efforts. This publication, *International Dialogue on Migration 2019*, is therefore devoted to analysing the role of youth in migration governance, how to engage them and how to unlock their potential to respond to the challenges and opportunities of migration.

## Why youth? Why now?

Today, there are more young people in the world than ever, 1.8 billion,<sup>1</sup> the largest generation in history. Of the 258 million international migrants, approximately 11 per cent of them were under 24 years of age in 2017.<sup>2</sup> The propensity to migrate tends to be highest among young people.<sup>3</sup>

Connected to each other like never before, young people today live in a world of unlimited potential, where they constitute a tremendous and essential asset worth investing in, opening the door to an unparalleled multiplier effect. When young people are empowered and prepared, they can use their energy, creativity and talent to turn an uncertain landscape into a world of opportunities. If engaged in their communities

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1 Between the ages 10 and 24 years, according to UNFPA, *State of the World Population: The Power of 1.8 Billion* (UNFPA, 2014). Available at [www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-SWOP14-Report\\_FINAL-web.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-SWOP14-Report_FINAL-web.pdf).

2 UN DESA Population Division, *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 Revision* (New York, United Nations, 2017) (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017). Available at [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.shtml) (accessed 26 November 2019).

3 UN DESA Population Division, "International Migration in a Globalizing World: The Role of Youth", technical paper 2011/1 (New York, United Nations, 2011). Available at [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/technicalpapers/docs/TP2011-1.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/technicalpapers/docs/TP2011-1.pdf).

through meaningful participation and sustained involvement, they are more likely to support their communities. They can play a key role in policy discussions, rising up for their rights and better opportunities, demanding a seat at the table in decision-making processes. An example of this is the world youth movement against climate change.

While the role of youth has been discussed from various specific perspectives, this Dialogue on Migration intends to provide a global multi-stakeholder platform for a more holistic, inclusive and diverse discussion on how to engage youth with migration policy decision makers and relevant international, regional and national actors – as well as with businesses, scholars and diaspora groups – and linking their role to migration.

In fact, the two sessions – one in New York and one in Geneva – have aimed to foster exchanges on all areas relevant to youth and migration, including, but not limited to:

- Global strategies and partnerships on youth on the move;
- Involvement of young people, especially youth migrants, in migration policy and decision-making processes at global, national and local levels;
- Adaptation and resilience among youth migrants;
- Youth as agents of integration and social cohesion;
- Young members of the diaspora as actors of development: promoting their contribution to empowering communities in countries of origin and destination;
- Enabling youth to overcome environmental challenges;
- Youth migration in the context of the new era of technology; and
- The future of work.

This 2019 Dialogue is also in line with ongoing global processes and aims at supporting the United Nations' overall efforts to amplify youth voices and promote their involvement in global migration debates. Additionally, it provides an overview on national migration and youth strategies and promotes the contribution youth can make to migration governance.



The United Nations Youth Strategy,<sup>4</sup> launched in 2018, is certainly a critical reference for the 2019 IDM, in particular as it refers to Priority 1: Engagement, Participation and Advocacy. It will serve as reference to the collective efforts of enhancing migration governance, developing policy frameworks and fostering greater cooperation, partnerships and networks for future action.

The objective of the United Nations Youth Strategy is “to facilitate increased impact and expanded global, regional and country-level action to address the needs, build the agency and advance the rights of young people in all their diversity around the world, and to ensure their engagement and participation in the implementation, review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as other relevant global agendas and frameworks”.

### **“Nothing for young people without young people”**

The United Nations recognizes young people as rights-holders, and promotes and facilitates transparency, accountability and responsiveness from duty bearers toward young people. The Youth Strategy uses a human-rights based, gender-transformative, sensitive and responsive approach. It also recognizes that it cannot achieve its mission without partnering with young people and ensuring that they are “not only heard but understood, not only engaged but empowered, and not only supporting but leading global efforts and processes”.<sup>5</sup> The 2018 *World Youth Report*<sup>6</sup> emphasizes that the goals, targets and instruments incorporated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offer increased opportunities to advance youth development objectives in the context of social, economic and environmentally sustainable development efforts.

With its Youth Strategy (Youth 2030), the United Nations commits to supporting and strengthening the engagement, participation and advocacy of young people. The Strategy aims at realizing the human rights of every young person, ensuring that they are empowered to achieve their full potential, and that their resilience and positive contributions as agents of change are recognized.

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4 Available at [www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080\\_UN-Youth-Strategy\\_Web.pdf](http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf).

5 United Nations, “UN SG launches #Youth2030 strategy” (New York, United Nations, 24 September 2018), available at [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2018/09/youth2030-launch/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2018/09/youth2030-launch/) (accessed 26 November 2019).

6 United Nations, *World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (New York, United Nations, 2017), available at [www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf](http://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf).

Youth is also the focus for migration governance and the subject is addressed in a number of processes on migration, specifically in those dedicated to migration and development. Furthermore, youth have been identified as champions of peace, sustainable development and human rights in resolutions, agreements and conventions. These include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; United Nations Security Council resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security<sup>7</sup>; human rights conventions and declarations; General Assembly resolution 72/146 on policies and programmes involving youth;<sup>8</sup> and, most recently, Security Council Resolution 2419,<sup>9</sup> which calls for augmenting the role of youth in negotiating and implementing peace agreements.

## **IOM engagement**

Engaging with youth is a priority for IOM. In fact, the Organization is committed to developing activities targeting the youth and addressing their needs and vulnerabilities. It has closely collaborated with the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General's Youth Envoy in the development of the document, and has also developed an internal action plan focused on the five priority areas identified in the Youth Strategy, and aims to equally respond to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in support of young people on the move. The Organization is correspondingly an active participant at the Inter-Agency Network on Youth and Development.

Migration can offer young people new opportunities and horizons, new skills and experiences, yet a country's ability to explore them depends largely on its host communities, and its government. This IDM is part of IOM's strategy on focusing and gathering knowledge and expertise on youth to facilitate evidence-based global awareness on youth. It is expected that the result of this dialogue will serve as guidance for lessons learned and as guidance to target more pressing needs.

## **IDM 2019 sessions**

The two IDM sessions convened in 2019 took place in New York on 28 February, and in Geneva on 15 and 16 October. The February session was organized in consultation with the Office of the President of the United

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7 Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250(2015)) (accessed 26 November 2019).

8 Available at [www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/72/146&referer=/english/&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/72/146&referer=/english/&Lang=E) (accessed 26 November 2019).

9 Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2419\(2018\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2419(2018)) (accessed 26 November 2019).

Nations General Assembly and with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) to complement the high-level event on international migration and development, convened by the President of the General Assembly for 27 February 2019, and the Symposium on International Migration and Development organized by UN DESA, on 26 February 2019.

This first session focused on engaging youth and identifying ways and key areas of focus addressing youth vulnerabilities and how to empower them to become actors of change. It was opened by IOM Director General Mr António Vitorino, and featured keynotes delivered by the President of the seventy-third General Assembly, H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, and the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms Jayathma Wickramanayake, in recognition of the United Nations Youth Strategy. The IDM session addressed four main themes: (a) understanding youth migration beyond facts and figures; (b) addressing specific challenges and vulnerabilities of young people: What role, which partners; (c) empowering youth to become actors of change; and (d) mainstreaming youth migration into development policies: Recommendations to move forward. The session also highlighted the importance of creating evidence and data as “numbers define policies”.<sup>10</sup>

The New York session was also the venue of a side event: Youth Leadership in Twenty-First Century Migration Governance. The all-female youth panel presented an opportunity to review the key outcomes and recommendations from the Youth Forum, which took place in Marrakesh in December 2018, and to begin looking at how and where youth can actively influence discussion on migration, as part of a whole-of-society approach.

Following the first meeting, the October session in Geneva aimed at exploring the new challenges and opportunities of migration in areas related to well-being of migrants, climate change-induced migration, how youth and diaspora – in particular – can contribute as agents of social inclusion and potential development, how technology can contribute to change perceptions, and the challenges affecting the future of work.

The opening session was led by the IOM Director General, Mr António Vitorino; the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, H.E. Ms Ghada

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10 Quote from Ms Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, UN DESA.

Waly; the European Union Deputy Secretary-General for External Action Service, Mr Christian Leffler; the Turkish Deputy Minister of Family, Labour and Social Services, Mr Ahmet Erdem; and the Ugandan Minister for Internal Affairs, Mr Gen Odongo Jeje Abu. The speakers highlighted the importance of harnessing the potential of youth to unlock the opportunities and recognized the unprecedented awareness and engagement of youth. There was a common acknowledgement of the need to invest in young people, while recognizing them as leaders and agents of change to achieve the required transformations towards sustainable and resilient societies.

The Geneva session was structured around six main panels, and time was also dedicated to a presentation of young migrant voices, an African Union case study and a side event on “African Youth and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”. The panels covered: (a) the role of technology in enabling opportunities over risks; (b) boosting young people’s potential for development through diaspora engagement; (c) youth as agents of integration and social cohesion; (d) enabling youth to overcome environmental challenges; (e) building the adaptation and resilience of young people on the move; and (f) the implications of the future of work on young migrants.

Numerous examples showed local, national, regional and worldwide practices to improve quality of life for young migrants, including the establishment of alliances such as the African Union–European Union (EU) Youth Cooperation Hub and the Young Mediterranean Voices initiative; introducing storytelling as a way of confronting the stereotypes and negative narratives about migration, as well as bridging different cultures; and the essential role of the diaspora to ensure long-lasting and sustainable responses. It was also during this time that the first-ever – yet to be published – African Migration Report was introduced. The report aims to rebalance the conversation about African migration away from the dominant, yet overly narrow, narrative of irregular migration to Europe.

## **#IDM2019**

In line with the practice for IDMs, IOM invited all concerned parties, including youth national delegates, migrant youth, high-level government representatives, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector and civil society organizations working

on youth and migration issues in addition to the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the first African Union Youth Envoy and high-level United Nations officials to contribute their views, best practices and recommendations on youth empowerment and engagement on migration aspects.

In the words of IOM Director General Vitorino, "IOM commits to listen, learn and act", following the lessons learned and recommendations made by youth and other speakers through the identification of strategies and partnerships that contribute to supporting young migrants. As he and many other speakers stressed, the focus is not just about working for the youth, but rather working with them, involving them and creating an environment that recognizes solutions they identify for themselves.

This publication contains the report, analysis and supplementary materials highlighting good practices, lessons learned and recommendations that governments and other partners can employ in designing appropriate policies to manage youth migration and youth engagement in sustainable development strategies.

# STATEMENTS



**António VITORINO**  
IOM Director General

1.8 billion young people in the world today – aged between 10 and 24 years old – can be agents of that impact and determine their own futures...

Giving voice to youth is important. Amplifying the voices of migrant youth is essential to develop channels for dialogue that empower young people on the move...



**Jayathma WICKRAMANAYAKE**  
UN Secretary-General's  
Envoy on Youth

More recognition needs to be given to the important role that young people play in the achievement of sustainable development and their positive contributions to origin and host communities. With Youth 2030, the United Nations commits support and strengthen the engagement, participation and advocacy of young people.



**María Fernanda ESPINOSA GARCÉS**  
President of the 73rd  
General Assembly

In a world where 11% of all migrants have an age range of 15 to 24 years, we must enable positive migratory experiences which sets young people into a better future to contribute to sustainable development in their countries of origin and destination.



**Ghada WALY**  
H.E., Minister of Social  
Solidarity - Egypt

90% of the world's young people live in developing countries where there is a struggle to meet the needs of their growing populations in terms of education, services, employment or social security...

We must all cooperate to ensure inclusion of migrants through better respect of cultures and values with host communities alike without discrimination.



**Christian LEFFLER**  
Deputy Secretary General  
European External Action

We need to highlight the instrumental contribution that youth can make when it comes to migration – despite the lack of a commonly agreed definition –: unlocking their potential, responding to the challenges and opportunities of their contexts require for us to work for youth, with the youth and by the youth to address these issues while giving them more prominence in the political agenda.



**Ahmet ERDEM**  
Deputy Minister of  
Family - Turkey

In the search for achieving the SDGs, migration is recognized as important factor for development and youth a key player in the age of internet, where borders become meaningless. Aware that youth is such a short but essential phase in life. We need to find more constructive new approaches and recognize that investing in youth is investing in our future.

## International Dialogue on Migration

### #ForMigration

**NEW YORK**

28 February  
UN Headquarters

Engaging youth  
as key partners in  
migration governance



#### NUMBERS DEFINE POLICIES

The evidence on youth migration is incomplete and can negatively impact migration policies



#### SOCIOECONOMIC EXCLUSION

Serious impact on those on the move becoming victims of social marginalization, racism, xenophobia and discrimination



#### AT RISK OF EXPLOITATION

No standard responses: Need specific attention, protection and empowerment for those most vulnerable



#### VOICES IN DECISION MAKING

Enhance inclusion, promote cultural diversity, social cohesion, mutual understanding, benefit from resilience and adaptability

### #IDM2019

15-16 October  
CICG

**GENEVA**

Unlocking the potential of youth to  
respond to the challenges and  
opportunities of migration



#### DATA AND STRATEGIES

Data and statistics for evidence-based policies. Use of non-traditional data and enable cooperation



#### MAINSTREAMING YOUTH

Involve diaspora, harness youth potential, create spaces for dialogue, promote education, equip them for the future



#### WELL-BEING OF YOUNG MIGRANTS

Comprehensive solutions for social cohesion and integration, address vulnerabilities, challenge realities and narratives, promote story telling to counteract misperceptions and bridge between cultures, amplify their voices

## Recommendations

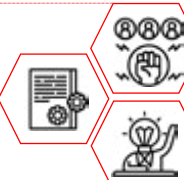
NATIONAL YOUTH

**PROTECTION**  
EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES  
MAINSTREAMING MIGRATION

ENCOURAGE **PARTICIPATION**  
AND EMPOWERMENT OF YOUTH  
IN DEVELOPING  
NATIONAL  
MIGRATION  
POLICIES

YOUTH-FRIENDLY  
NATIONAL  
**DIASPORA**  
STRATEGIES

UTILIZE **KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE**  
AND **EXPERTISE** OF YOUTH IN THE  
DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND  
EVALUATION OF POLICIES



PROMOTE TARGETED  
**POLICIES** THAT STRENGTHEN  
COOPERATION BETWEEN  
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN, TRANSIT  
AND DESTINATION



SUPPORT **INITIATIVES**  
THAT ENHANCE  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
COOPERATION ON YOUTH  
MIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT



PUBLIC-PRIVATE **PARTNERSHIPS**  
TO INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES



**ADVOCACY**  
FOR YOUNG  
MIGRANTS TO KNOW  
THEIR RIGHTS AND  
AMPLIFY THEIR VOICES



ADDRESS **VULNERABILITIES**  
COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS  
FOR **SOCIAL COHESION**

BENEFIT FROM **TECHNOLOGY**  
TO ENABLE OPPORTUNITIES  
OVER RISKS

**Youth  
and  
Migration**

**WORK FOR THE YOUTH,  
WITH THE YOUTH AND BY THE YOUTH**





# 1. ENGAGING YOUTH AS KEY PARTNERS IN MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

Throughout the discussions at the 2019 IDM, participants agreed and stressed the fact that young people – the largest generation in history – must be valued and supported if they are to grow and contribute to the world they will inherit.

There was general consensus that migrant youth are an essential part of the migrant community, especially in developing countries, as is reflected in the available data where youth, in particular those between 18 and 29 years of age, are some of the most mobile.

## Youth, actors of change

The outline made about young people through the different interventions describe them with “their ingenuity, creativity and dynamism, more disposed to integrate into new societies and merge into their communities. They are risk-takers, problem-solvers and frontrunners by nature; and extremely resilient and resourceful in time of crisis. Young people can play a pivotal role in fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. And therefore, they should be considered as key players in building peaceful and inclusive societies.”<sup>11</sup>

The reasons for leaving behind their homes are varied: study, work, setting up a business, joining their families, escaping poverty or violence. Whatever the reason, international migration can bring an opportunity for them to achieve better lives for themselves and their families, and to achieve educational aspirations, and improve skills, perspectives and personal development.

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11 Reference speeches of H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly; Ms Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, UN DESA; and several interventions from States.

Increasing opportunities to move for young people are an important driver for development and empowerment. Migration, despite the negative narrative, needs to be an integral part of broader efforts to create jobs and improve educational opportunities for young people, which can in turn bring a choice to their lives, rather than a single route of escape.



As many speakers concurred, it is easy to reach for migration as a solution to these and other challenges, and to find better opportunities overseas. Many are willing to take extensive risks to do so. Some participants highlight the fact that, while risk-taking is a characteristic of the young, and one that drives societies forward with each new generation, such risks should not be taken at the cost of lives or livelihoods. Instead, youth migrants face specific challenges and often find themselves in vulnerable situations, even if their hopes, dreams and ambitions are similar to other youngsters all over the world.

Evidence was made about the fact that discussions about migration and youth require understanding the pull and push factors of migration and how this affects youth in general (both migrants and those from receiving communities). In fact, part of the answer is that many of them do not have enough opportunities in their countries of origin, and this situation needs to be changed.

Likewise, understanding why so many young people decide to leave their homes must also include the analysis of how young people return to their home countries and whether or not they receive support for a sustainable reintegration.



Participants concluded that there was a need to ensure open and inclusive societies, where youth's needs and concerns were heard, an open and free debate was recognized as a contribution to a comprehensive understanding of migration, and because the effects of a rapid demographic change are caused in part by the movements of young people.

In words of the IOM Director General, "There are huge continental disparities with respect to the proportion and situation of young people worldwide that policymakers in every country will need to grapple with." These demographic changes vary depending on the region. In Asia and Central Europe, the declining number of young people relative to their older cohort has deep implications for future economic growth and development, as well as placing disproportionate pressure on young people themselves. Elsewhere in the world, a rapidly growing young population has given rise to a different kind of pressure.

There is, therefore, a common understanding that young people need to be part of the conversations in the field of migration, being key partners in the construction of migration governance. This refers not only to young migrants, but youth in general, particularly those critical about migration.

Policies must be designed and implemented with their participation, taking into consideration their needs and experiences. Engaging youth may provide opportunities and tools to contribute to define migration governance at different levels, putting in place conditions of liberty, dignity, equity and security for young people who are migrating.

## **Seizing opportunities**

Seizing the opportunities offered by the migration of young people will also contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Over a third of the 169 SDG targets highlight the role of young people and the importance of their empowerment and well-being, with 20 targets across six SDGs strongly focused on youth, namely, zero hunger (SDG 2), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG 10) and climate action (SDG 13).

The United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030)<sup>12</sup> demonstrates a number of ways young people can be empowered. It recognizes the potential of youth to advance progress in many policy areas, considering young people's first-hand experience.

The Strategy also offers an umbrella for existing key inter-agency initiatives on youth, such as the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth and Development,<sup>13</sup> which looks at the role of youth in advancing sustainable development; the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth; the Compact on Young People in Humanitarian Action; and the Inter-agency Work on Youth, Peace and Security; as well as forthcoming initiatives, such as the Generation Unlimited initiative led by UNICEF.

Such commitment is reflected not only in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but also in the spirit of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. The adoption of the Global Compact for Migration in Marrakesh, Morocco (December 2018) created the first international framework for global cooperation and a landmark moment for the international community to come together on migration.

It was in the context of Marrakesh where the Youth Forum<sup>14</sup> took place, convened by the major group for Children and Youth at the United Nations, which echoed the three calls of action: "Commit to us, invest in us and count on us!"

Other migration and development bodies, such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) or the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development, can also serve as spaces for engaging youth.

In addition, several member States and regional body initiatives show the overall commitment on involving young people, "enabling them as architects of their own lives, support their personal development and

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12 United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030), available at [www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-un/](http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-un/) (accessed 26 November 2019).

13 United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth and Development, available at [www.un.org/development/desa/youth/what-we-do/un-inter-agency-network-on-youth-development.html](http://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/what-we-do/un-inter-agency-network-on-youth-development.html) (accessed 26 November 2019).

14 United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, available at [www.unmgcy.org/getinvolved](http://www.unmgcy.org/getinvolved) (accessed 26 November 2019).

growth to autonomy, to build resilience and equip their lives and skills to cope with the changing world”.<sup>15</sup>

The African Union actively supports the involvement of youth, which was more evident with the creation of the African Union Youth Envoy.<sup>16</sup> Its first representative, Ms Aya Chebbi, expressed during the first workshop the need for involving youth in migration-related matters, as she claimed “migrant population has a young face... Engage young people in the policy formulation related to migration. Youth in their diversity are asking a very legitimate demand to be co-designers of their own future.”

The focus of the Youth Strategy for the African Union places African migrants and their well-being at the centre of policy interventions, acknowledging that Africans on the move are resourceful, not passive victims of circumstances, and that African youth are drivers, not subjects, of development.

“Youth want to live with dignity and want jobs with dignity. Free movement and safe channels of migration should be a human right that offers youth the means to transition finally to adulthood,” emphasized the African Union Youth Envoy.

The EU Youth Strategy for 2019–2027, on the other hand, includes migration and integration of refugees among its priority topics, considering the number of social and inclusion challenges that the new migratory phenomena have brought along.

The EU Youth Strategy focuses on the fulfilment of the rights of all young people in Europe, including the most marginalized and excluded. It aims at enabling young people to be architects of their own lives, supporting their personal development and growth to autonomy, building their resilience and equipping their lives and skills to cope with the changing world. It also encourages and equips young people with the necessary resources to become active citizens, and agents of solidarity and positive change, inspired by EU values and European identity. And finally, it aims at improving policy decisions that have a direct impact on young people across all sectors – notably employment, education, health and social

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15 EU Youth Strategy for 2019–2027, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en) (accessed 26 November 2019).

16 African Union Youth Envoy Action Plan, available at <https://auyouthenvoy.org/actionplan/> (accessed 26 November 2019).

inclusion – and lastly to contribute to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and the eradication of all forms of discrimination.

The methods used in the field of youth work seek to help with the integration of regular youth migrants and refugees. To recognize the role of youth work in the context of integration and to support member States in their efforts, the European Council of the EU recently adopted conclusions that include several references to the promotion of civic and political participation.

Looking ahead, the new EU Youth Strategy foresees the establishment of a new EU youth coordinator, who will be entrusted with strengthening the dialogue at all levels and in all policy areas with young people, to allow them to bring their contribution to the shaping of all EU policies.

The EU has also engaged with the African Union through a Youth Cooperation Hub<sup>17</sup> to foster stability and migration through regular paths. The Hub seeks to strengthen the inclusion of young people in this partnership at all levels, such as the youth diaspora civil society participation that took place during the Valetta process in Addis Ababa. Youth civil society representatives also take part in seminars on migration and refugee issues, which will provide recommendations at the next EU–African Union Human Rights Dialogue by the end of 2019.

Another regional organization supporting youth engagement is the Ibero-American Youth Organization<sup>18</sup> (OIJ in Spanish), composed of the 21 Youth Ministries from the Ibero-American region aiming at raising youth involvement and participation in the public and political agendas.

The Ibero-American Youth Organization's Secretary General, Max Trejo Cervantes, stressed the strategic role of young people and how much they can contribute, particularly when it comes to the SDGs. He called for identifying young people, empowering them, increasing their social and digital capacity, building their access to knowledge and giving them a role to play in sustainable development.

Reflections from other regional forums came from the Migrant Forum in Asia,<sup>19</sup> a regional network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs),

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17 AU–EU Youth Cooperation Hub, available at [www.aueuyouthhub.org](http://www.aueuyouthhub.org) (accessed 26 November 2019).

18 Ibero-American Youth Plan, available at <https://oij.org/oij-2/> (accessed 26 November 2019).

19 Migrant Forum in Asia, available at <https://mfasia.org> (accessed 26 November 2019).

associations and trade unions of migrant workers, and individual advocates in Asia, who are committed to protecting and promoting the rights and welfare of migrant workers. From the Migrant Forum in Asia, Alexis Nadine Bautista, Project Coordinator, emphasized the need to build trust: “It all boils down to the willingness to change the mindset, changing the culture and the way things have been done for some time. Asking for everyone’s participation requires accountability. It requires engagement and commitment from every stakeholder, governments including local authorities, UN agencies, private sector and civil society.”

## Partners for migration governance

Aware that significant progress has been made in enhancing the visibility of young people as strategic actors, many countries’ representatives in the New York and Geneva sessions raised the need to integrate local youth voices into their national policies, as such policies are more likely to succeed if grounded in reality.

Speakers from both sessions addressed the need to develop policies that support youth’s economic and social integration, policies that are tailored according to their needs in their new communities and protect them from extortion. These policies can be revised and improved by holding frequent stakeholder meetings between migrants and policymakers, thus ensuring that all concerned parties are consulted.

Efforts in place to involve youth can be seen in many countries, organizations and regional bodies. The Canadian Prime Minister’s Youth Council, for example, is a group of young Canadians who provide advice to the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada on relevant issues to them and to all Canadians; this is one mechanism to support dialogue with youth. Through the Minister of Youth, the Prime Minister wants to hear directly from young people.<sup>20</sup>

The European Union, on the other hand, has involved youth in many of its programmes, and expressed in a number of occasions the importance of mainstreaming the youth dimensions into policies and initiatives for integration.

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20 Canada’s Youth Policy, available at [www.canada.ca/content/dam/y-j/documents/YP-ENG.pdf](http://www.canada.ca/content/dam/y-j/documents/YP-ENG.pdf).



From the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council<sup>21</sup> (New York session), it was stressed that “policies and decision-making mechanisms should acknowledge the voices of migrant youth at the highest level as the critical missing piece in this dialogue, a right that has been denied for so long”.

There are examples of how the Migrant Forum in Asia networks in the Republic of Korea or Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China work at the local level on the well-being of the young migrants and their social inclusion, developing local policies that ensure inclusion of young migrants, while encouraging the importance of cultural diversity. These networks are working hand-in-hand on local policies that ensure the inclusion of young migrants.

Other countries, such as Guatemala and Morocco, have also agreed on the importance of introducing initiatives to involve youth, engaging them in the development of migration policies.

Switzerland and Morocco stressed the importance of involving local authorities, creating bridges between youth and local authorities to address vulnerabilities of young migrants in urban settings, and examine the causes and effects of migration in the local areas.

Many other countries, such as Lebanon and Madagascar, particularly during the Geneva session, made extensive reference to the diaspora contribution – particularly from youth diaspora – to local development.

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21 Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, available at [www.hamiltonimmigration.ca](http://www.hamiltonimmigration.ca) (accessed 26 November 2019).

Having represented and motivated global youth development on an international level since 21 years of age, notably during high-level United Nations initiatives including the declaration of World Youth Skills Day, Ms Jayathma Wickramanayake has also played a key role in transforming the youth development sector at the national level, notably through the creation of a large movement for civic and political engagement of young people called “Hashtag Generation”.

### Advocacy is a call to action!!

Her appointment as the Second United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) Envoy on Youth was, “a testament on itself to what a young Asian woman can achieve if she is empowered”.

Jayathma is using her own leadership position to be in spaces off-limits to others and push a more youthful agenda. She wants to “create a momentum – a movement – a generation of young people that care about SDGs, that make them their own and take action to implement them in their community”. In her view, the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development depends largely on empowering young people as rights-holders, agents of change and torchbearers.

She says, “What shapes politics is public opinion. And this is where I see an equally important role for young people when we are discussing the topic of migration.”

Appointed in November 2018 as the African Union Special Envoy on Youth, Ms Aya Chebbi has the mandate to serve as representative of and advocate for the voices





and interests of African youth to the relevant African Union decision-making bodies. Aya aspires to be a bridge and trust builder by linking African youth with member States, regional institutions and the African Union by shaping intergenerational dialogues at the heart of the African Union.

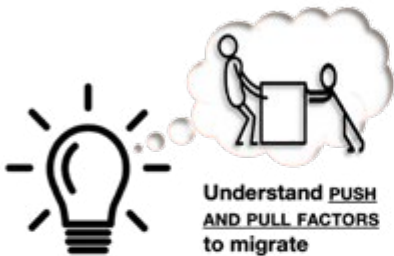
Aya embodies the geographical, linguistic and ethnic diversity of Africa. She boldly articulates the aspirations and frustrations of marginalized youth in her country and Africa at large. She has demonstrated servant leadership by maximizing strategic partnerships, digital and membership resource mobilization to build one of Africa's largest youth-led Pan-African movements, Afrika Youth Movement.

Aya works tirelessly to create spaces where African youth can add their voices to regional and international discourses on the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

She says, "We should ask ourselves why young people are willingly dying in the Mediterranean. Jobs alone will not address deep-seated awareness of marginalization, experiences of inequality and perception of injustice. Youth want to live with dignity and want jobs with dignity. Youth in their diversity are asking a very legitimate demand to be the co-designers of their own future."



**Youth, key partners in migration governance**




Understand PUSH  
AND PULL FACTORS  
to migrate




LISTEN TO YOUNG  
people's voices.  
Engage with  
them in  
MEANINGFUL  
solutions

Build a discourse  
that EMPOWERS  
YOUTH to transform  
the negative  
narrative on  
migration and  
political  
polarization



Bridge the Gap  
between NEEDS  
AND SERVICES  
providing  
access to health,  
education,  
social services,  
etc. to young  
migrants



LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES  
are key to



identifying  
strategies  
for inclusion




promoting  
social  
cohesion



promoting  
knowledge  
exchange



supporting  
return



Engage  
Youth to  
promote the  
role of  
DIASPORA in  
development

## 2. CREATING EVIDENCE ON YOUTH MIGRATION

As reported by many participants in both sessions, the main challenge when assessing youth migration is the lack of universally agreed definitions of youth. In fact, in order to address this challenge, another area of consensus during the two IDM sessions of 2019 was the need to create better evidence and data. If there is an intent to improve or develop political commitments and financing measurements, there is also a need for evidence and data collection. In the absence of a common definition, data are essential to identify youth, analyse and understand what is happening with them and, consequently, develop policies that are adequate to the needs of the different groups. Data also help to increase awareness among all stakeholders, governments and civil society.

### “Numbers define policies”<sup>22</sup>

Ms Daniela Bas, Director of UN DESA's Division for Inclusive Social Development, underlined the importance of considering the challenges related to youth migration, such as the fact that the definition of youth includes both minors and young adults (those who have attained the age of majority). Data are extremely important to decide what policies are required, and to assess how rights change when migrants transition from children to young adults.

According to Bas, current evidence on youth migration is incomplete and can negatively impact migration policies. Furthermore, there is no global consensus on a definition for youth. Yet, this evidence is key to raising awareness of the challenges and opportunities young people face in the context of migration, their role and contribution in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), SDG 8 (Promote inclusive and

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22 Extract from Ms Daniela Bas's speech.

sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all) and SDG 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries) as well as their contribution to development in communities of origin and host societies.

Available data<sup>23</sup> show that youth make up 11 per cent of all international migrants, representing the most mobile group of all (up to half of those changing residence each year are between 18 and 29 years of age), a total of 28 million from 15 to 24 years of age in 2017. Certainly, young migrants are not a homogeneous group, and that is why disaggregated data are relevant to understand the different needs in the various groups, to ensure that no one is left behind. If given enough analysis, further research may provide additional elements to understand who they are, what their aspirations are, and what soft skills are required (such as the ability to communicate, lead, have interpersonal relationships, understand other cultures, and think critically).

Their needs will directly depend on the reason for moving, such as study, work, family reunification, seeking refuge and escaping from poverty.

The absence of a universally agreed legal definition of “youth” makes it hard to find accurate data related to youth. Moreover, the information on migration is gathered as part of the population census or through administrative surveys, and can differ from one country to another.

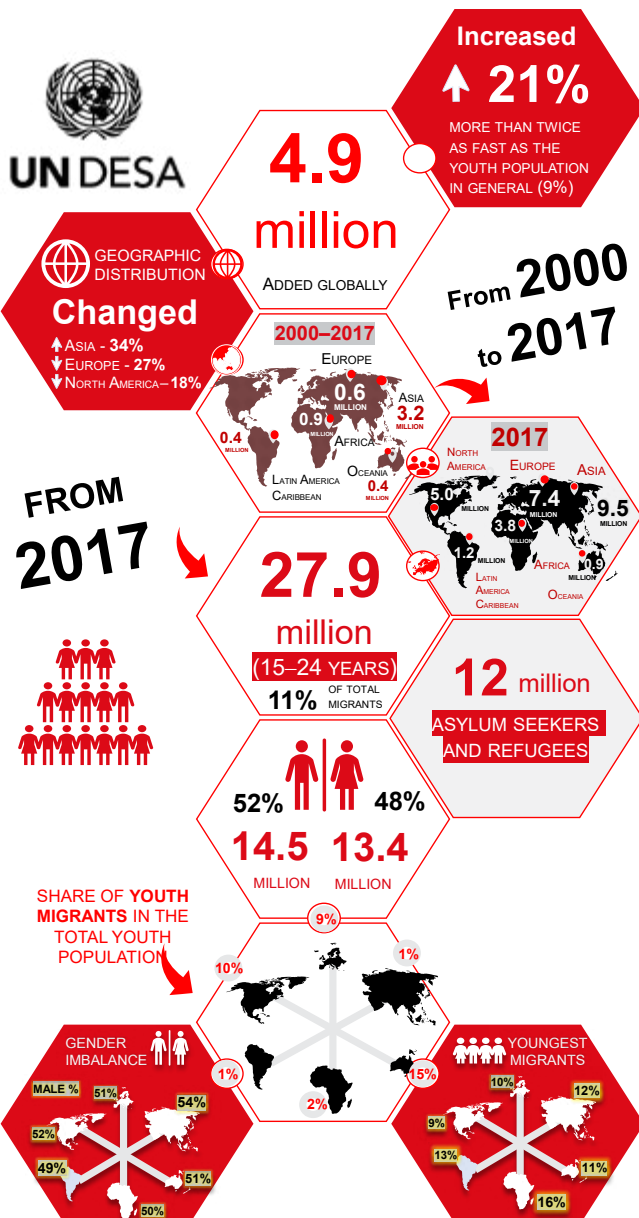
Data on the impact of migration on young people are lacking, yet it is essential to enhance policy processes by providing reliable data, trends and information on youth and migration in all stages. Understanding push and pull factors, and drivers of migration, is key, especially when considering that most migration is safe and regular, and occurs within regions.

As expressed by Ted Chaiban, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, in his presentation: “Reliable, gender-and-age disaggregated timely and accessible data are key to identify and effectively address the needs of young migrants.”

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23 United Nations, World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (New York, United Nations, 2017), available at [www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf](http://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf).

# MIGRANT YOUTH FACTS AND FIGURES



This was evidenced by UNICEF through its research and publication *Every Child's Right To Be Heard* (2018),<sup>24</sup> which provides an analysis of 4,000 migrants and refugees from 14 to 24 years of age. In this case, the disaggregation of data identified some issues for young girls that would protect them from discrimination; the data would also identify gender-specific drivers of migration.

The evidence on young people and children affected by migration and displacement, human trafficking, access to education, health, nutrition and other essential services, social protection conditions and migration status needs to be developed. The UNICEF study also confirms that there are not only push factors to migration – such as conflict, climate, instability or injustice – but also pull factors, such as opportunities.

Qualitative as well as quantitative research is needed. Identifying data gaps to provide a more comprehensive vision of youth migration and the real impact in society today is required.

Bridging the large gaps in data availability and addressing data inequalities between and within countries require significant capacity-building, substantial financial investment, and innovative approaches to the collection, utilization and dissemination of accurate and timely data, especially in the least developed countries. Cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination can promote better collection of data and statistics.

There is also a need to make better use of existing data, to develop new norms, practices and innovative approaches for data sharing across sectors and agencies, encouraging further sharing on local, national, regional and international levels. New efforts to include global data include the migration data portal,<sup>25</sup> which includes a new thematic page on child and youth migrants,<sup>26</sup> which compiles and disaggregates migration data by age to analyse the age dynamics of migrant populations. For child migrants, data that are disaggregated by age, sex and information on whether or not children are accompanied by a parent, family member, guardian or sponsor, are particularly important to determine potential levels of vulnerability and protection needs during transit and on arrival.

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24 UNICEF, *Every Child's Right To Be Heard* (London, UNICEF, 2011), available at [www.unicef.org/files/Every\\_Childs\\_Right\\_to\\_be\\_Heard.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/files/Every_Childs_Right_to_be_Heard.pdf).

25 Migration Data Portal, "The bigger picture", available at [https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=stock\\_young\\_perc&t=2017](https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=stock_young_perc&t=2017) (accessed 26 November 2019).

26 Migration Data Portal, Child and young migrants, available at <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/child-and-young-migrants> (accessed 26 November 2019).



## Big data: Non-traditional sources

Traditional data and statistics may, however, come with limitations and gaps that prevent users from having a full and timely understanding of the movements. Data quality or inconsistencies from the sources often come with inadequate ways of aggregation or the impossibility of capturing transient trends.<sup>27</sup>

Ms Sara Grubanov-Boskovic from the Joint Research Centre (JRC)<sup>28</sup> of the EU introduced a new perspective towards non-traditional data sources to complement the traditional sources in supplementing more information including, but not limited to, public perception on migration. She also mentioned various initiatives within the migration field, and how big data can be used to supplement certain information gaps.

In fact, improving migration data using non-traditional data sources is an avenue that JRC is actively exploring, given its hands-on experience with data mining and big data for migration. This is particularly important considering that improving migration data is a key priority of the Global Compact and essential for migration governance, as foreseen in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular SDG 10.7, to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.

Non-traditional data sources for migration can range from mobile phone data and air passenger data to social media (such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, LinkedIn and Twitter). Among innovative data sources, social media are particularly relevant for youngsters, given its high penetration in this age group. Social media platforms are their preferred tool to interact, generate and share content. Just in the EU 28, according to Eurostat, almost 60 per cent of young adults 15–29 years of age use social media daily, in comparison to 27 per cent of adults 35–49 years of age.<sup>29</sup>

The Big Data for Migration Alliance (BD4M)<sup>30</sup> is an ambitious global initiative aiming to harness the potential of big data for migration. The

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27 Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography. Joint Research Centre, European Commission, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/migration-demography\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/migration-demography_en) (accessed 26 November 2019).

28 EU Joint Research Centre, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en> (accessed 26 November 2019).

29 Eurostat, data extracted on 10 October 2019, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database> (accessed 26 November 2019).

30 Big Data for Migration Alliance (BD4M), available at <https://bluehub.jrc.ec.europa.eu/bigdata4migration/bd4m> (accessed 26 November 2019).

initiative is steered by JRC and IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC). Since the launch of BD4M, several results on the use of non-traditional data for policy have followed, including (a) the use of mobile phone data for integration for studying social and behavioural segregation in cities; (b) LinkedIn data for analysing the educational attainment of recently arrived migrants; (c) air passenger data for analysing mobility and its nexus with migration and visa policies; (d) Facebook data to anticipate and complement official statistics on stocks of migrants. In fact, the Facebook advertising platform allows estimating the stock of “expats” in various countries by giving the option to the advertisers to select the characteristics of their target audience, such as age and gender, without providing personal details and therefore addressing the issue of privacy and confidentiality.

Non-traditional data may also provide an opportunity to gather information on circular and irregular migration that traditional data cannot reach. Potential limitations rely on the fact that big data are mainly collected by the private sector; issues such as ownership, technological sustainability and costs may hinder their access.

## Challenging the narrative

In the search for evidence, facing negative narrative promoted through fake news or echo chambers<sup>31</sup> should be a central focus. In his presentation based on his research, Carlo Rasmus Schwarz, Ph.D. student from the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom,<sup>32</sup> expressed the need for building awareness on how social media contribute to the negative rhetoric around minorities and migrants, leading to hate speech and misinformation. Evidence has been generated linking violent attacks with the polarizing effect of social media; the existence of echo chambers and the lack of exchange of ideas between different communities have increased negative perceptions, xenophobia and radicalization.

Effective strategies require solutions targeting both offline and online spaces. Efforts must be made for more interactions between these segregated communities, such as increasing analysis and data that render the negative speech inaccurate.

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31 Echo chamber: An environment in which a person encounters only beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own, so that their existing views are reinforced, and alternative ideas are not considered.

32 K. Müller, “Fanning the Flames of Hate: Social Media and Hate Crime”, available at [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3082972](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3082972) (accessed 1 December 2019).

An example of challenging the negative narrative is the new Africa Migration Report – presented during the Geneva session and yet to be published. The report interrogates the distortions that characterize African migration, mostly portrayed as irregular mass exodus by African youths from the continent to other parts of the world through the Mediterranean and other illegal channels.

The report responds to the need to build a new narrative and perception of African migration that is nuanced and fact-based.

When presented with the report, Nanjala Nyabola, co-editor of the African Migration Report, and Walusungu Ngulube, African Union Youth Volunteer Corps alumna and young migrant, both highlighted how unpacking the data shows that most African migrants remain within Africa, and while women constitute almost half of the total migration, they stay relatively close to home, whereas men travel further. The report highlights that African youth are not only a large part of the conversation regarding how migration within the continent will evolve, but they themselves will be one of the prime determinants of its success.

### **“Don’t ask them, empower them”<sup>33</sup>**

When it comes to youth migrants, they need to be considered as a vulnerable group and we must find ways to protect and empower them.

Making data on youth migration available helps inform better policies and programmes addressed to youth. It helps to tackle inequalities by making visible with data what is not evident. Migrant youth face risks compounded by their age, gender, migration status or cultural identity. Policies must address specific conditions, risks and vulnerabilities of young migrants, considering their resilience and adaptability.

Creating evidence on youth migration brings youth to the centre of policies and processes and reduces the likelihood of their becoming marginalized and vulnerable.

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33 Extract from H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, in reference to the request of the Youth Group meeting at the Global Compact Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco, 2018.

Mr Felipe González Morales, Special Rapporteur on migrants' human rights<sup>34</sup> stressed the fact that there have been developments in terms of standards and evolution of the international community for the protection of migrant youth, but there is still a long way to go.

Other participants addressed the issue of having better data to help develop better matches on labour, linking the skills of young migrants with the countries that could welcome them, to increase their productivity and their growth. In this line, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) during the New York session, raised concerns on the lack of institutional data on labour shortages by skill level across the continent in Africa that limits the ability of African countries to use the potential of migration to foster structural transformation.

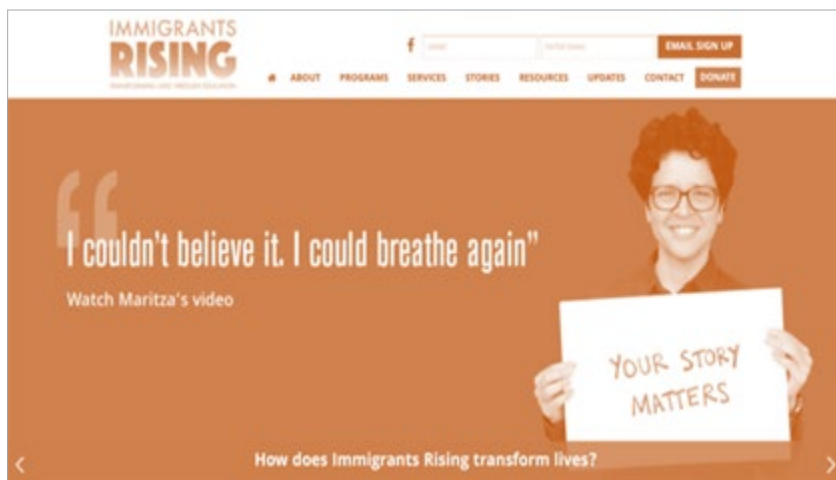
Many speakers offered concrete examples of good practices that showed positive aspects of migration driven by empowering youth. Children and young adults, if given the opportunity, adapt faster and become better citizens. If provided with the required tools, they can contribute positively in the economy, development and cohesion of the countries of origin and destination.

Founded in 2006, Immigrants Rising<sup>35</sup> is an association that works with undocumented young migrants in the United States to provide them with the opportunity to access education, pursue careers, and build a brighter future for themselves and their communities. The organization's work is focused on transforming their lives, by providing access to legal services to those most affected by unequal access to opportunities, rights and resources, moving forward solutions for the betterment of all. It considers that undocumented young people can be powerful leaders who develop long-term partnerships with committed and capable allies in order to realize common goals. And it represents an example of how data can also help bring to light hidden figures and how to address the most vulnerable groups.

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34 Felipe Gonzalez Morales, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, available at [www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Migration/SRMigrants/Pages/FelipeGonzalezMorales.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Migration/SRMigrants/Pages/FelipeGonzalezMorales.aspx) (accessed 1 December 2019).

35 Immigrant Rising, available at <https://immigrantsrising.org> (accessed 1 December 2019).



The creation of the Africa Migration Observation Centre in Morocco shows the level of importance that the Kingdom places on migratory data. The Centre will focus on analysing and producing data and evidence on migration that could guide local, regional or global policy.

The representative of Ghana presented during the first session the government initiative, in coordination with IOM, to launch a national policy on migration and implementation plan that prioritizes activities such as the collection and dissemination of migration data, the establishment of the coherent institutional framework, and resource mobilization.

Finally, speakers in both sessions highlighted the importance of promoting positive narratives of youth migrants and their contributions around the world, collecting these narratives from the youth migrants themselves. As stated by Rya Kuewor, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Refugee Integration Organization (RIO) in Ghana, “even the smallest of successes that migrants have can go a long way in shaping perceptions and policies around migration by sharing them intelligently to ensure these narratives reach the right places and people”.

### Storytelling to help change perceptions



Thana Farooq is a Yemeni documentary photographer and storyteller, based in the Netherlands. In 2016, she was awarded a Break the Silence scholarship to pursue a Master of Arts degree in Documentary Photography and Photojournalism at the University of Westminster in London.

Her work aims to achieve a personal reportage that negotiates themes of memory, boundaries and violence. She focuses on collaborative storytelling projects to tell personal anecdotes of displacement and migration.

Previously, Thana worked with various international NGOs in Yemen to tell stories of displacement of women and children, portraying the suffering and highlighting the forgotten crisis there. Her work appeared in several publications, including Al Jazeera,

World Press Photo, BBC, Huffington Post, CNN and others. Recently, Thana was awarded the Open Society Foundations fellowship grant and exhibition on her ongoing project The Passport.

### **“Who knows, I might survive!”**

In her latest work, Thana focuses on the relevance of raising the voices of people – not just those successful cases but also, and most importantly, those who were not successful.

She believes that, through her photography, she can connect with people, being both the author of her story as well as an insider in other stories.

Her work is a fight to remove labels and to treat everyone as equals – to make the others understand how the life of migrant is, what their feelings are, what they face. She explains the importance of making people understand the reality – “understanding and visualizing trauma” – as well as the phase of uncertainty and hope that envelops the life of a migrant. Or even the “weird phase of integration, trying to fit in, working hard to please the society that is hosting you”. And at the end, arrive to the conclusion that we are looking at faces of people – not migrants, but people with the same feelings that we have.

By telling their stories Thana hopes to unlock everyone’s potential by making them relevant, by leaving behind the labels such as refugee, migrant or asylum seeker; breaking barriers and creating bridges that promote social inclusion through those things that make us equals. Finding those commonalities that unite us, such as passion, curiosity and empathy.

According to Thana, change starts by getting to know the unknown, learning about the other, going beyond the learning of the language, bridging cultures and helping people construct a new way of life in which they can lead and be actors of change. And social, cultural and art initiatives can contribute to fostering inclusion and breaking down barriers.

“  
I wish we could hear more stories about those who did not make it, those who are still on the zero phase. We need hope but we also need to see the reality of those who are not successful...

Change starts by getting to know the unknown, bridging cultures and helping them construct a new way of life in which they can lead and be actors of change.  
”



Strengthen the evidence based on youth migration



Enhance policy processes by providing reliable data, trends and information on youth and migration



Invest in the collection, dissemination and analysis of data on youth and adolescent migrants

Make better use of existing data and develop new norms and practices for data sharing across sectors and agencies



Benefit from non-traditional sources such as big data and social media

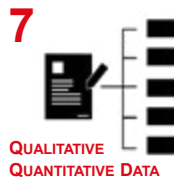


Include data disaggregated by gender to ensure protection and support services



Build institutional capacity to gather specific data on health, education, social protection and relevant policies and programmes

Foster qualitative and quantitative research on experiences, conditions, needs and aspirations of young migrants



Use data for better matches of labour skills of young migrants and increase targeted capacity in countries of origin



Identify, disseminate and replicate relevant good practices



Challenge realities and narratives and build awareness



Storytelling to confront stereotypes and build bridges between cultures, while combating fake news and echo chambers



### 3. PROMOTING SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND EMPOWERMENT

The subject of vulnerability was a specific theme of the first IDM session, held in New York, and further developed in Geneva. As expressed by many speakers, efforts need to be taken to address young migrants' vulnerabilities by enhancing their protection and empowering youth.

The protection of rights of migrants and the provision of safe and dignified means of migration will ensure that young migrants are not vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

As young migrants are a very diverse group of people on the move, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to their challenges, and responses can only be tailor-made. It is therefore important to distinguish the needs of young migrants from the general needs of all migrants.

Many participants raised the need to develop national child protection and youth empowerment strategies, as well as action plans that mainstream youth needs. Bringing them to the centre of policies and processes may reduce the likelihood of marginalized youth falling through the cracks when these policies are implemented.

Specific attention is required for unaccompanied children and adolescents, as well as young women and girls, who are particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation during their migration journey.

It is important to recognize the elements of disadvantage and the triple marginalization that young migrant women and girls often face: being a woman, a migrant and a young person. Specific actions are needed to ensure their protection, address gender equality and empower young women, while trying to understand gender-specific drivers of migration. Even if policies exist, they tend to be gender-blind, even though women are a group with high vulnerabilities.

## Elements for social integration

As rights holders, young migrants need an environment that supports their economic and social integration and protects them from exploitation. Such an environment needs a direct dialogue between stakeholders, decision makers and youth. Hearing the voice of young migrants themselves and their opinions can help in shaping policies of migration.

During the session on Youth as agents Agents of Integration and Social Cohesion, Mpumelelo Wonderboy Phungula, Consumer Protection Services, stressed the importance of cross-cultural interaction and understanding among youth to achieve social cohesion.

The Philippines emphasized that vulnerability risks are aggravated in the case of young people when they are isolated, excluded, discriminated against and unsecured: “In the course of migration, they may lose their social connection or networks as well as the absence of family members who would look after them and provide support systems. A call for action is required to intensify advocacy mechanisms for our young migrants to know their rights, such as the right to access quality and relevant education, the right to informed choices, child protection, equality and non-discrimination as well as participation in decision-making processes. Protecting their rights will help to improve their potentials, contributions and origin.”

Likewise, Germany emphasized the fact that every country bears primary responsibility for its nationals and for its youth, and no cooperation can be a substitute for this. However, assistance can be provided when developing educational curricula that can live up to the demands of their youth schooling and professional formation at home, thus making migration a choice and not a necessity. Youth is a very diverse group and includes children who need care, protection and education. The German representative stressed that youth is a potential resource for prosperity for their society, but this potential can only unfold if properly supported and developed.

Other participants in both the New York and Geneva sessions also raised the need to develop reforms and actions that support young migrants to achieve their educational and career goals. In their new communities, young migrants may become victims of social marginalization and face difficulties and restrictions in accessing education, employment, social

protection and other basic rights. At the same time, they are extremely resilient, determined, strong and resourceful in facing challenges and crises. They possess valuable skills and voices to contribute to their origin and destination communities, and to help build solutions to problems.

## Gender and age

UNICEF stressed five points of action concerning young migrant girls' assistance:

- (a) Understanding the gender-specific drivers of migration – forced marriage for girls or recruitment for boys – and addressing those issues in countries of origin;
- (b) Protection and support services must address gender-specific needs: gender-based violence, menstrual-hygiene management and such, making sure that this is part of the package of services that are available for migrants and young people in particular;
- (c) Data disaggregation to understand who is migrating and why, looking it by age and gender;
- (d) Looking at issues that are specific to girls when it comes to discrimination, in countries of origin, transit or destination – issues such as birth registration, passing on nationalities, and access to education and justice;
- (e) Listening to the voices of young women migrants and making sure that those voices, as well as those of young boys, are heard.

Ireland also stressed the fact that 130 million girls were out of the educational systems around the world. The gender gap in education is a crucial factor, and large efforts are required from the international community.

The Global Compact has listed several actions to develop gender and disability responses or age-sensitive migration policies. It also provides some guidance as to how to reduce the vulnerability of migrant children.

Some voices at the Dialogue called for considering the transition that young people experience as they reach the age of maturity. As adolescents turn into legal adults at the age of 18, as per applicable international law, they lose certain rights and protections available

to them as children, such as access to welfare assistance, education, health care and housing assistance, and in some cases, protection from detention and deportation.

At present, there are no legal instruments designed to protect these migrants and accompany their transition to adulthood. Moreover, the need was stressed to consider all different cultural, moral, political and socioeconomic aspects, and youth and adolescents, at the heart of all these aspects.

### **Education, first step for success**

Many speakers stressed the need to increase government investments in high-quality education in the countries of origin, coordinating efforts with other players in the private sector, in order to provide more inclusive and dignified sources of employment and on-the-job learning, while promoting the creation of platforms that connect the skilled with those who require help.

Schools are recognized as places of first integration for young migrants and can act as a bridge between migrant and local youth by promoting dialogue, mutual understanding and cohesion. In the context of Europe and the Mediterranean, TandEM, a regional project that aims to build bridges between migrants and local youth, provides an example to promote integration and changing perceptions from the learning environment. In Italy, Rola Issa is a young migrant who participates in the mentorship programme at the University La Sapienza in Rome, and Alessia Falorni is a member of the TandEM student committee at the University of Pisa. They both emphasized the need for support that migrant university students require. Such support is better received when it comes from local students, and that, in turn, benefits both migrant and local students. Rola emphasized how the programme helped her in multiple aspects of the migration process.

On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, in Brazil, there are specific programmes that involve refugees and vulnerable migrants in bachelor programmes at various public and private universities. The Federal University of Paraná, besides implementing the special admission, developed the project “Fresh starts are possible” (Recomeços são possíveis) to welcome and integrate youth migrants and refugees as new students.



**Towards Empowered Migrant Youth in Southern Europe** is a regional project, funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Union, and implemented by IOM, in partnership with the European University Association and the Italian Islamic Religious Community.

**TandEM** aims at building bridges between migrant and local youth to promote dialogue, mutual understanding and cohesion in Spain, Italy, Malta, Greece, Croatia and Cyprus.

The project is grounded in a network of universities, as places of socialization, integration and the ideal places to design a youth-led response against discrimination and toxic narratives on migration. It encourages young migrants' active participation, while allowing young people to speak up and define their own identities.

The project has four main objectives: (a) enhancing education while researching foreign students' needs and barriers to access to higher education; (b) promoting understanding to foster interreligious and intercultural dialogue through conferences and meetings; (c) encouraging communication, empowering young people to define their own narratives; and (d) supporting integration through mentorship programmes.

These goals are promoted through specific regional and national activities, implemented from January 2018 to December 2020.

Young migrants need to have better access to education and employment opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to become future leaders and entrepreneurs. This includes both hard and soft skills as expressed in SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), which includes lifelong learning education opportunities.

The Minister of Youth Affairs of Sierra Leone, Mohamed Bangura, underlined the importance of free and quality education from primary and secondary schools as a key to the success of a nation. Giving hope for the future in one's own country prevents people from leaving. In Sierra Leone, quality education is no longer a privilege but a right. "Putting youth in the forefront, there is no way young people can be seen as a liability, but rather creating opportunities where they are accountable and recover trust in governance."

To address marginalization and reach the full potential of migrant youth, long-term investments must be done, mainly through education. As the representative of Ireland emphasized, quality education can not only play a key role for the integration of migrants, but also for their countries of origin.

It is important to consider how to adapt the educational system to a diverse and changing environment, and overcome language and cultural barriers through a system that supports a culturally diverse society for young migrants respectful of their own heritage. In this sense, Ireland introduced in 2010 its first Inter-Cultural Education Strategy,<sup>36</sup> an example of recognizing that there is a need to embrace a more intercultural society.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report<sup>37</sup> shows Ireland as one of the three countries in the European Union where foreign-born children have a lower school dropout rate than native-born children. Ireland has also launched a new policy for Irish Aid Development Education Strategy,<sup>38</sup> where education for girls is a priority.

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36 Available at [www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Intercultural-Education-Strategy/mig\\_intercultural\\_education\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Intercultural-Education-Strategy/mig_intercultural_education_strategy.pdf).

37 Available at <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/taxonomy/term/210> (accessed 1 December 2019).

38 Available at [www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/allwebsitemedia/20newsandpublications/publicationpdfsenglish/Development-Education-Strategy-2017-2023.pdf](http://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/allwebsitemedia/20newsandpublications/publicationpdfsenglish/Development-Education-Strategy-2017-2023.pdf).

Brazil pays great attention to the inclusion of young migrants in the Brazilian educational system. By Federal Law 9.394/1996, which sets the basis for the Brazilian School System (known as *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação*), children who concluded part of their education outside Brazil, including migrant children, are able to enrol in the relevant educational level through alternative access mechanisms in case they do not have proof of previous schooling (art. 5º, § 5º).

The 2018 Global Education Monitoring Report<sup>39</sup> by UNESCO, on the other hand, focuses on “Migration, displacement and education: building bridges, not walls”. The report clearly highlights how much more efficient it is to invest in early education than trying to catch up at a later stage, when children or young people have missed out on several years. This needs to be understood as a comprehensive approach – education, vocational training and access to work – to ensure that young people have a future in their own country if this is what they want, and therefore looking at opportunities, social security issues and offering them the prospects they may require.

The representative of Migrant Forum in Asia, Ms Alexis Nadine Bautista, shared examples that ensure access to quality education of migrant children (in the Philippines or Japan), to address the needs of stateless children (in Malaysia and Thailand), or with a focus that falls on children and youth left behind (in countries of origin such as Nepal, the Philippines and Bangladesh).

Likewise, the Government of Mexico is launching a programme called “Young people building their future”,<sup>40</sup> which seeks to ensure that young people build their capacities through studying or working. To do so, the programme gives monthly subsidies to young people participating, contributing also to Objective 2 of the Global Compact for Migration.

Switzerland also emphasized that education is an important tool to measure and address vulnerabilities. Having access to quality education in displacement situations, for example, is key, as is working together with teachers, training them and giving them the tools to deal with additional burdens and specific needs, especially when they must deal with a high influx of people coming from other countries. It is also important to make the link between education, vocational training and access to work.

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39 Available at [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/2019\\_gemr\\_migration\\_4\\_dec.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/2019_gemr_migration_4_dec.pdf).

40 Available at <https://jovenesconstruyendoelfuturo.stps.gob.mx> (accessed 1 December 2019).

## Bridging needs with services

By bridging the gap between needs and services and invest on national delivery, more opportunities for young people on the move can be generated as they become part of the national systems and can benefit from the health, social protection or educational system. Bridging education with employment is essential for successful integration, while it also targets SDG 8 (Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all) in relation to youth and migrant youth.

The story of Mr Khaled Karri, a Syrian refugee in Rome, highlights the difficulties that young migrants face to integrate, learn the local language and be self-sustainable, which can be the bridge towards inclusion (see Hummus Town Cooperative on page 38).

Employment may be particularly difficult, especially depending on migration status. Informal and degrading work is often the only employment choice. Decent work opportunities for youth can not only encourage social inclusion and integration in the labour market, but also prevent risks of abuse and exploitation.

Challenges remain, however, in terms of direct recognition of qualifications, streamlining recruitment criteria and searching for common international standards. These factors are relevant for youth migration as drivers of decent discrimination, promote minimum labour standards and encourage that migrant young workers are paid for the work done, and recognize acquired education and skills.

Norway raised the question of how to engage the private sector, and especially key companies – actual employers – in this discussion, to better shape the policies so that education, including vocational training, is actually placed in countries of origin to match the needs and demands of the labour market in destination countries.

For Norway, education, including vocational training and private sector development, are one of their five priorities policy areas for development cooperation.

The private sector is best positioned to create those type of jobs, especially in countries where governments don't have that capacity.





### **Hummus Town Cooperative**

Despite Mr Khaled Karri's challenging travel from the Syrian Arab Republic to Italy, and his difficult process of integration, he found his way through an association helping migrants towards the creation of his own company.

In 2017, Khaled founded Hummus Town Cooperative in Rome, which offers catering Syrian food all around the city, providing Syrian refugees with a livelihood and training, thereby contributing to SDG 8 and also to the integration of its workers into Italian society. This builds their capacity and teaches them the local language, helping them to become financially independent. Hummus Town also builds partnerships with Italian businesses and social organizations.

The difficulty of the journey that Khaled faced has persuaded him to raise awareness of physical and mental cultural and social challenges. Khaled's plans are to bridge the Italian and Arab cultures by increasing understanding. This includes learning the local language and eliminating misperceptions in the receiving community, thereby promoting integration. The new premises will also allow the construction of a meeting place in which to welcome citizens.

He says: "What counts the most is when people interact with refugees, because they have a name, a face, and a real identity."



The Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh and current chair of the platform on disaster displacement, Mr Shahidul Haque, expressed his concerns as to how governments from lower-income countries can help in creating jobs that are required in the twenty-first century. In his view, the Government's role should be to enable the environment that allows innovation and creativity for job creation. He says: "Many multinationals are coming to Bangladesh, creating that space for the new entrepreneurs, new innovative and varied jobs."

Likewise, activities supporting access of Venezuelans, including youth migrants, to entrepreneurship trainings and income generation opportunities should be implemented. A good example is the cooperation between IOM Brazil and World Vision. Both organizations contributed to the development of workshops focused on building capacities and promoting technical support in entrepreneurship to Venezuelan migrants and for members of host communities. This initiative also provided grants for the selected entrepreneurship projects.

Brazil's National Commercial Training Service,<sup>41</sup> in partnership with IOM Brazil, facilitated access to vocation trainings in order to improve migrants' skills training. In partnership with IOM, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other

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41 Cultura Inglesa, "Professional development and the surge in vocational training", available at [www.the-report.com/reports/brazil/education-in-brazil/professional-development-and-the-surge-in-vocational-training/](http://www.the-report.com/reports/brazil/education-in-brazil/professional-development-and-the-surge-in-vocational-training/) (accessed 1 December 2019).

organizations promote “creative workshops” (currently in its third edition) with the aim to better qualify young migrants and refugees and then connect them with companies to apply for jobs.

UNCTAD referred to a joint publication with IOM entitled *Migration and Youth Challenges and Opportunities*,<sup>42</sup> which highlights the needs for wider recognition of qualifications, which allows young migrants to obtain jobs in line with their skills and education. In that regard, trade agreements are a relevant tool to facilitate the recognition of skills, qualifications and competences.

The International Labour Organization (ILO), on the other hand, has adopted a Global Strategy to support States in creating jobs for youth,<sup>43</sup> including migrant workers, thus ensuring their protection in destination countries. In this context, ILO promotes the integration of youth migrants, including those in irregular situations, to help improve their situations by increasing opportunities for education, vocational training or employment.

In the words of Binod Khadria, Professor of Economics and Education at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India, what is required is a “Smart Engagement” of high-skilled youth of the world in global migration governance to safeguard stability of educational, career and migration choices made by the high-skilled youth, and to help stem the brain drain by boosting Temporary Return of Youth against Temporary Migration of Youth.

## Empowerment happens locally

Many countries voiced the importance of involving local authorities and hosting communities to create spaces for social cohesion. In Mauritania,<sup>44</sup> “social cohesion is extremely important, as it contributes to develop a collective life where people become fulfilled” said Mohamed Ould Abdi, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Employment, Youth and Sports. Measures in the country to foster cohesion include a holistic approach that combines humanitarian issues, a policy on dialogue, an extensive

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42 Available at [https://globalmigrationgroup.org/system/files/23\\_Key\\_Messages\\_and\\_Policy\\_Recommendations.pdf](https://globalmigrationgroup.org/system/files/23_Key_Messages_and_Policy_Recommendations.pdf).

43 Available at [www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/databases-platforms/global-initiative-decent-jobs/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/databases-platforms/global-initiative-decent-jobs/lang-en/index.htm) (accessed 1 December 2019).

44 Mauritania: Transforming Youth Trajectory for Vulnerable Youth – World Bank, available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/273741523281729489/pdf/125059-WP-PUBLIC-22369-Mauritania-Youth-Policy-Note-EN.pdf>.

programme on social inclusion working with the most disadvantaged, social justice and a gender perspective to prevent discrimination against women. The success of this programme is based on finding acceptable compromises, developing targeted trainings and focusing on the employability of youth.

In line with this initiative, the African Union Youth Envoy shared some of the ongoing initiatives that aim at empowering youth at the African Union. This includes the initiative of the African Union Chairperson, H.E. Moussa Faki, to develop a meaningful engagement of youth in key areas such as employment, entrepreneurship, education and engagement. In addition, the African Youth Volunteer Corps Programme recruits, trains and deploys young professionals<sup>45</sup> to serve in African countries other than their own for one year. The National, Regional and Continental Youth Consultation included the Africa Governance Architecture<sup>46</sup> Secretariat and Youth4Peace<sup>47</sup> programme of the Peace and Security Department to ensure that youth perspectives and voices are mainstreamed and engaged at the Regional Economic Communities. Finally, a joint labour–migration programme is looking at labour and migration through skills portability, to harness the movement of youth who are migrating with their skills and education.

In Brazil, to empower youth through sports, World Vision and UNICEF supported an initiative of a local teacher to facilitate football training for children and youth migrants from local shelters in the State of Roraima. At the local level, various activities are implemented by Brazilian institutions, United Nations agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations, with the purpose to empower youth migrants and refugees.

In the Philippines, a joint programme on Youth Employment and Migration (2009–2013)<sup>48</sup> is inserted in the national action plan on youth aiming to achieve coherence across national initiatives, sectors and relevant organizations affecting youth employment. The plan establishes linkages and complementarities with the existing national development plans and frameworks, and is focused on two outcomes: (a) to improve policy coherence and implementation on youth employment and

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45 Available at <https://au.int/> (accessed 1 December 2019).

46 Available at <http://aga-platform.org> (accessed 1 December 2019).

47 Available at [www.youth4peace.info](http://www.youth4peace.info) (accessed 1 December 2019).

48 Available at <http://mdgfund.org/sites/default/files/Youth,%20Employment%20and%20Migration%20-%20Development%20Results%20Report.pdf>.

migration, and (b) to increase access to decent work for poor young men and women through public private partnerships, more inclusive with basic education and life skills, career guidance, including safe migration, vocational training and entrepreneurship.

## Reducing inequalities

SDG 10 talks about reducing the gap of inequalities. Young people are facing the challenges of migration and displacement at a time of intense cognitive, physical and social development.

Some countries stressed the importance of working on the drivers of migration in countries of origin to address issues such as lack of opportunities. As Ms Daniela Bas (UN DESA) mentioned, the world in general is already immersed in the Fourth Industrial Revolution while, in fact, some countries are still in the Second Industrial Revolution (agriculture). One reason why youth migrate is to be able to acquire those hard skills that may not be available in their countries of origin.

Reducing inequalities should consider not only countries of origin and destination, but also inequalities within the countries. In line with the above, Ms Bas emphasized the fact that “even being in countries placed on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the truth is that there are youngsters having difficulties to catch up and acquire the constant learning of hard skills that jobs require. This is a fact that only contributes to increased inequalities.”

On the other hand, social integration and youth empowerment require prioritizing the fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination. One of the biggest challenges for integration is helping locals/citizens understand that refugees and migrants who have been integrated are in fact beneficial to the economies and societies.

Campaigns and the use of social media can be powerful tools in this respect by promoting migrant voices and engagement of youth. As young people possess digital literacy and the critical knowledge of new technology, youth themselves should be engaged in producing and sharing evidence-based counternarratives that can inform responsive policies on migration.

The example of TandEM also has a strong component on social media, in particular on Facebook and Instagram, to create a peer-to-peer

approach that seeks to knock down misperceptions. By establishing links among people of different cultures, they learn about each other's stories, dreams and challenges, which contribute to changing perspectives and the students' views on migrants.

In addition to the essential role that governments must play in the fight against discrimination and xenophobia, young people can also play a relevant role by being the best advocates for an evidence-based counternarrative that can inform migration policies.

There were many references as to how reducing inequalities implies addressing young migrants' protection needs. The tremendous psychological stress and trauma they might be exposed to during the migration process, coupled with the negative impact of pre-existing issues faced by young migrants, can seriously undermine their mental health status and overall well-being. Therefore, policies and strategies targeted at supporting young migrants must pay attention to their mental health and well-being, and the need to include the experiences and input of migrant youth.

In the case of those most vulnerable, such as children and youth in displacement, or unaccompanied minors, special attention needs to be made to their protection needs.

According to UNICEF, when dealing with both migrants in displacement or refugees,<sup>49</sup> the protection requires four considerations: (a) whenever possible, making sure that unaccompanied children are protected but also that their families are traced; (b) scaling up the access to services according to their needs; (c) providing alternatives to detention centres; and (d) identifying and addressing specific needs of the most vulnerable, such as girls, minorities and the disabled.

The issue of unaccompanied minors in Brazil is covered by Executive Act 197/2019, which allows unaccompanied children and teenagers who are separated from their parents, regardless of their nationality, to request residence in Brazil. The residence permits are valid until the children turn 18 years of age. After that, they can request extension if they wish and the residence permit will be extended for an indefinite period. Until then, they are legally represented and assisted by the Office of the Federal Public Defender.

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49 UNICEF, *A Right To Be Heard: Listening to Children and Young People on the Move* (New York, 2018), available at [www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_103433.html](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_103433.html) (accessed 1 December 2019).

Additional areas of consideration should be made to the needs for protection of young people who move due to climate change and how environmental change has exacerbated poverty. Climate change displacement is also unique and that puts people in very vulnerable and dangerous situations.

## Networks to address vulnerabilities

Physical and psychosocial stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health issues or disabilities require specific assistance and attention. The aim should be to identify the fears that disable and prevent young migrants from participating and integrating in their new communities. Specific well-being programmes need to provide counselling support while fostering administrative processes and easier access to health care. Psychosocial support with a holistic approach involves all aspects of the person, including cultural, religious and social, and is an approach that contributes to successful integration processes.

Switzerland introduced a successful practice to address these vulnerabilities. This practice is based on the set-up of networks to protect children and young migrants on the move built in partnership with civil society and governments in West Africa.<sup>50</sup> Lessons from this experience highlight three recommendations that make a difference in protecting children and youngsters on the move:

- (a) Create operational links with civil society and government agencies, and between governments. It is important to know the responsible agencies within the countries to better understand their situation and protect the best interests of the child.
- (b) Set up a standard operating procedure and principles to have a common set of procedures, such as support and requirement, with unaccompanied minors. These principles have been developed in close cooperation with government agencies and civil society, and have also received political approval by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) commission and their member States, and been lifted by a political process by ECOWAS as a regional organization.

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50 ECOWAS, ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants, available at [www.ssiss.ch/sites/default/files/2018-11/04001\\_ssi\\_content\\_EN\\_RZ\\_web\\_72dpi.pdf](http://www.ssiss.ch/sites/default/files/2018-11/04001_ssi_content_EN_RZ_web_72dpi.pdf).

- (c) To focus on capacity-building: understanding what the capacities are, what the needs are and then to focus support on the actors involved in this network.

In this sense, Morocco has created local services for capacity-building in 11 areas of the Kingdom dedicated to migrant returnees, as well as those migrants who are transiting through Morocco to move to another country.

Likewise, Brazil's Relocation Strategy<sup>51</sup> regarding the Venezuelan influx in the country involves IOM and UNHCR to jointly coordinate the movements of Venezuelans from the impoverished border state of Roraima, where integration prospects are extremely limited, to several urban centres across the country. The relocation strategy supports family reunification and access to employment opportunities by matching skills of migrants to labour market opportunities in other states of Brazil. Youth migrants or refugees can be relocated for family reunification or in order to access the employment opportunity in other states of Brazil.

In conclusion, comprehensive solutions are required to address social cohesion and integration. It is, in fact, a continuous process that requires a multidimensional approach, while keeping the youth at the centre of focus. This includes the development of public policies; empowering through representation and inclusion at all levels; building resilience through education, health care and social dialogue; adding value to peer-to-peer learning; establishing mentorship opportunities; and looking for synergies "with the other" to eradicate stigmas and contribute to decreased inequalities.

## **Building adaptation and resilience**

Young migrants face challenges during the migration or displacement, and this happens at a crucial time of their emotional, cognitive, physical and social development. The stressors they are exposed to can lead to psychological problems and undermine their overall well-being.

Despite the lack of access to certain rights and services or legal instruments that protect youth over 18 years of age and accompany their transition to adulthood, as they are getting to know their rights as citizens, there are successful practices, policies and strategies that

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51 International Organization for Migration, *Relocation, Integration Support for Venezuelans in Brazil*, available at [www.iom.int/news/relocation-integration-support-venezuelans-brazil](http://www.iom.int/news/relocation-integration-support-venezuelans-brazil) (accessed 1 December 2019).



respond to these challenges and that focus on building young people's adaptation and resilience, while unleashing their potential to advance their development in their communities. These strategies fall under the efforts to achieve SDG 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages).

Education should give space to issues such as dealing with social stresses – specifically violence within the family and community, or issues such as early marriage or lack of participatory space. Most importantly, however, providing psychological and psychosocial support to young migrants helps identify the fears that disable young migrants and prevent them from participating, integrating or using their skills.

These fears are often linked with a feeling of helplessness, disorientation, abandonment, betrayal or even the feeling of non-existence, fears that can destroy a person and that are even more damaging when they affect youth people. Psychosocial and psychological support helps identify and overcome those fears.

Hestia Hellas<sup>52</sup> is an NGO that serves vulnerable populations, including children with special needs, adolescents and adults with mental health concerns and minority populations in Athens, Greece. It also empowers migrant families to participate within Greek society and, therefore, contribute to their reintegration.

Among the recommendations to build young people's adaptation and resilience made by Ourania Kirka, psychosocial support team Coordinator at Hestia Hellas, are:

- (a) Ensuring open spaces for dialogue to listen to them;
- (b) Easy and immediate access to free health care when they enter the country;
- (c) Faster processes for unaccompanied minors to leave the camps and transfer to specific centres for minors;
- (d) Faster processes for family reunification (currently it takes between 1 and 1.5 years or more), and for asylum seekers if they are to remain in the country;
- (e) Access education and proper support through integration classes cultural activities or sports in public schools;

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52 Hestia Hellas, available at [www.hestiahellas.org](http://www.hestiahellas.org) (accessed 1 December 2019).



### **Community-based psychosocial support**

Hestia Hellas is a community-based psychosocial well-being centre that provides integrative mind and body care to families in need.

Its focus is on sustainability, integration and life skills, with psychosocial counselling, livelihood training and legal assistance. It works with families to build resiliency, strengthen healthy coping mechanisms and support school readiness, through:

Family support groups and customized workshops, tailored therapies such as positive parenting, nutrition, stress relief, early childhood development, or skills building, facilitating engagement with the Hestia community.

Psychological counselling for children, adolescents and adults.

Promoting social/emotional skills in young children to be able to participate within the community:

Creative group therapies including art, music, drama and dance therapies;

Mind-body therapies including yoga, martial arts, mindfulness, sports, physiotherapy and reflexology.

Child-friendly spaces: social and emotional skill development, self-regulation techniques, safe learning environments.

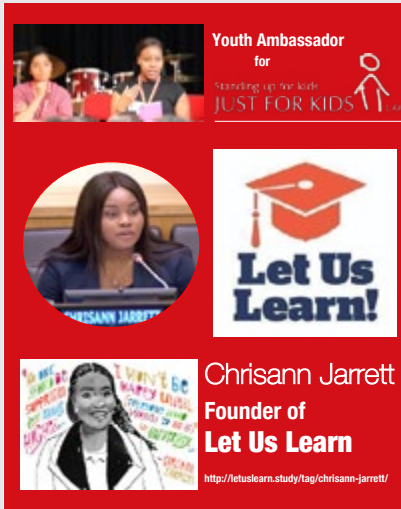
- (f) Well-being and psychosocial support activities to help address trauma in a holistic manner;
- (g) Ensure funding for shelters to be operational, including trained staff, and for organizations that carry out psychosocial and reintegration support.

Another example to build adaptation and resilience was provided by Ms Nadia Khouri, Executive Director of Tahaddi, a Lebanese NGO that responds to the multidimensional challenges of poverty by facilitating access to education, health-care and psychosocial services. The NGO focuses its activities mainly on informal settlements that host the most vulnerable groups, including migrants.

During her presentation, Ms Khouri emphasized the relevance of focusing on education to promote integration with a holistic approach: addressing not only basic primary education, but also vocational and on-the-job training. As she put it: “A system that targets not only minors but also young mothers under 25, providing child-care services and flexible hours for young men who are breadwinners, so that they can be educated. In sum, developing a safety and protective environment that extends its net to families and communities.”

Adaptation and resilience require specific emphases when dealing with unaccompanied migrants, specific support to ensure they can overcome traumas and be successfully integrated. In such context, emotional intelligence and mental health care are essential; being empowered is key.

Mr Steve McGlynn, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Australia in Geneva, emphasized how the country has learned from its experience, and now maintains a needs-based provision of services. Australia upholds specific programmes with unaccompanied minors, cultural orientation or humanitarian settlements. It assists young migrants in their integration process, providing them with orientation and information on how to navigate the system, support in the transition to promote social cohesion, and awareness on their rights and responsibilities, as well as psychosocial support and counselling, when required.



In 2013, 19-year-old Ms Chrisann Jarrett, top student and head girl at Clapton Girls' Academy, was thrilled to be offered a place at London School of Economics (LSE) to study law. Her delight soon turned to anger as she realized that, due to her immigration status, she would not be accepted as a home student and would have to pay £16,000 in tuition fees/year, without any support from student finance.

Chrisann arrived in the United Kingdom from Jamaica when she was 8 years old. She grew up and was educated in the

United Kingdom. She wanted to go to Law School at LSE but, with her migrant status (Discretionary Leave to Remain), she was not eligible for student finance. Despite being aware of her immigrant status, she did not know she would be charged international student fees.

"The colour of my passport, my nationality, citizenship and most importantly my identity was thrown into confusion. I couldn't go to university that year; my family couldn't afford the high tuition fees. In my forced gap year, I secured an internship at Just for Kids Law, a charity that provides advocacy, support and assistance to young people in difficulty. There I met other young migrants who shared a similar fate. I learnt that I was one of 2,000 young migrants each year prevented from moving forward."

Fortunately, when Chrisann informed LSE of her situation, the university offered her a full scholarship, allowing her to take up her place on her course.

### Let us learn

Her experience stimulated her to help other migrant teenagers who were in the same situation. Together with a group of other young campaigners, she started Let us Learn, a project that aims to raise awareness and act as a support network

for those who find themselves barred from higher education.

The campaign has successfully organized and mobilized over 1,000 young people who have migrated to the United Kingdom at a young age. “We have led campaigns that have achieved change on a national scale, influencing legislation and creating a counternarrative to the United Kingdom’s hostile environment toward migrants. Most of these young people have been here since they were very young”, she says. “They haven’t returned to their country of origin and so completing their educational aspirations, which have been shaped and moulded by British institutions, is something important to them. We want to spread the word. We want them to go to schools and let people know that this is an issue.”

**Influencing policy**

I am currently on secondment to the Greater London Authorities as a Policy Advisor to the Deputy Mayor of London for Social Integration, with particular focus on young Londoners who are undocumented or have precarious status.

I was given this opportunity fresh out of university, but it is important to recognize that, prior to 2016, this office, the chair

I now occupy at City Hall, did not exist. It was deliberately engineered from the start to have voices like mine represented. I have advised on Brexit, the future of the United Kingdom’s immigration system, made submissions to the Home Office on matters relating to European Londoners, Young Londoners with precarious status and Commonwealth Citizens from Windrush generation, warning of potential impacts of upcoming legal changes.

My experience has shown me three things: (a) the opportunity has enabled me to influence and represent young people; (b) the proximity, closeness to policymakers but also less distance between me and the issue in which I am advising on; and (c) it has enabled me to influence and represent young people, coming from a place of lived experience. Recognize the gap, surround by people who share the same purpose and go for it. If personally affected by the issue in which you are campaigning on, do not underestimate the power of your own story.

Twitter: @LetUs\_Learn

E-mail: [LetUsLearn@justforkidslaw.org](mailto:LetUsLearn@justforkidslaw.org)



## Address young migrants vulnerabilities by enhancing the protection and empowerment of youth

**Protect**



**Empower**

**NO ONE SOLUTION FITS ALL NEEDS**

**Develop tailor-made responses that consider:**



Promoting safe means of migration

Increasing awareness on safe migration



Preventing risks of abuse, exploitation



Empowering women to address gender equality and specific risks



Preventing socioeconomic exclusion reducing likelihood of marginalization

Well-being of young migrants includes mental health support



Providing specific protection to



unaccompanied children and adolescents



young people moving due to climate change



Quality education and employment opportunities help address inequalities

Fostering dialogue to increase resilience and strengthen the feeling of inclusion



Fighting racism, xenophobia and discrimination



Promoting cultural diversity, social integration and innovative responses

## 4. INVOLVING YOUTH IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN OF MIGRATION STRATEGIES

A recurring sentiment expressed in the different sessions was the need to involve the diaspora to empower youth while working with the youth diaspora to build cooperation and create sustainable links.

Diaspora groups can play an important role in the development of their countries of origin and destination. Even though they are often seen as a loss to their origin countries, there is an increasing understanding that an engaged diaspora can be an asset. Besides sending money, which can become investments in their home countries, they are channels for the transfer of technology and knowledge.

Remittances by young migrants play an ever-stronger role in the economies of many developing countries, but they alone cannot overcome development challenges. However, comprehensive solutions need to contemplate other aspects, such as peer-to-peer support, policy changes like the right to vote or the right to the nationality, as well as



appropriate programmes for integration and exchange of experiences between the diaspora and their countries of origin.

In its publication *Economic Development in Africa Report 2018: Migration for Structure Transformation*,<sup>53</sup> presented by UNCTAD during the New York session, the organization underlines how members of the diaspora who maintain a connection to their homeland are normally actively engaged in trade promotion activities through their network and knowledge of their countries of origin. Policies should encourage return to build productive capacities in countries of origin, as they contribute with accumulated knowledge, experience and networks.

In addition to remittances, UNCTAD emphasized that diaspora engagement can also enhance the role of young migrants, benefiting both countries of origin and destination by increasing bilateral trade. They can be active knowledge brokers in their communities of origin by providing information on work, business, education opportunities, financing and identification of trade barriers and reduction of trade-related costs. Engaging diaspora networks will help to increase remittances flows while supporting young migrants.

Likewise, the AU Youth Envoy argued that the diaspora has already provided support to their countries of origin, not only with investments or remittances, but also with knowledge. Yet there is a need to work on their involvement in political participation and development, being active on networks such as Youth Migrant Voices, whether regionally or globally, so that they can contribute to sharing ideas and changing perspectives. And this could also be enhanced by an intergenerational dialogue.

Furthermore, Australia recognized the diaspora as a valuable source of support for integration of newcomers and stressed their experience with children and young adults, considering them as cross-cutting enablers who learn and adapt quickly, while keeping links with their communities of origin.

Based on the country experience, youth migrants have an incredible capacity for adaptation and resilience, and play a pivotal role in fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. They are key players in building peaceful and inclusive societies.

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53 Available at [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/edar2018\\_ch5\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/edar2018_ch5_en.pdf).



## Diaspora as key agents of change

Young diaspora members contribute to their countries of origin, transit and destination through remittances, by transferring knowledge and skills, by connecting people and resources, or by sharing and understanding other cultures, which helps to break negative and harmful stereotypes.

Based on long experience with the diaspora, Pascale Dahrouj, Senior Adviser, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon, enlisted several recommendations to ensure value and a successful commitment:

- (a) Gather a sound knowledge of the diaspora abroad, assessing their needs, their numbers or how are they are willing to contribute;
- (b) Establish proper means to communicate with them;
- (c) Enable an environment to engage them through the development of policies such as the right to citizenship or to vote;
- (d) Develop strategic partnerships between the State, international organizations and civil society to build frameworks that link the youth with the diaspora;
- (e) Generate outreach and partnership policies to involve diaspora: numerous examples show their critical role in crisis management; and finally
- (f) Enhance national policy and co-develop a national migration strategy.

Lebanese practice with diaspora engagement includes Lebanon Connect,<sup>54</sup> the Academy of Youth and other programmes, such as those supporting the right to vote or stand as candidates in elections (to be implemented in 2020).

There are also programmes that aim to hear from the youth regarding their needs, and networks among local and diaspora population to simplify procedures to acquire nationality for third- and fourth-generation diaspora youth. Learning from the Irish experience, they are producing a Hub as a museum, the Diaspora Village.

A diaspora fund has also been created to ensure and give visibility to the diaspora contributions to the development of communities, funding

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54 Lebanon Connect, available at <https://lebanon-connect.com> (accessed 2 December 2019).

youth initiatives. If the diaspora invest in projects, it will lead to the creation of jobs and an employment market.

Morocco shared the country's initiatives to raise awareness on how the youth diaspora can contribute to its country of origin through the establishment of networks that contribute skills and knowledge locally.

Likewise, the representative of Argentina introduced Raices (Roots), a programme carried out to promote links with Argentinians around the world, to establish new networks and incentivize return with grant subsidies for research through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Sciences.

Tunisia shared its unique experience on how the diaspora supported the country during the transition period, developing a relationship of trust and creating a feeling of belonging (12 % of the population lives abroad, mainly in Europe). The new country strategy on migration includes the right to vote, and 18 officials have been elected abroad. The country also maintains links with the diaspora through the Forum of Tunisians living abroad, and is developing a platform for the sharing of skills, know-how and networking, seeking to establish public-private partnerships.

Mali, a country that receives 15 per cent of its GDP from the diaspora, has also set up networks in Europe, the United States and elsewhere, where it listens to the young Malians living abroad. It is also carrying out a programme in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme to work with young Malian scientists abroad.

Sri Lanka's successful experience with the diaspora to leverage knowledge in the country was evidenced with the tsunami experience in 2004 and afterwards. It showed the country how critical its role was to get help in the recovery of the country. Many Sri Lankans returned to help in the development, re-establishing resilience and stability. Even if most of the diaspora (3 million, mainly in the United States, Australia and Europe) maintain low qualifications, they nevertheless acquire knowledge and skills that can benefit the country, particularly to assist the most vulnerable.

Some of the current activities focus on connecting with the community back home, challenging the messages of hate, adapting a family/village by engaging in traditional handicrafts to establish linkages with the diaspora.

## Young diaspora

Dejan Bojanic, Chief Executive Officer from Save the Children in Sweden and Vice President of the European Youth Forum, the world's largest platform of youth organizations, stressed the idea that young people have the right to development and to migrate, and that their skills and acquired knowledge can contribute to the hosting communities as well as the communities of origin.

Nepal promotes self-entrepreneurship programmes and science conferences involving the diaspora to encourage knowledge sharing.

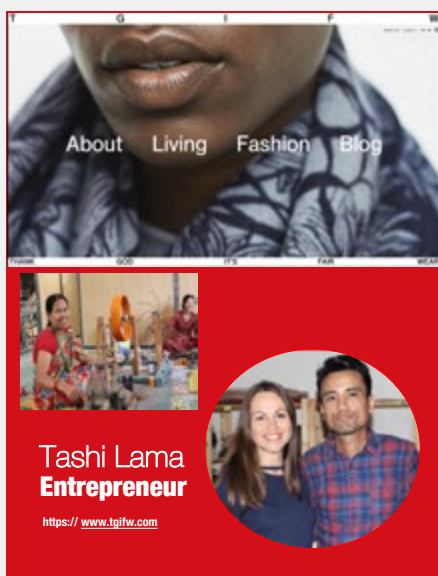
TGIFW – Thank God It's Fair Wear – is an example where a young Nepalese, Tashi Lama, based in Switzerland since 2006, has developed a business in partnership with a Swiss designer and in collaboration with Nepalese companies, to support the fair production of clothing made by women in Nepal. The products are designed in Switzerland for Swiss buyers.

The young diaspora also has a significant role in empowering young people in the country of origin, enabling development and fostering collaboration.

The Young Malagasy Diaspora programme, organized by the Government of Madagascar in partnership with IOM, is a successful practice that involves young Malagasy diaspora volunteers with local communities by facilitating the transfer of skills, knowledge and experience. Such engagement challenges stereotypes and helps break down barriers and build connections.

At the Geneva session, the representative of the permanent mission of Madagascar in Geneva highlighted the importance of developing a framework for engagement, including provisions for the protection of the diaspora and coordination mechanisms in an individual-centric approach.

The programme enhanced the interaction between diaspora and local population, whereby stereotypes were broken down. The diaspora youth contribute in sectors that require development within the country, including agriculture, and were able to understand the realities of the local communities, while the communities understood their commitment to help and contribute to their development through



### **TGIFW – Thank God It’s Fair Wear**

Swiss design fair and socially sustainable, produced in Nepal.

TGIFW is a Swiss Fair Fashion and Living Label from St. Gallen, the result of collaboration between Swiss designers and Nepalese companies, a combination of traditional craftsmanship and modern Swiss design.

The couple Carmen and Tashi Lama lead TGIFW GmbH together. Tashi is from Nepal and has been living in Switzerland since spring 2016. Tashi is an example of how engaging with country of origin and destination can provide benefits to both.

TGIFW’s market model produces contemporary designs that can be used in the Swiss market while generating a direct impact in Nepal through women’s entrepreneurship.

All clothes are made of natural materials in Nepal through three small producers, with a people-centred approach that guarantees a fair production, with products that go from handwoven scarves, clothes made of natural materials, jewellery and hand-knotted designer carpets.

The company is earmarking 10 per cent of its profits to train people who have ideas but not the necessary entrepreneurial skills. Its purpose is to promote the economic independence of women in Nepal by investing in sustainable business models, enabling microcredits, and supporting women with further training in business start-up and management.

knowledge and skills sharing. An example that could be continued, improved and even replicated elsewhere.

During the presentation of the programme, one of the volunteers, Hariniaina Ranjoro, affirmed how young people have a significant role to play engaging and networking as diaspora to contribute to the development of the country of origin. This engagement also helps challenge stereotypes while building relations and breaking barriers.

Harivola Mirana Ravokatrasonlofo, Attaché of the Permanent Mission of Madagascar in Geneva, emphasized the positive impact of the programme to enhance the interaction between the diaspora and the local population. This exchange contributed to breaking down stereotypes. Ravokatrasonlofo recommended that these kinds of programmes be continued, improved and replicated.

Representatives of other countries, such as Guyana, reflected on this experience to add the importance to create ties with the young diaspora not to forget their origins.

## Youth advocates for migrant youth

It is also essential to establish a dialogue between youth, migrants and non-migrants.

Peer-to-peer contacts and exchanges between young migrants and their peers ultimately foster mutual understanding and counter prejudice and stereotypes, thereby contributing to building more inclusive societies. It is demonstrated that a satisfying coexistence between local community members and refugees and migrants could be achieved by co-designing economic integration solutions that are involving and are beneficial to all groups. Projects that are co-designed and co-implemented by the local community and refugees and migrants end up working better, and in the long term lead to more projects of economic integration.

Investing in youth is also in Canada's social and economic interest, as Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, Member of the Canadian Parliament, stated during his presentation at the New York session. It is the Government's view that multiple perspectives strengthen decision-making and policy development by encouraging innovation, creativity and change, and this involves migrant youth. It is understood that Canada's economy depends on the participation of young people, and empowering them

## Time to give back



Hariniaina  
Ranjoro,  
**Volunteers  
arrived in  
Madagascar**

<http://madagascar-unesco.com/loharano2.pdf>

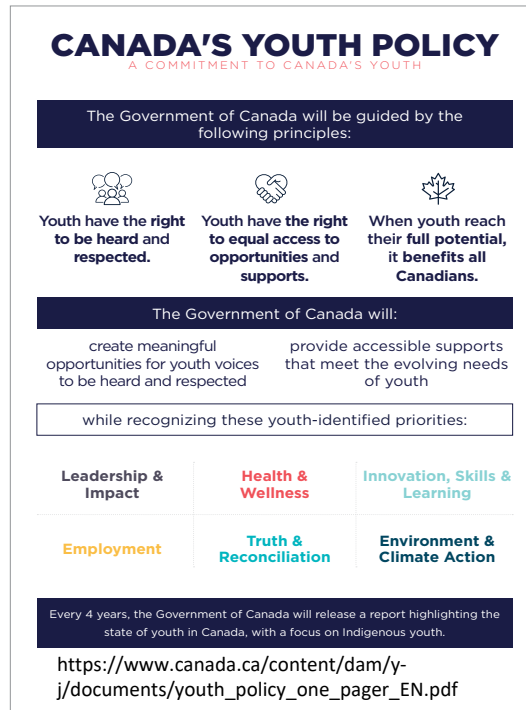
### Strengthen ties and give back to the origin

Hariniaina Ranjoro was one of the first group of volunteers that spent three months volunteering in Madagascar during the summer of 2019. For the first edition, the programme selected 15 youth volunteers from all applications received from Malagasy residents in France, the BENELUX (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg), Switzerland, the United States and Canada.

This programme – the first of its kind – seeks to create and develop a space for exchange and interaction between the Malagasy diaspora and institutional stakeholders in Madagascar, as well as to entice a constructive engagement between the diaspora and the general Malagasy population.

Hariniaina, as the rest of volunteers, lived with host families in rural communities, engaging in their daily lives where they shared their experiences and knowledge, and were able to understand what the gaps and scope for development were. Drawing from their experience living in developed countries, they were able to support local development priorities.

In a world characterized by growing mobility and migration dynamics and globalization, diasporas represent increasingly relevant and potent actors of development. With an estimated diaspora of between 75,000 and 200,000 Malagasy nationals living abroad, Madagascar can leverage this formidable human resource potential for its sustainable development.



to take part will diversify its economy, making it more competitive and sustainable.

Furthermore, involving young people in political processes will help build trust in democratic institutions, in turn protecting Canada's democracy.<sup>55</sup>

## Creating inter-diaspora bonds

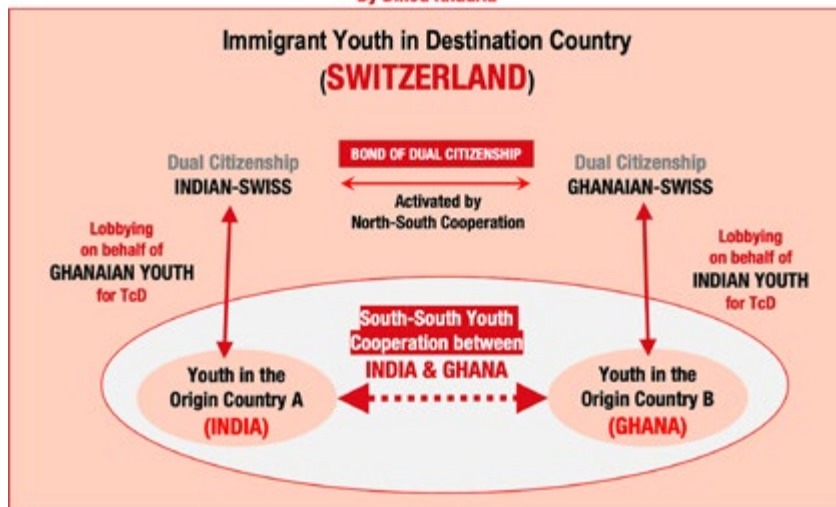
Participants stressed the importance of including youth and young diaspora voices to listen to their perspectives and contributions in policymaking processes, both in their countries of origin and host societies, at the national and local level.

Youth diaspora can contribute by bridging the needs through the transfer of skills and knowledge, and also by setting the example to challenge negative perceptions, and adhering to laws and rules.

<sup>55</sup> The Youth Council of Canada, available at [www.canada.ca/en/campaign/prime-ministers-youth-council/council.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/prime-ministers-youth-council/council.html) (accessed 2 December 2019).

## INNOVATION FOR EMPOWERMENT AND YOUTH SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT through Inter-Diaspora Cooperation in Destination Countries for Third-Country Development

By Binod Khadria



Grass-roots level development can be done through building inter-diaspora networks.<sup>56</sup> Professor Khadria talks about “creating bonds among diaspora to support third-country development. Ideas such as creating a Health Keeping Force with diaspora that can support many countries by sharing their knowledge and practices.”

As per the graph, he expressed the need for “an Inter-Diaspora Cooperation creating lobbying groups in support of other youth in Third Country Development”. What he defines as “Age, Wage and Vintage” would provide responses to counter the ageing of the local labour force in some countries, minimizing the labour costs through a lower wages bill of the migrant youth on others, and creating an accumulation of frontier knowledge embodied in migrant youth.

In the same line, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council<sup>57</sup> in Canada brings together diaspora, identifying and mentoring young leaders.

<sup>56</sup> Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH Migration and Development Sector Project, Building bonds for migration and development: Diaspora engagement policies of Ghana, India and Serbia, available at <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00820771/file/building-bonds-for-migration-and-development.pdf>.

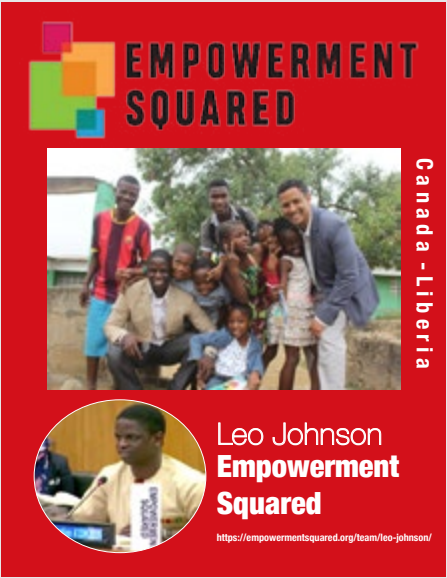
<sup>57</sup> Available at [www.hamiltonimmigration.ca](http://www.hamiltonimmigration.ca) (accessed 2 December 2019).



## **South–South cooperation: Win–win**

The Refugee Integration Organization (RIO) is an example of South–South cooperation that promotes the integration of refugees in Ghana and Brazil. Lessons learned from this experience show that the main challenges for integration are not so much the conditions in which refugees and migrants coexist, but rather setting up the mechanisms to encourage dialogue between hosting communities and receiving migrants – helping host communities understand that refugees and migrants can benefit their economies and societies.

The example of Ghana focuses on the co-designing economic integration solutions and getting both groups (refugees and host communities) to talk together. Co-design and co-implementation projects together can contribute to break walls. Experience has shown that, in the long term, these projects lead to long-term endeavours, thus contributing to economic integration and successful outcomes for all.



“  
I decided I could either carry on with a victim mentality or be a champion of possibilities  
”

While most teenagers surfed the web, watched Friends and learned to drive, Mr Leo Johnson – born in Liberia in 1983 – spent eight years in refugee camps, after fleeing a decade long civil war, human suffering and death in 1998.

“I arrived in Canada in 2006 as an unaccompanied minor in a government-sponsored refugee programme, after spending nine years in refugee camps in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana separated from my family. As a young person, I lived through the war in my home country Liberia and then two refugee camps. I have watched how decisions and discussions were being made about my future without any input from me.

“After three months in Canada, I began volunteering with organizations working with inner-city youth and underprivileged families. And for once, I felt some form of dignity. I was in a position where I could contribute to society and not always be begging for my survival.

“Despite the early challenges faced, I have been able to use my experiences to make a direct impact on the lives of thousands of young refugees and migrants in Canada. And this has helped me take a conscious choice to dedicate my life to understanding how to best empower migrant youth in their destination countries as a catalyst for making positive impact in their countries of origin as appropriate.”

At university, Leo shared his vision for an organization that would transform communities through education, youth engagement, leadership development and genuine community partnerships. Inspired by his message and story, several people approached Leo after his presentation. They told him they wanted to help, and Empowerment Squared was established shortly after in 2008 to mobilize resources and cultivate the power of people in finding solutions to the youth migrant and immigration crisis.

Today, Empowerment Squared is building a world where everyone is empowered with the tools and opportunities to thrive and contribute to society. We do this by empowering newcomers and marginalized youth and communities in Canada and across the world to succeed through mentorship, access to post-secondary education, information literacy, and sports and recreation.

Leo joined the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council in an effort by the City of Hamilton to facilitate community partnerships for collective impact, thereby enhancing the coordination and delivery of services to newcomers and immigrants. This effort has also brought together stakeholders to influence policies and decisions through an evidenced-based approach, incorporating the input of immigrants and newcomers, including migrant youth. In 2008, he was named a recipient of the Hamilton Spectator Top 40 under 40 awards, a special feature celebrating the top 40 exceptional people under 40 who are making a difference in the City of Hamilton.

Leo now spends his time between Canada and Liberia. His current project is the Liberian Learning Centre, a state-of-the-art multipurpose facility that will house the country's first public library since 1989, when the war started, a community innovation centre and the development of a young professional network for collective impact.

Leo has formed partnerships, led organizations that have provided education to students from underprivileged communities, and lobbied politicians and organizations for youth empowerment, a journey he started at age 15 when he was forced to flee his native Liberia. "Through my life experiences, I learn that when the community gets better, we all become successful in ways that are sustainable."



### Strengthen Cooperation With Diaspora

#### Diaspora Engagement:

**1**



**ASSESS**

Gather sound knowledge about how many, their needs, participation

**2**



**COMMUNICATE**

Establish means to communicate with them

**3**



**ENABLE ENVIRONMENT**

Engage them through the development of policies like the right to citizenship or vote

**4**



**BUILD PARTNERSHIPS**

Develop strategic partnerships with international organizations, civil society and private sector

**5**



**CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

Involve diaspora in crisis management

**6**




**CO-DEVELOPERS**

Co-develop national migration strategy

#### Comprehensive solutions:

**1**



**EMPOWER YOUTH**

Involve youth diaspora to empower youth in country of origin

**2**



**BUILD NETWORKS**

Work with youth diaspora to build networks, share knowledge and skills and break misperceptions

**3**



**INTEGRATION**

Children, Adolescents and Young Adults in destination countries are a valuable source of support in the integration of related family and community

**4**



**LOCAL YOUTH**

Youth nationals can be best advocates to migrant youth

**5**



**INTER-DIASPORA COOPERATION**

Foster qualitative and quantitative research on experiences, conditions, needs and aspirations of young migrants

**6**



**SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

Opportunities for the promotion and integration of refugees and establish win-win relations with hosting communities

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## 5. STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITH YOUTH

In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, as laid out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the meaningful and active participation of all young people in decision-making processes related to migration governance is imperative.

Migration laws, regulations, policies and programmes can't be implemented without the participation of the individuals who are going to be affected by them. Solutions where youth migrants are involved tend to be beneficial to all groups. Projects that are co-designed and co-implemented by the local community with refugees and migrants tend to work better, and in the long term lead to more projects that lead to economic integration.

Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, Member of the Canadian Parliament, stressed the fact that governments need to understand “who we engage with” and “how we engage with them”. The first should focus on recognizing young people with experience on migration; while the second should focus on showing those with migration experience, the power of politics as a force of change or a vehicle to address problems in a positive manner, whether it is about migration concerns, international cooperation or climate change, etc.

In the words of Erskine-Smith, “empowering the youth without migration experience will not only help raise awareness on the benefits of migration (Canada alone would have labour shortages without migration), but also counter-fighting the negative narrative on migration: “It is about fairness and compassion.” The Canadian Youth Advisory Council<sup>58</sup> engages directly with youth on the migration experience to ensure that their voices are on the table when developing migration-related policies.

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58 Available at <https://planCanada.ca/youth-advisory-council> (accessed 2 December 2019).

## Youth-centred approach

Santiago Javier Chavez Pareja, Vice Minister for Human Mobility of Ecuador and Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in 2019, highlighted how the country has made a great effort incorporating young migrants in the educational system and creating a thematic table on migration and young people within the Human Mobility system,<sup>59</sup> in line with the GFMD. Regarding the Venezuelan crisis, the Quito Process<sup>60</sup> has put its focus on the most vulnerable groups, particularly children and adolescents, involving them in the assistance that is being provided.

Likewise, the Government of Mexico is working to develop opportunities for the inclusion of young people. The representative of Mexico stressed the fact that the Global Compact represents the best space for young people to voice their interests and ensure that their voices are heard in discussions that have to do with international migration. Member States have a responsibility to listen to their voices. Mexico has included youth as part of its delegation, so that they can share practices and learn from others, hoping that their experience will contribute to policy development back home.



59 Ministra de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, Plan Nacional de Movilidad Humana, available at [www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/plan\\_nacional\\_de\\_movilidad\\_humana.pdf](http://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/plan_nacional_de_movilidad_humana.pdf).

60 Refugees International, Quito III: What Regional Governments Must Do to Help Displaced Venezuelans, available at [www.refugeesinternational.org/reports/2019/4/5/quito-iii-what-governments-must-do-to-help-displaced-venezuelans](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports/2019/4/5/quito-iii-what-governments-must-do-to-help-displaced-venezuelans) (accessed 2 December 2019).

The African Union Youth Envoy stressed the fact that “Youth Transforming Africa” is not a potential anymore but a reality. “It may not be as visible, but young people are leading change in the continent. They are leading the tax solutions, they are digitalizing institutions, they are changing the landscape in Africa, not only demographically but also politically and economically.”<sup>61</sup>

There are several examples, but most probably the leading African Youth Charter,<sup>62</sup> adopted by the African Union In 2006, is one of the most visible tools. It is a political and legal document that supports policies and programmes focused on young people and serves as a framework for youth, while also being an important and progressive document that was co-designed by young people.

The African Union Agenda 2063 is also a progressive document that is “people-driven”, especially by women and youth. The next challenge is to involve young people in the formulation of policies related to migration, considering their diversity, to be co-designers of their own future and to have a say on things that affect them.

In addition, the African Union Youth Envoy emphasized the importance of change in the political discourse from “the negative statistics the youth Africans or negative perceptions regarding violence or radicalization or extremism show another face of youth as leading change, as part of the solution, not the problem, and as a first step to empower youth, thus creating opportunities, not only looking for them... If we change the discourse, we can empower them to do more.”

It is not possible to talk in the abstract about youth migration because their experiences, access and potential places are very different, depending on the context that they arrive to or that they return to.

Youth activism, despite facing many challenges, has proven to be a catalyst for reforms and changes in access to education and the right to an identification document, as is the case of the United States, with undocumented migrants’ rise as immigrants as an example.

Ms Alexandra Délano Alonso, Associate Professor and Chair of Global Studies, New School in the United States, shared the outcomes of her

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61 African Union, Youth Division, available at <https://au.int/en/youth-division> (accessed 2 December 2019).

62 Available at <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-youth-charter> (accessed 2 December 2019).

publication *From here and there: Diaspora policies, integration, and social rights beyond borders*.<sup>63</sup> It is a research project with youth migrants in the United States, particularly undocumented youth, some of whom are active in organizing around equal access to education, such as the DREAM Act, and other rights, such as access to driver's licenses. Other experiences are taken from the context of deportation of youth or return to their countries of origin, particularly Mexico and, where their experiences of discrimination are present, back in the country of origin.

Ms Délano Alonso claimed the importance of having a youth-centred approach that considers the entire migration process as well as the conditions for expulsion, deportation, return and reintegration. Visualizing the entire process, it is possible to understand that, and she says, "the same migrant that at a moment is seen as part of the youth diaspora can then be a returned migrant". Even if the needs may change, the process of integration, inclusion and equal opportunities needs to happen across borders. Some of her recommendations to address these issues include the following:

- (a) Establishing connections transnationally among governments, civil society and international institutions can contribute to the process of integration.
- (b) Youth need to be supported to create spaces of their own, since it should be a two-way process. Also, youth should define what they mean by integration/inclusion to provide their own perspective.
- (c) Building broader agendas that include several actors and establish a dialogue and horizontal partnerships. They achieve more when they feel they are equal partners, shaping and building the agenda together with government officials, NGOs, scholars and the private sector.
- (d) Listen to them not only during design, of policies but also during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- (e) Involving non-migrant youth is also central. It is essential to consider key issues such as access to education, health and support structures that cover mental health issues; but also including migrant youth in schools and work environments in their communities.

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63 A. Délano Alonso, *From Here and There: Diaspora Policies, Integration, and Social Rights Beyond Borders* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2018).



**From Here and There:  
diaspora policies,  
integration, and social  
rights beyond borders**



Alexandra  
Delano Alonso  
**From Here and There**

In order to protect the rights of precarious status migrants in the United States, Mexico and other Latin American countries of origin are increasingly taking part in the provision of education, health care and English language instruction through their consular representations.

As an area of migration governance that is rarely discussed, this book offers a critical evaluation of these programmes and their impact on emigrants, particularly on those who are undocumented or have precarious legal status, and the collaborations between governments and civil society groups on which the programmes are based.



- (f) Generate intergenerational partnerships with migrants' leaders. Recurring is the idea that the same young person that in one moment is part of the diaspora can be a returned migrant in the next. This reflection needs to be addressed considering not only the first generation of migrants but also for second and third generations.

In line with the recommendations made by Ms Délano Alonso, the EU in 2017 launched the Young Mediterranean Voices Initiative,<sup>64</sup> another example of how youth from all over the Mediterranean has helped to shape the programme with inputs, analysis and ideas to help develop the European policies and design the programmes. They have become a de facto informal consultative body, with migration being one of their key areas.

Recognizing the positive economic, social and cultural contributions made by migrants both in countries of origin and destination, Panama

<sup>64</sup> EU Neighbours, "EU-supported Young Mediterranean Voices programme launches national dialogue forums in 8 Southern Mediterranean countries", available at [www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/eu-supported-young-mediterranean-voices-programme-launches-national](http://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/eu-supported-young-mediterranean-voices-programme-launches-national) (accessed 2 December 2019).

has also launched the Strategic Young People's Plan,<sup>65</sup> specifically crafted to guarantee greater participation of young people in prevention and security with the support of non-traditional actors, civil society and private sector, to motivate and involve young leaders.

Part of the support for inclusion may include the promotion of cultural diversity in host societies, supporting social inclusion of newcomers (including language acquisition, equal access to services and exercise of rights), promoting dialogue at the community level, while combatting xenophobia and discrimination.

Reviving the issue of vulnerabilities, UN-Women stressed the fact that young migrant women should not be talked about but rather included in the discussions, their stories should be heard and their voices and experiences learned from: "Putting in place gender responsive migratory laws, policies, regulations and programmes that address gender related dimensions of migration, to respond and protect their vulnerabilities."<sup>66</sup>

Equally, the 2015 World Humanitarian Summit evidenced the fact that youth is one group that is often mentioned but most of the time not present in the discussions. Ways for engaging youth were underlined by the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action and were presented by Nina Birkeland, Advisor, Disaster Displacement and Climate change at the Norwegian Refugee Council. These ways of engagement were summarized in five principles:

- (a) Youth as a positive asset (such as pushing governments to act);
- (b) Requires meaningful participation (not enough to symbolically include youth);
- (c) Give away real power to them (older people must give away some of their power to the youth);
- (d) Maintain solidarity; and
- (e) Maintain a real commitment.

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65 Panama, "Gobierno presenta Plan Estratégico Interinstitucional de Juventudes", available at [www.mides.gob.pa/gobierno-presenta-plan-estrategico-interinstitucional-de-juventudes/](http://www.mides.gob.pa/gobierno-presenta-plan-estrategico-interinstitucional-de-juventudes/) (accessed 2 December 2019).

66 UN-Women, "Making Gender-Responsive Migration Laws", available at [www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/policy-brief-making-gender-responsive-migration-laws-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5143](http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/policy-brief-making-gender-responsive-migration-laws-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5143) (accessed 2 December 2019).

## Foster participation

Fostering migrant youth and adolescent participation in the communities of destination, and in policymaking processes, is crucial to protect their rights, supports their integration and promotes social cohesion. It is important to use the knowledge, dynamism, innovative ideas and expertise of young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies.

The active participation of youth in policy dialogue – on topics such as good governance, social justice, inclusion and social cohesion – has proven to be key for the identification of long-standing and sustainable solutions. Several examples show how involving youth in policymaking provides a more inclusive, integrated and innovative approach.

Many voices claimed the need to establish and build the capacity of youth organizations to ensure that young migrants are not in isolation, that they have access to work and/or advocacy, and that they are included and listened to.

The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council<sup>67</sup> is a good example led by the City of Hamilton in Canada, created to facilitate community partnerships for collective efforts of young migrants and hosting communities in support of the delivery of services to newcomers and immigrants. The vision of the Council acknowledges that newcomers and immigrants are supported through strong community partnerships that foster responsive, welcoming and inclusive communities, as well as establishing continuous ways for knowledge sharing.

The Hamilton Partnership has influenced policies and decisions through an evidenced-based approach, incorporating the input of immigrants and newcomers, including migrant youth. One of the learning considerations of this Partnership is that discussing youth migration with members of other diasporas strengthens their feeling of inclusion in the country of reception.

## Enable cooperation and innovation

Enabling an environment that promotes cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination can include better collection of data

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67 Available at [www.hamiltonimmigration.ca](http://www.hamiltonimmigration.ca) (accessed 2 December 2019).

and statistics, the creation of platforms that connect skilled migrants with those who require help, as well as the recognition of qualifications, skills development or networking.

One example of cooperation is the continental strategy launched by the African Union in April 2019 called the “1 million by 2021 initiative,”<sup>68</sup> which aims to direct investment towards millions of African youth in the areas of employment, entrepreneurship, education and engagement, through leveraging partnerships and private sector opportunities.

ILO, on the other hand, promotes the development of start-ups and the establishment of internships and apprenticeships to nurture leadership skills in young people. Promoting and encouraging young migrants’ active involvement as social innovators and social entrepreneurs can help increase investment and programmes that promote entrepreneurship and innovation among youth.

Côte d’Ivoire, for example, is encouraging the return of young migrants, and is aware of the potential contributions these migrants can have on the country. Some youth are taking key jobs in the Government to position the country with new ideas and innovative approaches. The Government has signed an agreement with the African Solidarity Trust Fund<sup>69</sup> to support the financial requirements that youth may have in their return and restarting their lives.

## Youth in cities and rural areas

Concerning SDG 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), UN-Habitat emphasized the fact that integration takes place mainly in cities, where local authorities have a key role in creating spaces of social cohesion and supporting youth entrepreneurship. This support could be provided by identifying ways in which young migrants can be partners in migration governance, addressing youth-specific challenges, and empowering them to have greater influence in designing policies that address their lives. This implies increasing the capacity of local authorities to engage youth.

On the contrary, rural areas are facing the exodus of their youth, leaving behind empty fields. In this sense, at the New York session,

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68 Available at <https://auyouthenvoy.org/1mby2021/> (accessed 2 December 2019).

69 Available at [www.fao.org/africa-solidarity-trust-fund/en/](http://www.fao.org/africa-solidarity-trust-fund/en/) (accessed 2 December 2019).

the Senegalese representative shared the initiative developed by the Government with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) support to engage Senegalese youth in agriculture through more quality employment opportunities for rural youth. The goal is to create community agriculture and make sure that youth returns to the land in a country that is heavily dependent on agriculture. The idea is that youth find options at home and migration becomes a choice, not an obligation.<sup>70</sup>

As result of this initiative, Senagriculture was born, and has become a reference portal for agrobusiness in the region and a successful experience linking the diaspora.

### **Address environmental challenges**

Interventions from Togo, Gambia, Costa Rica, Zimbabwe, Mali and the International Catholic Migration Commission, also focused on best practices and challenges when dealing with the exodus of young people, especially of rural areas, due to climate change, and strategies to encourage youth to stay and become engaged in agriculture. Migration is one strategy used to increase livelihoods and reduce risks in the Western Sahel, particularly considering uncertain agricultural returns.

Research has highlighted the interconnections between, on the one hand, impacts of climate change on natural resource-dependent livelihoods and food insecurity, and on the other hand, tensions, conflicts and mobility.

Environmental challenges including degradation and natural disasters are two often overlooked factors that contribute to human displacement and migration. Complex and interconnected environmental changes – such as droughts and floods, overexploitation of resources and climate change – are also contributing factors to rural–urban and cyclical mobility within countries and across borders in the region.

While the climate crisis is a global issue and it affects everyone, it has a greater impact on those most vulnerable within communities: women, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and the poor.

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70 Available at [www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/detail/ar/c/1120663/](http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/detail/ar/c/1120663/) (accessed 2 December 2019).

Many participants concurred on the importance of involving youth in disaster risk reduction activities and increasing awareness among the youth population in vulnerable communities. Examples of supporting capacity-building include IOM's school-based programmes' aim at building capacity and raising awareness on disaster risk reduction issues (Sierra Leone) and disaster drills (Timor-Leste and Myanmar). IOM's Climate Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction and Education (CADRE) programme integrates disaster risk reduction within school curricula (Federated States of Micronesia).

This is certainly an area of special interest for youth. The Swedish teen Greta Thunberg is probably one of the faces better known in the fight against climate change and for starting the Fridays for Future school walkouts that have spread around the globe. Her message to other youth is: "I don't want you to feel hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear. Feel it every day and then, I want you to act."

Southern Asian populations and Pacific Island communities are particularly vulnerable to slow-onset and rapid-onset disasters related to natural hazards and climate change. However, these are communities that lack access to and control over resources, power and knowledge, while three out of four people living in these areas rely on agricultural and natural resources for survival.

The Asia and the Pacific region have over 1 billion young people 10–24 years of age, constituting more than half of the global youth population. They need to participate in disaster risk reduction through policy making, advocacy and protests to help our vulnerable communities reduce their disaster risks.

Efforts must be made to include more youth-centred approaches at combating climate change, putting youth at the centre of the advocacy process; engaging young people; and empowering young people in the policymaking realm to enhance better understanding, planning and coordination at local, regional and international levels.

Pacific communities have displayed greater innovation and resilience to disaster impacts, and this resilience is evident in youth involvement, demonstrating greater ability of Pacific Islanders to bounce back following disasters.

Zakiyyah Ali, a University of South Pacific student and climate change activist, highlights what in her view are key recommendations for governments:

- (a) Establish dialogue and knowledge sharing spaces, as they are often constrained between those who face risks and those who control policy.
- (b) Involve youth at the centre of discussions and policy development. Young people must be empowered to make sound decisions through representation and inclusion.
- (c) Involve youth while building resilience to climate change impacts on local communities.
- (d) The power of collective action only occurs through thoughtful engagement, patience, understanding and listening to the needs of the affected communities.
- (e) Involving the youth perspective will contribute to achieving climate justice and equity, enabling youth – particularly women and girls – to increase their resilience and become positive agents of transformation.

As the saying goes, according to Zakiyyah, “We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

“It is our generation, and those that follow, that will be living with the consequences of our actions and inaction. Today, our very existence in the Pacific is threatened. Driven by the fact that younger generations have everything to lose, we demand a more equitable and just world.”



Ms Zakiyyah Ali, a student at the University of South Pacific and climate change advocate, has participated in several projects to raise awareness and find solutions towards the environmental challenges in the Pacific.

As a member of the Project Survival Partnership (PSP), her role is to work with the PSP co-coordinators, secretariat team and youth members to act as educators in public outreach efforts. She also represented PSP at a World Bank-organized Future Pasifika panel on Healthy Oceans held at the University of South Pacific.

Zakiyyah has interned at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and was a youth speaker at the inaugural Pacific Resilience Meeting. She was also on the youth panel dialogue with the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to highlight the inclusion of women and youth in climate policy spaces.

She advocates for holistic responses such as the one carried out in a small Fijian village called Nokonoko, which suffered the effect of Tropical Cyclone Winston. One reason why this village was called “a shining example for the Red Cross in the Pacific” is due to the resilience displayed by its young people deployed as first responders at the forefront of disaster management.

Zakiyyah maintains that providing more involvement of youth brings greater innovation. Their meaningful involvement is linked to their desperation to defend future rights for a clean and healthy planet. “That is what our youth vision of development for the Pacific is, one that is sustainable and resilient,” she claims.





**Mr Ibrahim Faye**, CEO and Founder of **Senagriculture**, is focused on developing a new way of using Agriculture in Senegal and the region, to help young people be resilient in face of climate change.

Ibrahim returned to Senegal after living in Canada and discovered a modern way to deal with agriculture where young people can become empowered, interested and have access to modern system.

Upon his return, he founded Senagriculture, a web platform that offers alternatives to the agriculture and sustainable livestock providing a different perspective. It also offers training and helps communities replicate the learning. It helps raise interest in young people for agriculture, moving away from its former image of being a vulnerable sector. The platform has a journalist dedicated to writing articles on agriculture, providing linkages with different researchers that contribute to creating a different type of employment and positions for young people, getting involved in the entire value change path.

Senagriculture works closely with community leaders and religious leaders to ensure access to lands in a self-financing system developed

“ We do need young people to participate, increase awareness, involve the diaspora, leverage the knowledge and ensure that young farmers have access to key info, and they can learn and share their concerns.

through partners, local and international entities, engaging with migrants from Canada and Europe, using their own networks and enlarging locally, telling their stories and sharing experiences with young nationals in-country.

Two main reasons for its success are:

- The use of technology to promote agriculture to youth and offering a bridge between the rural supply and urban demand.
- Engaging the Senegalese diaspora to help fight unemployment. This is done through communication, training and assistance working alongside young people to promote entrepreneurship.

In the agriculture sector, technology and innovation play a key role. Reaching out and engaging with the diaspora and youth from other parts are important to establish linkages and increase awareness about the agriculture business, and where to find partnerships for export. As part of the community efforts, the site offers applications that can be used in the entire Western Africa, targeting young people to be entrepreneurs in this area. The site also offers meteorology in various languages and dialects to help them know in advance what is coming.

According to Faye, one of the learning outcomes of this experience is that, to engage young people, it is important to use their channels of communication, show them a modern agriculture that can be of interest to them, teach them the entire process, and offer potential positions that may go from producing to the value chain and, assist them with funding.

In order to face the challenges to access funding for young people, Senegal has implemented a project of sharing the wealth, where local people invest in a participatory shareholder system of funding that also supports students to finalize their studies in related areas. The profits are shared with the community.

Considering that the impact of climate change on young people in Africa is the first reason for displacement after wars, Faye stresses the importance of governments taking radical measures of response, such as supporting marketing and distribution of local products over imported products, promoting return and providing sufficient support to start a new activity related to agriculture.



Meaningful and active cooperation with youth



To achieve the 2030 Agenda, meaningful and active participation of youth is required


**1**



**YOUTH-CENTRED APPROACH**

Maintain a youth-centred approach that considers the entire migration process and conditions for expulsion, deportation, return and reintegration needs

**2**



**YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS**

Establish and build youth organizations' capacity to ensure young migrants are not in isolation

Fostering migrant youth and adolescent participation in policymaking is crucial to protecting their rights, to integration and to social cohesion

**3**



**POLICY MAKING**

Encourage young migrants' involvement as social innovators and entrepreneurs by increasing investment and promotion

**4**



**INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**5**



**POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Use youth innovative ideas in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies

**6**



**DECENT WORK**

Encourage decent work through advocacy, dissemination, policy, technical advice and capacity-building

Focus on cities, where most integration happens and rural areas that face the exodus

**7**



**EXODUS AND INTEGRATION**

**8**



**RESILIENCE BUILDING**

Build resilience to climate change impacts on local communities with diaspora engagement


**9**



**EQUITY**

Youth involvement requires justice and equity for most vulnerable, increasing their resilience

**10**



**COLLECTIVE ACTIONS**

Collective actions require thoughtful engagement, patience, understanding and listening to the needs of the affected communities

## 6. HOW TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CAN SUPPORT YOUTH AND MIGRATION

The world is transforming at an accelerated rate; labour markets are shifting with the impact of new technologies and demands; communities are managing rapid population turnover; and external shocks – from conflict, instability, natural disaster or slow-onset climate change – are ever more frequent.

Technology has entered our lives as a global disruptive force that provides many challenges and opportunities. The fifth generation of mobile technologies – 5G – is expected to connect people, things, data, applications, transport systems and cities in smart networked communication environments. It should transport a huge amount of data much faster, reliably connect an extremely large number of devices and process very high volumes of data with minimal delay.

With the intensification and globalization of technology arise many challenges, such as inequality and gaps among countries and societies; a negative rhetoric around minorities and migrants, intensified by social media that promote hate speech and xenophobia; or the trend towards the automatization that may replace traditional low-skilled jobs with robots and therefore challenge the future of work for many.

On the other hand, technology comes with many opportunities, offering alternatives and enhancements in education, social connection, networking, market expansion and development. In fact, the digital connectivity offered by mobile phones affects every aspect of migration: it provides access to information pre-migration, during journeys and in destination countries; facilitates remittances; and helps migrants stay connected to families.

In countries of destination, youth migrants can contribute to their development by bridging their needs with available learning, networks

or skills development. Young migrants can find in technology a means to connect and integrate. In countries of origin, technology offers the possibility of accessing knowledge and skills relevant to the local industry and not available in the country, and it opens opportunities for engagement in the global community, contributing to finding innovative solutions for development and responding to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Technology as digital enabler

In both the New York and Geneva sessions, technology was emphasized as a digital enabler. Some voices reacted to the fact that access and digitalization skills are not equally available to everyone. In fact, that inequality, as Ms Daniela Bas (UN DESA) emphasized, does not only happen in between countries, some living in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (technology) while others are still on the Second (agriculture); it also happens within the same country living in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

“These differences create a huge gap, where the victims are often the youth population,” according to the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh and current chair of the platform on disaster displacement, Shahidul Haque.

Similarly, the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Houlin Zhao, insisted on the fact that nearly half of the world’s population is not yet connected to the Internet. Increasing connectivity is a requirement to ensure integration of youth in the global sphere. Standardization of digital and financial services is also a must. Zhao stressed the fact that new technological challenges bring responsibilities that require multi-stakeholder discussions on how to proceed and engage with artificial intelligence in the future, thus guaranteeing the necessary efforts to ensure that no one is left behind as technology advances.

New technologies bring new opportunities and possibilities, and as such they are reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. SDG 17 sets a number of targets related to technology transfer, investment and trade aimed at encouraging greater investment in developing countries in ways that promote sustainable development.<sup>71</sup>

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71 United Nations, World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (New York, United Nations, 2017), available at [www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf](http://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf).

Technology provides access and understanding, contributes to breaking models, challenging narratives, enhancing education and building skills; it can be an enabler for child and youth integration as well as a contributor to innovation, connecting countries of origin and destination, breaking models with unique solutions.

## Understand, challenge and learn

Technology provides numerous opportunities to access data and understand movements through traditional and non-traditional sources.

The GMDAC–IOM-led platform<sup>72</sup> offers an integrated approach on migration data. GMDAC was set up to respond to calls for better international migration data and analysis, aware that timely data on migration are often scarce, making it difficult for decision makers to develop effective policies.

Efforts to benefit from technology have also led organizations in the search for non-traditional sources. The Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography, part of the Joint Research Centre at the European Commission,<sup>73</sup> has made use of big data, such as the use of mobile phones vis-à-vis segregation in cities; LinkedIn data for analysing the educational attainment of recently arrived migrants; air passenger data for analysing mobility and its nexus with migration and visa policies; or Facebook data to anticipate and complement official statistics on stocks of migrants. Social media data – in their view – provide insights into socioeconomic indicators that are not collected by statistical offices, including personal interests, skills, educational attainment, and sector of employment – information that can be used as an early warning indicator for a range of public policies.

The use of non-traditional sources is still in its early stages and faces many challenges regarding ownership, sustainability and costs; however, the interest exists.

In line with these efforts, the International Forum on Migration Statistics – a global platform devoted to improving data on migration in all its dimensions, and organized by IOM, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and UN DESA – on its second big

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72 Available at <https://gmdac.iom.int> (accessed 1 December 2019).

73 Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/organisation/kcmd-knowledge-centre-migration-demography\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/organisation/kcmd-knowledge-centre-migration-demography_en) (accessed 1 December 2019).

event, which will happen in Egypt by the end of January 2020, expects to explore innovative ways to measure population mobility and to generate timely statistics. Its multidisciplinary approach includes experts on statistics, economics, demography, sociology, geospatial science and information technology.<sup>74</sup>

Access to data, whether from traditional or non-traditional sources, is nevertheless a requirement for evidenced-based decisions, and becomes even more relevant when dealing with vulnerable populations, as they give visibility to those more in need. Data disaggregation, as one of UNICEF's recommendations in the development of Right to Be Heard,<sup>75</sup> gives visibility to the specific needs of women and girls. The IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)<sup>76</sup> and the Mixed Migration Hub<sup>77</sup> are other examples of data collaboration to identify needs for the most vulnerable.

Technology is used – for good or ill – in migration administration and management by public authorities. Governments rely heavily on technology for migrants' processing status, to regulate border crossings, to ensure passage and settlement of migrants and refugees. Biometric technologies are one of the main technologies used. They provide full respect to applicable privacy and personal data protection legislation, and can be an effective tool for enhancing migration management and empowering migrants.

The use of automated recognition of individuals based on physical and behavioural characteristics improves the reliability of verification. Delivering efficient and swift protection or assistance to beneficiaries often relies on the ability to identify individuals and to prevent irregularities regarding their identity. The use of biometrics in registration processes can help to collect data to identify vulnerable individuals who may require additional assistance. Biometrics is also of great importance to facilitate and expedite regular and safe cross-border mobility, and its responsible use enhances security in migration and border management processes.

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74 International Forum on Migration Statistics, Second Conference: Egypt 2020, available at <https://gmdac.iom.int/iom-oecd-undesa-organise-second-international-forum-migration-statistics> (accessed 1 December 2019).

75 UNICEF, *A Right To Be Heard: Listening to Children and Young People on the Move* (New York, 2018), available at [www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_103433.html](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_103433.html) (accessed 1 December 2019).

76 Available at <https://displacement.iom.int> (accessed 1 December 2019).

77 Mixed Migration Hub, available at [www.mixedmigrationhub.org](http://www.mixedmigrationhub.org) (accessed 1 December 2019).



Syrian refugees undergoing biometric registration by Canadian officials as part of their application process to resettle in Canada. ©IOM 2016/Muse MOHAMMED

## Challenge realities

Technology has become a revolution in terms of democratizing the access to data, yet reality shows that social media contribute to a discourse of hate against minorities and migrants. The amount of misinformation disseminated through social media contributes to the polarization that is evidenced by the link to violent attacks.

In his research on *Fanning the Flames of Hate: Social Media and Hate Crime*, Carlo Rasmus Schwarz, from the University of Warwick,<sup>78</sup> explains how the echo chambers in social media contribute to radicalized youth, as ideas are not challenged by anyone, thus contributing to further shifts into their extreme rhetoric, leading to increased violent actions. In his view, to be able to address these issues with an effective strategy, it is essential to include solutions that target both online and offline realities.

Storytelling or data researches, like the *African Migration Report*, are ways to challenge misperceptions and break barriers. Storytelling by giving voices to migrants through social media has also been an additional positive aspect to engage youth by shaping perspectives, bridging

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78 C.S. Schwarz and K. Müller, "Fanning the Flames of Hate: Social Media and Hate Crime" (University of Warwick, 19 February 2018), available at <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/crschwarz/fanning-flames-hate.pdf>.



cultures by identifying simple issues that are common to all, such as the sadness for a grandmother passing away, as explained by Nadir Nahdi, founder of BENI.

BENI<sup>79</sup> is a storytelling platform on YouTube created with the aim of turning social influence into substance, inspiration and adventure. BENI promotes multiculturalism by engaging on the daily life of migrant youth. BENI has more than 1.7 million users, and is also a remarkable experience to fight echo chambers and engage with second- and third-generation migrants.

## Education and skills development

The role of technology has defined the acceleration of education like other industries and sectors. In research carried out by UNICEF on *Raising Learning Outcomes: The opportunities and challenges of ICT for learning*,<sup>80</sup> the organization advocates for the use of ICT for education policies, and should first focus on the poorest and most marginalized.

The World Youth Report<sup>81</sup> also makes use of the need to focus the technology on special learning programmes for those with more difficult access. An example of this is the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) project that seeks to increase girls' capacity to aspire and engage on sciences.

According to UNESCO, access to specific learning, scholarships or capacity-building is more accessible, thanks to technology. By 2020, the number of scholarships will substantially expand to developing countries, with focus mainly on higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology (ICT), technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.

In the context of the AU–EU Alliance, many commitments have been made to developing legal paths that allow students the exchange and recognition of qualifications in pilot projects, such as Lithuania–Nigeria

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79 BENI, available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=tt7\\_YyRyyH8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tt7_YyRyyH8) (accessed 2 December 2019).

80 UNICEF, *Raising Learning Outcomes: the opportunities and challenges of ICT for learning*, available at [www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF-AKF-IU-2018-ICT-Education-WCAR-ESAR.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF-AKF-IU-2018-ICT-Education-WCAR-ESAR.pdf).

81 United Nations, *World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (New York, United Nations, 2017), available at [www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf](http://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/WorldYouthReport-2030Agenda.pdf).

in the ICT sector; Belgium or Spain with Morocco; and France with Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia. The Erasmus Plus is another example opened to students and organizations outside the EU. The Alliance has committed scholarships to 35,000 African students by 2020, while more than 4,000 senior researchers are at African universities. The AU–EU Alliance has also created the role of Youth Guarantee, to ensure that those who fail the education system can find a way out, by developing skills profiles.

According to UNICEF, “digital technology has increased learning opportunities in a manner never known before, including the promise of online training opportunities and job-matching services. Benefits of the digital age are hardly equally shared, however. About 29 per cent of young people (15–24 years of age) worldwide – around 346 million people – are not online. Digital divides mirror prevailing economic gaps, amplifying advantages for wealthier children and failing to deliver opportunities to the poorest. African youth are the least connected, for example. Around 60 per cent are not online, compared with just 4 per cent in Europe. Since digital access and literacy are increasingly becoming determinants of equal opportunity, they are vital for all children, adolescents and young people, no matter where they live. For those without formal education, online learning opportunities, particularly in non-formal contexts such as vocational training centres, represent a chance to learn ICT skills. For some, it may be the only chance they get to engage with ICT at all.<sup>82</sup>

Data protection remains a challenge, but trust in the technology and safety also requires more awareness of digital skills.

## Child and youth integration

The support that technology offers starts before the journeys by raising awareness on regular pathways to migration. Ms Natalia Alvarez, Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Security of the Social Area from Costa Rica, explained how the country has established a call centre that provides information to people who want to migrate, and supports those in transit. It also promotes applications such as MigApp,<sup>83</sup> to gather the necessary information in preparation for the travel.

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82 UNICEF, The future of learning, available at <https://blogs.unicef.org/blog/future-of-learning/> (accessed 2 December 2019).

83 MigApp, available at [www.iom.int/migapp](http://www.iom.int/migapp) (accessed 2 December 2019).

Technology can be a great ally for adaptation and integration. As the ITU Secretary-General stated, “Technology helps young people with adaptation to new places and helps them achieve better opportunities.”

An important part of the adaptation for children and youth migrants is contacts, establishing a network that can support them. In this sense, the Migrant Forum in Asia<sup>84</sup> has developed networks that operate at the local level and focus on the well-being of the young migrants and their social inclusion. Community engagement helps establish bonds and connections while also challenging echo chambers.

Platforms such as RIO (Refugee Integration Organization in Ghana) show how South–South cooperation can establish linkages by learning new skills and transferring knowledge in relevant local industries while assisting in the integration.

From the RIO experience, some recommendations were made to support the integration of migrants:

- (a) Facilitate the access to technology to migrants so they can get in touch with their countries of origin;
- (b) Promote the importance of engaging with the society as an active member, which has a positive impact;
- (c) Encourage positive narratives based on the stories they know and their contributions to their communities.

The migration aspect also has an impact on the way technology is used by the youth migrant. Migrants and diaspora are an important channel for transferring technology from destination countries back to origin countries. This may be through knowledge sharing, sending remittances, investing in their countries of origin, and supporting business development or research institutions. Lebanon–Connect or Tunisians Living Abroad are some platforms shared among nationals and the diaspora that help build skills, share know-how and create connections, investments and markets.

Other migrants utilize the technology to directly serve their products, engaging communities of origin and destination, such as Thank God It's Fair Wear (TGIFW).<sup>85</sup>

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84 Migrant Forum in Asia, available at <https://mfasia.org> (accessed 26 November 2019).

85 Available at [www.tgifw.com/en/](http://www.tgifw.com/en/) (accessed 2 December 2019).

When it comes to remittances, technologies such as blockchain have made the process cheaper and faster than it has ever been.

## **Innovation to face new challenges**

Many participants to the sessions raised the importance of involving youth migrants to identify innovative solutions in destination countries on areas that affect them. This may include housing or labour, but also climate change, contribution in the future of work or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

At the Youth and Leaders' Summit<sup>86</sup> of 2019 that took place at Sciences Po University in Paris, discussions took place about the benefits and challenges posed by new technology to health care, climate change and democracy. It was evident that, to identify innovative responses, there was a need to develop a collective, inclusive effort across the generations, listening to the voices of young people who were “digital natives”, but also drawing on the experiences of those who came of age in the “analogue world”.

In line with this approach, UN-Habitat stressed the importance of involving young people in the future development of urban areas, as they are part of the environment they live in. This, in exchange, contributes to their integration. UN-Habitat also invests by providing training modules for entrepreneurship, life skills and vocational training to youth directly, while increasing the capacity of local authorities to integrate youth, working on housing, governance structures and participatory planning situations.

UN-Habitat's strategic plan (2020–2025) outcomes 4.1 and 4.2 respond to increasing demands from cities to support the realization of positive impacts of migration, and from United Nations sister agencies to support urban solutions for displacement. The organization is currently in the process of formulating a global flagship initiative to support migration and inclusive cities.

Fostering economic growth and broad market development, target 8.1 focuses on sustainable per capita growth, with a specific goal of at least 7 per cent GDP growth in the least developed countries, while target 8.2 relates to fostering increased productivity through economic diversification, technology development and innovation.

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86 Available at [www.theelders.org/news/new-technology-disruptive-global-force](http://www.theelders.org/news/new-technology-disruptive-global-force) (accessed 2 December 2019).

Contributions to technological innovation and research may come from highly-skilled migrants. But diaspora can also contribute to issues such as rural exodus or climate change in countries of origin. An example of this is Senagriculture.<sup>87</sup>

## The future of work

Youth needs to integrate and contribute to the future of globalization as empowered actors and future employees. The new challenges demand a structure of a more globalized labour market. Youth need to develop diverse and recognized skills and knowledge before joining the workforce, thus contributing to SDG 8 (Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all) and SDG 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation).

ILO has a long-standing commitment to promote decent work for youth through advocacy, knowledge development and dissemination, policy, technical advice and capacity-building. Youth employment<sup>88</sup> is a very serious concern, as it is likely to increase the pressure on youth unemployment over the coming years.

The world economy – as presented by ILO – is characterized by rapid globalization, advancements in technology and industrial development, with significant implications in the nature of work and the relationship between employers and employees. Digitalization of the labour market consequently impacts on youth.

As stated by Ms Maria Prieto, Future of Work Specialist at ILO, “new opportunities have opened for young people as employees and entrepreneurs, but the guarantee of lifelong employment with a company is no longer a reality. This offers youth more flexibility in exploring a wide range of career possibilities but increases the need for continuous skills investment and strategic planning to ensure economic security in retirement.”

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87 Senagriculture, available at [www.senagriculture.com](http://www.senagriculture.com) (accessed 2 December 2019).

88 ILO, “Youth Employment and the ILO”, available at [www.ilo.org/youthmakingithappen/YE\\_ILO/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/youthmakingithappen/YE_ILO/index.htm) (accessed 2 December 2019).

The impact changes from country to country, and from region to region. There is no one-size-fits-all, but the Future of Work Initiative<sup>89</sup> created a commission of high-level experts that has developed 10 recommendations for a human-centred agenda. Among the recommendations are:

- (a) Strengthen the capacities of the individual (allow skills development with an approach toward lifelong learning that help adapting to the demands of labour);
- (b) Social protection should maintain respect to fundamental rights of all workers, such as timing, safety or health care;
- (c) Encourage economies that can create an environment that allows the creation of new jobs or employment growth and collaboration;
- (d) Investment on infrastructure, facilitation of transiting from informal to formal economy; and
- (e) Promote data protection.

In her presentation, Ms Prieto stressed the importance of considering several drivers together: how technology influences the future, climate change, demography and globalization. This also includes the tendency towards protectionism as opposed to globalization; how jobs will be destroyed by the automation and the presence of robots; how environment and climate change can influence the way we work and produce; and how migration happens.

Ms Joanna Naprierala, Policy Analyst of the Joint Research Centre at the European Commission, has participated in research on the *Changing nature of work and skills in the digital age*,<sup>90</sup> which analyses the relationship between the digital age and the nature of work.

The research shows how highly-skilled workers have a significant impact on innovation and research and development activities in destination countries if adequate migration policies are in place. There is an association between higher rates of ageing and higher rates of automation, but there are also customers' preferences, such as in the care sector.

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89 The Future of Work Initiative, available at [www.ilo.org/global/topics/future-of-work/brighter-future/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/future-of-work/brighter-future/lang--en/index.htm) (accessed 2 December 2019).

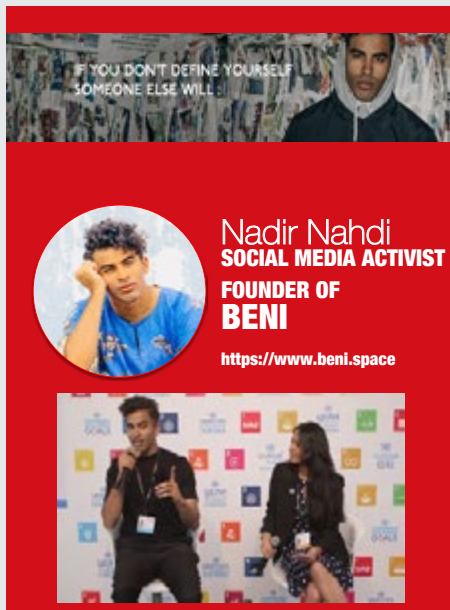
90 J. Naprierala, Flagship report on Changing nature of work and skills in the digital age (Joint Research Centre, European Commission, 2019), available at <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/changing-nature-work-and-skills-digital-age> (accessed 2 December 2019).

Additionally, the change in demand for skills requires a moderate level of digital skills and strong non-cognitive skills for most jobs in the future. Technology is a key driver of new forms of work with self-employment among them. Being entrepreneurial is a generic capacity to act upon ideas and opportunities to generate social, economic and cultural value.

Migrants would be among those most affected by the changes. Promoting the development of tools and skills learning (both soft and hard skills) will contribute to effective youth matching. Singapore is an example of facilitating skills recognition from country of origin, transit and destination.

Promoting “lifelong learning” and the use of technology can contribute to developing sustainable environments. Education should evolve from just transmitting knowledge to enabling individuals to participate fully in society, to gain a sense of belonging and well-being over the course of a lifespan, developing resilience, creativity and open-mindedness. And overall, it needs greater cooperation between governments, education system institutions and employers.

### **BENI a YouTube channel created for change**



BENI is a storytelling platform born with the aim of turning social influence into substance, inspiration and adventure. We find people whose stories you don't often hear and collaborate with like-minded others from a variety of backgrounds. Our goal is to draw from our heritage but create a cultural space that is entirely new.

Mr Nadir Nahdi, a content creator and producer, is the founder of BENI, a YouTube channel that was born to tell stories of young migrants who maintain their own cultures while adapting to the hosting one.

The site was created to respond the question that many young migrants ask themselves: "Who Am I?" It is intended to respond Nadir's feeling of belonging to one or the other culture, and how young people like himself are negotiating their identities. Whether

cultural or spiritual, traditions clash with the young generations' attitudes. Nadir travels and seeks to discover the new youth culture that is emerging, in the hope he can find the place he belongs (© presentation website).

As he embarked on this adventure, Nadir found that social media were full of hate messages about migrants and made him realized how dangerous social media could be. However, he soon realized that confronting those negative messages with positive stories would have a more positive impact.

And in fact, the site has reached 1.7 million users, involving not just young migrants but also second- and third-generation migrants and other youth. Storytelling can be very useful in shaping identity and self-perception, and bridge communities through common feelings like "the love for a Grandma".



“

The question is, how can we work to create projects that utilize the creativity of the influencer and at the same time fall in line with issues of validity of information and protect the people with whom such content deals?

When we provide a platform to young people, they start conversations not from the lowest denominator (of their suffering) but from the essence of the person – his or her dreams and aspirations. When stories are told in this manner, they will be more invested and engaged.

We want to work with you proactively and hope that youth can leverage their influence under the watchful insight of organizations.

”

This learning experience has shown him that social media mean different things depending of the context, but it can certainly help craft a narrative that is trustful, even if some data are hidden to safeguard the protection of the participants. As he defines social media for a practitioner, they are “like a knife – they can be used to help or to hurt – the responsibility lies with the people utilizing it and therefore it is important to raise awareness. Culture is a way and the platform can be the space to link cultures to let people have their voices heard.”

“The validity of the information has little value these days, and different information is pulling people into different directions. Youth attach great value to personalities and the information coming from them. The question remains as to how to tap into this and turn the youth from apathy to a more involved stage. Young people connect with these personalities due to the authenticity they represent.”



lessons **LEARNED**

**Technology and Innovation to support Youth Migration**



**DISRUPTIVE FORCE**



**DIGITAL ENABLER**

Technology as a force to leave no one behind

**Data access:**

**1**

Technology can support access to traditional and non-traditional sources of information



**DATA**

Technology to counteract misperceptions, echo chambers and negative narrative

**CHALLENGE**



**2**

**PERCEPTIONS**

**Education:**

**3**

Access to education, digital skills, advance training or professional skills



**E-LEARNING**

**Integration:**

**4**



**UNDERSTANDING**

Call centres and applications like MigApp help find regular pathways to migration

**5**



**CONNECTIONS**

Connections contribute to community engagement

Diaspora engagement and South-South cooperation platforms promote knowledge sharing, skills and jobs



**DIASPORA  
CONNECTS**

**6**

Networks help engage in business activities and access to other markets



**7**

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**Innovation:**

Youth participating in finding innovative solutions to rural and urban migration, climate change or the future of work

**8**



**URBAN RURAL  
MIGRATION**



**CLIMATE CHANGE**



**FUTURE OF WORK**

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Throughout the two IDM sessions, youth – including migrant youth – have been recognized as critical stakeholders in the development of policy, data, programmes and laws that affect their lives and those of their communities, be they the ones of origin or destination. Youth are recognized as actors of change, ready to engage and willing to be more active in decision-making policies and processes. Government and international organizations have recognized not only the importance of actively involving them, but also the need to consider their views in the construction of future integrated and just societies.

The two sessions have provided a number of practices, policies and inspiring stories that show the importance of committing to young people and listening to their voices in order to identify innovative solutions. Many participants called for building partnerships between different actors, with youth playing a key role in developing policies and programmes that promote good migration management and advance the Sustainable Development Goals. In fact, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development brings an opportunity to engage youth and young migrants in response to the demands identified through the SDG

goals and targets. Several instruments – whether global, regional or national – have been developed to provide space and recognition to the involvement of youth, and many of these instruments were shared among the different sessions.

## **Main recommendations to address the needs**

Specific subjects were identified and targeted as the most urgent matters to address youth, in particular migrant youth. Most relevant were: (a) the need to have proper evidence on the needs that justify the development of adequate policies; (b) being able to address vulnerabilities of young migrants by protecting and empowering them and ensuring sustainable integration; (c) engaging youth – whether migrant or not – to support integration as communities of destination, and foster development at the departing points so that migration becomes a choice and not an obligation; (d) listening to the voices, engaging with diaspora and involving youth in the development and identification of adequate responses benefiting from technology and innovation; (e) learning and sharing knowledge to build a solid and coherent response that considers their views and participation.

Young migrants are a very diverse group of people on the move, so there is no one-size-fits-all model and measures should be tailor-made. There is also a need to address gender equality and the empowerment of young women. Evidence on youth migration is key to be able to address challenges and opportunities. Data on the impact of migration on young people are lacking and therefore more work needs to be done by all concerned actors, thus ensuring that all persons in need, those most vulnerable in particular, are properly identified and assisted, to ensure that no one is left behind. Numbers define policies and therefore reliable data and information on youth are required. It was agreed that a better framework for migration management must reflect the needs and views of all concerned actors, with attention to the youth. Data are therefore essential to address all needs in a holistic manner.

Fighting racism, xenophobia and discrimination should be a priority for all actors as a step to promote social integration and empowerment of youth. Social media and campaigns can be powerful tools in this respect by promoting migrant voices and engagement of youth. In the words of the two Youth Envoys, there can't be better advocates than young people for an evidence-based counternarrative that can inform policies on migration.

Bringing young people to the centre of policies and processes may reduce the likelihood of marginalized youth falling through the cracks when these policies are implemented. All efforts need to be taken to address young migrants' vulnerabilities and provide safe means of migration for young people, to protect them from human trafficking and smuggling. National child protection and youth empowerment strategies and action plans that mainstream youth need are required. Young women migrants are particularly vulnerable to discrimination and violence.

Youth can be effective partners in addressing climate change-induced migration, recovering the rural areas, and engaging in local responses at cities, among other things. However, in order for them to engage in policy development, there is a need to ensure access to quality education and dignified employment opportunities, to equip them with skills and knowledge they need to become future leaders and entrepreneurs. Many examples were shared during the sessions that show the importance of engaging migrant youth in education if they are to engage in society.

Innovative responses include people-to-people contacts and exchanges between young migrants and their peers, and ultimately foster mutual understanding, challenging prejudice and stereotypes, thereby contributing to building more inclusive societies. Integration of young people takes place in cities. Local authorities have a key role in creating spaces of social cohesion, in supporting youth entrepreneurship through identifying ways in which young migrants can be partners in migration governance, addressing youth-specific challenges, and empowering them to have greater influence in addressing challenges that concern them.

It is important to identify the mechanisms available to involve young people as key actors, to ensure they have space to take decisions and to be accountable for the choices they make, to intensify advocacy mechanisms for young migrants so they know their rights, including the right to access quality and relevant education, the right to informed choices, protection, equality, and non-discrimination. The role of adults is to support and accompany these processes, to be active listeners, to offer tools and create spaces for dialogue, to let young migrant co-lead in partnership, so that adults and young people can work together to face the future.

It is also relevant to promote targeted policies that strengthen cooperation between countries of origin and destination, and to stimulate the active involvement of young people, as well as initiatives aimed at enhancing intergovernmental cooperation and inter-agency and civil society partnerships on youth migration and employment.

Involving the private sector through public–private partnerships will help increase job opportunities and engage private sector companies and employers in the discussion, while continuing to build a conducive and enabling environment that reduces bottlenecks and encourages jobs and entrepreneurship development.

Furthermore, the focus should go beyond economic development, developing social processes for engagement that include access to health and education. It is not just about acquiring hard and soft skills, but also being able to match the skills with actual infrastructure and support, so that those skills can be a real leverage. This requires commitments between countries of origin, transit and destination.

Lastly, the knowledge, experience and expertise of young people should be utilized in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies; mainstreaming and integrating youth policies across sectors; and developing a transparent monitoring and accountability framework.

In conclusion, as highlighted by H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the Seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, in her keynote remarks, “nothing for young people without young people”.

Specific recommendations per chapter are given below.

## **1. Engaging youth as key partners in migration governance**

### **• Understand pull and push factors to migrate**

Working together to identify the drivers of migration in countries of origin; being able to address issues such as the lack of opportunities, decent work and violence; trying to support member States and civil society to be sure that opportunities are available in situ.

- **Listen to young people's voices, engage with them for meaningful solutions**

Young people should have a word in policies that will affect their lives. They know their needs. Young people and youth migrants must be part of a holistic youth strategy instead of compartmentalizing the challenges in parallel strategies of specific groups. Empower and facilitate a migrant youth voices network at regional and global levels.

Establish a meaningful engagement, harnessing their potential in the design of migration policies and recognizing and meeting the aspirations of young migrants. Young migrants bring many skills, are often multilingual and carry important cross-cultural skills and knowledge.

- **Help transform the negative narrative on migration and political polarization**

To empower youth, there is a need to move from a disempowering discourse that portrays migrant youth as violent, the problem, negative numbers of unemployed, the job seeker that needs a quick fix, violent extremists, the armed rebels, etc.

To start building a discourse of empowerment that reflects reality where young people are not the problem but the solution, and not just looking for opportunity but creating opportunities. Transforming the messages with facts and reality, such as the fact that 80 per cent of world's migrants move between countries South–South more than South–North.

- **Bridge the gap between needs and services**

Invest in national delivery services to create and provide more opportunities to young people on the move by including them as part of the national systems, whether in health, social protection or education systems.

- **Local authorities are key**

Real migration happens at the local level. Local authorities need to be able to welcome migrants and provide them with decent conditions, rights and integration. Strategies identified need to go hand-in-hand with the support of local authorities.

- **Engage youth diaspora for development**

Initiate inter-diaspora cooperation among Southern youth migration, and win the global North for migration governance aimed at third country development. Diaspora contributes in many different ways, not only sending remittances, but connecting people, transferring technology and boosting education, among others.

## **2. Creating evidence on youth migration**

- **Enhance policy processes by providing reliable data, trends and information on youth and migration**

Evidence on the mixed impacts of youth migration on young migrants, communities of origin and host societies should be increased. Enhance awareness on youth, the challenges and opportunities they face in the content of migration, and their role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- **Commit to and invest in enhancing the collection, dissemination and analysis of data on youth and adolescent migrants**

Disaggregated by age and sex, education, qualifications, occupation, employment situation, and skill level, as well as country of origin, country of birth, country(ies) of previous residence, and country of citizenship.

- **Make better use of existing data and develop new norms and practices for data sharing across sectors and agencies**

This will encourage further sharing on a local, national, regional and international level, while protecting the privacy and interest, and ensuring ethical use of data.

- **Benefit from non-traditional sources such as big data and social media**

- **Make sure to include gender-specific data to ensure protection and support services**

- **Build institutional capacity to gather relevant data**

Work with specialized institutions and cooperating partners to obtain data related to health, education, social protection, migratory status and migration-related policies and programmes.



- **Foster qualitative and quantitative research on experiences, conditions, needs and aspirations of young migrants**
- **Use data to develop better matches of labour skills of young migrants with the countries of destination, and increase targeted capacity in countries of origin**
- **Identify, disseminate and replicate relevant good practices**
- **Challenge realities and narratives**  
Promotion of negative narrative through fake news or echo chambers should be a central focus. There is a need for building awareness on how social media contribute to the negative rhetoric around minorities and migrants, leading to hate speech and misinformation.
- **Use storytelling to confront stereotypes and build bridges between cultures, while combating fake news and echo chambers**

### **3. Promoting social integration and empowerment**

- **No one solution fits all needs. Develop tailor-made responses that protect and empower young migrants**
- **Protection of young migrants comes by:**
  - (a) Promoting safe means of migration;
  - (b) Preventing risks of abuse and exploitation;
  - (c) Preventing socioeconomic exclusion and reducing the likelihood of marginalization;
  - (d) Unaccompanied children and adolescents requiring specific protection.
- **Youth empowerment can start by:**
  - (a) Increasing awareness on safe migration;
  - (b) Empowering women to address gender equality and specific risks;
  - (c) Safeguarding the well-being of young migrants with mental health support and psychosocial activities;

- (d) Providing quality education and employment opportunities to help address inequalities;
- (e) Fostering dialogue to increase resilience and strengthen the feeling of inclusion;
- (f) Promoting cultural diversity social integration and innovative responses.

#### **4. Involving youth in the development and design of migration strategies**

##### **Diaspora engagement**

- **Gather a sound knowledge of the diaspora abroad (assessing their needs, their numbers or how are they are willing to contribute)**
- **Establish proper means to communicate with the diaspora**
- **Enable an environment to engage it through the development of policies such as the right to citizenship or the right to vote**
- **Develop strategic partnerships between the State, international organizations and civil society to build frameworks that link the youth with the diaspora**
- **Generate outreach and partnership policies to involve diaspora: numerous examples show its critical role in crisis management**
- **Enhance national policy and co-developing a national migration strategy**

##### **Comprehensive solutions**

- **Involve diaspora to empower youth at country of origin**
- **Work with Youth Diaspora to build networks with the youth at country of origin, create links, share knowledge and break barriers and misperceptions**
- **Children, adolescents and young adults in destination countries can be a valuable source for support to integration of related family and community**

- **Youth can be best advocates to migrant youth**

Their interaction can help reduce the negative narrative on migration. Peer-to-peer contacts and exchanges between young migrants and their peers ultimately foster mutual understanding and counter prejudice and stereotypes.

- **Migrant youth can be best supporters of youth at country of origin**

Interaction can contribute to build knowledge-sharing networks and further understanding.

- **Inter-diaspora cooperation can contribute to support development**

- **South–South cooperation can provide opportunities for the promotion and integration of refugees and establish win–win relations with hosting communities**

## **5. Strengthening cooperation with youth**

Meaningful and active youth participation is required to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

- **Maintain a youth-centred approach that considers the entire migration process and the conditions for expulsion, deportation, return and reintegration**
- **Establish and build the capacity of youth organizations to ensure young migrants are not in isolation**
- **Foster migrant youth and adolescent participation in their destination communities and in policymaking that concerns them, which is crucial to protecting their rights, to integration and to social cohesion**

Interaction can contribute to build knowledge-sharing networks and further understanding.

- **Promote and encourage young migrants' active involvement as social innovators and social entrepreneurs by increasing investment and programmes promoting entrepreneurship and innovation**

- **Involve youth at the centre of discussions and policy development. Young people must be empowered to make sound decisions through representation and inclusion**
- **Use the knowledge, dynamism, innovative ideas and expertise of young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies**

Knowledge sharing spaces – both online and offline – should involve those who face risks and those who control policy. Their interaction can help reduce the negative narrative on migration. Peer-to-peer contacts and exchanges between young migrants and their peers ultimately foster mutual understanding and counter prejudice and stereotypes.

- **Encourage decent work for youth through advocacy, knowledge development and dissemination, policy, technical advice and capacity-building**
- **Special focus needs to happen in cities, where most of the youth integration happens, but also in rural areas, when the exodus of youth is leaving the agriculture fields empty**
- **Involve youth while building resilience to climate change impacts in local communities; promote diaspora engagement in areas such as agriculture to promote innovation and knowledge sharing; and respond to environmental challenges, fostering return and development**

Involving the youth perspective will contribute to achieving climate justice and equity, enabling youth, particularly women and girls, to increase their resilience and become positive agents of transformation.

- **The power of collective action only occurs through thoughtful engagement, patience, understanding and listening to the needs of the affected communities**

## **6. How technology and innovation can support youth and migration**

- Technology is a disruptive force that can act as digital enabler to ensure that no one is left behind
- Technology can support the access to traditional and non-traditional sources of information
- Technology can act as a tool to counter act misperceptions, echo chambers and negative narrative
- Technology supports education, digital skills, advance business training or professional skills
- Technology can support integration by ensuring adaptation and inclusion
- Call centres and applications such as MigApp help find regular pathways to migration
- Building connections contribute to community engagement
- Diaspora engagement and South–South cooperation platforms promote knowledge sharing, skills and jobs identification
- It helps create network and engage business activities as well as access to other markets
- Youth needs to participate in the identification of innovative solutions to rural and urban migration, climate change and the future of work



# APPENDICES







## **International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) 2019**

### **Youth and migration: Engaging youth as key partners in migration governance**

*First session of the International Dialogue for Migration 2019*

*28 February 2019*

*Conference room 2, United Nations Headquarters, New York*

## **AGENDA**

### **Background**

There are currently more young people in the world than ever, 1.8 billion, the largest generation in history. Of the 258 million international migrants, around 11 per cent of them were below 24 years of age in 2017. Young people have a key role in policy discussions, rising up worldwide for their rights and better opportunities, and demanding a seat at the table in decision-making processes.

Against this background, the International Dialogue for Migration 2019 will be dedicated to discussing how to engage youth as a key partner in global processes on migration. The 2019 IDM responds to the calls for greater engagement with youth made by participants at IDM, and it is aligned with the United Nations Youth Strategy, which recognizes the potential of youth to advance progress in many policy areas, considering young people's first-hand experience.

### **Overview**

The first of two IDM sessions planned in 2019 took place on 28 February at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and discussed global strategies and partnerships in the area of youth mobility, as well as best practices for youth engagement in policy and decision-making processes.

Adaptation, integration and empowerment of young migrants were also among the topics explored through an exchange of good practices, lessons learned and recommendations, involving youth representatives, young migrants, governments, academia, civil society and international organizations.

10:00–10:30	<b>Opening session</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés</b>, President, seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly</li> <li>• <b>António Vitorino</b>, Director General, International Organization for Migration</li> <li>• <b>Jayathma Wickramanayake</b>, United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth</li> </ul>
10:30–11:30	<b>Panel 1: Understanding youth migration: beyond facts and figures</b>
	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Roxanne Tajbakhsh, Global Focal Point on Migration, United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Daniela Bas</b>, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, UN DESA</li> <li>• <b>Ted Chaiban</b>, Director, Programmes, UNICEF</li> <li>• <b>Iliana G. Perez</b>, Director of Research and Entrepreneurship at Immigrant Rising</li> </ul>
11:30–13:00	<b>Panel 2: Addressing specific challenges and vulnerabilities of young people: what role, which partners?</b>
	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Julia Blocher, President of the International Youth Federation, Migration Researcher at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mohamed Bangura</b>, Minister of Youth Affairs, Sierra Leone</li> <li>• <b>Shahidul Haque</b>, Foreign Secretary, Bangladesh</li> <li>• <b>Felipe González Morales</b>, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants</li> <li>• <b>Alexis Nadine Bautista</b>, Programme Officer at Migrant Forum in Asia</li> </ul>
13:00–15:00	<i>Break</i>

15:00–16:30	<b>Panel 3: Empowering youth to become actors of change</b>
	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Tolu O. Olubunmi, Communications Advisor, Department of Global Communications, United Nations</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Santiago Javier Chavez Pareja</b>, Vice Minister for Human Mobility of Ecuador, Chair of GFMD 2019</li> <li>• <b>Nathaniel Erskine-Smith</b>, Member of Parliament, Canada</li> <li>• <b>Aya Chebbi</b>, African Union Youth Envoy</li> <li>• <b>Binod Khadria</b>, Professor of Economics and Education, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India</li> </ul>
16:30–17:50	<b>Panel 4: Mainstreaming youth migration into development policies: recommendations for the way forward</b>
	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Laura Thompson, Deputy Director General, International Organization for Migration</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>José Vicente Santini</b>, Deputy Chief, Chief of Staff's Office at the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil</li> <li>• <b>Leo Johnson</b>, Executive Director, Empowerment Squared, Member of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, Canada</li> <li>• <b>Alexandra Délano Alonso</b>, Associate Professor and Chair of Global Studies, New School</li> <li>• <b>Chrisann Jarrett</b>, Founder of Let Us Learn, United Kingdom</li> </ul>
17:50–18:00	<b>Closing session</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Laura Thompson</b>, Deputy Director General, International Organization for Migration</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The first session of IOM's International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) in 2019 was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 28 February under the title "Youth and Migration: Engaging youth as key partners in migration governance".

This IDM session was organized as part of the "migration week", which also involved events organized by the President of the United Nations General Assembly and UN DESA. It gathered more than 300 participants from high-level government officials, youth, NGOs and academia representatives.

Ministers, ambassadors, youth delegates and other policymakers – together with the President of the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly and other high-level United Nations officials, including the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the first African Union Youth Envoy – met to discuss the role of youth in determining the future of migration governance around the world.

The session was structured in four panels, led by 20 speakers, representing a balanced mix of youth representatives, government officials and policymakers from countries of origin, transit and destination; representatives of partner United Nations agencies; and experts in the areas of youth, migration and human rights, civil society, academia and young migrants. The first three panels were led by female youth representatives and the last and closing panel was moderated by IOM Deputy Director General, Laura Thompson.

The meeting was opened by the IOM Director General, Mr António Vitorino, and featured keynotes addresses by H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, and the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms Jayathma Wickramanayake, in recognition of the United Nations Youth Strategy, Youth2030, launched by United Nations Secretary-General, Mr António Guterres, in September 2018.

In his opening remarks, Mr António Vitorino, Director General of IOM, highlighted the potential that young people represent for the societies and how migration can be an important driver for their development and empowerment. The Director General also highlighted that “many young migrants experience discrimination – in their schools, or in their communities – that reduce their prospects for growth, as well as their self-esteem. This is a dangerous cycle that we must avoid: unduly limiting the potential of a generation who encapsulate a diverse experience and skills. Governments must work to welcome those who are in their societies regularly, and ensure that they are treated equally, and with dignity and full respect for their human rights.”

In her keynote remarks, H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, noted that “we must create positive migratory experiences that can project young people into a better future to contribute to sustainable development in their countries of origin and destination. Protecting their rights is fundamental: guaranteeing access to health, quality education, housing and basic services.” The President expressed her absolute commitment to listening to young people’s voices and promoting their inclusion at the heart of the United Nations.

Ms Jayathma Wickramanayake, the United Nations Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, noted in her keynote remarks in the opening session that “the need to empower and create the space for young people to participate in civic and political debates” is at the core of her mandate. She expanded on how youth can meaningfully engage in global policymaking and emphasized that “dedicating policy discussions like this International Dialogue on Migration to youth issues is an important step on the way”.

The session was also the venue of a side event: Youth Leadership in Twenty-first Century Migration Governance. The all-female youth panel presented an opportunity to review the key outcomes and recommendations from the Youth Forum that took place in Marrakesh (December 2018), and to begin looking at how and where youth can actively influence discussion on migration, as part of a whole-of-society approach.

## **The IDM session addressed four main themes:**

- (a) Understanding youth migration beyond facts and figures;
- (b) Addressing specific challenges and vulnerabilities of young people: What role, which partners;
- (c) Empowering youth to become actors of change;
- (d) Mainstreaming youth migration into development policies: Recommendations to move forward.

The four panels discussed trends of youth migration, emphasized the many challenges faced by young people worldwide and the policy gaps in addressing them, and presented global, regional and national strategies and partnerships in the area of youth mobility, as well as best practices for youth engagement in policy and decision-making processes. Adaptation, integration and empowerment of young migrants were explored through the exchange of good practices, lessons learned and recommendations made by representatives from all relevant sectors, including youth representatives and young migrants themselves.

## **The main outcomes and conclusions of the discussion are summarized below:**

### **1. The evidence on youth migration is incomplete and can negatively impact migration policies**

- Evidence on youth migration is key to raising awareness of the challenges and opportunities youth face in the context of migration and their role and contribution in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, SDGs 4 (education), 8 (employment) and 10 (reducing the gap of inequalities), as well as their contribution to development in communities of origin and host societies.
- It is very important to understand the push and pull factors of migration. Most migration is safe, regular and occurs within regions. The reasons people leave behind their homes are varied, including studying, searching for work opportunities, setting up businesses, reuniting with family, building a new family, seeking refuge and escaping from poverty, environmental degradation, violence or conflict.

- “Numbers define policies” as Ms Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development of UN DESA underlined. Data on the impact of migration on young people are lacking, yet it is essential to enhance policy processes by providing reliable data, trends and information on youth and migration. Reliable, gender- and age-disaggregated, timely and accessible data are key to identifying and effectively addressing the needs of young migrants. The absence of a universally-agreed legal definition of “youth” makes it hard to find accurate data related to youth. Moreover, the information on migration is gathered as part of the population censuses or through administrative surveys, and can differ from one country to another.
  - The evidence on young people and children affected by migration and displacement, human trafficking, access to education, health, nutrition and other essential services needs to be developed.
  - Bridging the large gaps in data availability and addressing data inequalities between and within countries will require significant capacity-building, substantial financial investment and innovative approaches to the collection, utilization and dissemination of accurate and timely data, especially in the least developed countries.
  - There is a need to make better use of existing data, and to develop new norms, practices and innovative approaches for data sharing across sectors and agencies, encouraging further sharing on local, national, regional and international levels.

## **2. Social and economic exclusion often disproportionately impacts those on the move**

- In their new communities, young migrants may become victims of social marginalization and face difficulties and restrictions in accessing education, employment, social protection and other basic rights. But at the same time, they are extremely resilient, determined, strong and resourceful in facing challenges and crises. They possess valuable skills and voices to contribute to their origin and destination communities, and to help build solutions to problems.
- Bringing them to the centre of policies and processes may reduce the likelihood of marginalized youth falling through the cracks when these policies are implemented.

- Young migrants face difficulties in finding employment, especially depending on their migration status. Informal and degrading work is often their only employment choice. Decent work opportunities for youth can not only encourage social inclusion and integration in labour markets, but also prevent risks of abuse and exploitation.
- There is a need to address gender equality and the empowerment of young women. Even if policies exist, they tend to be gender-blind.
- Fighting racism, xenophobia and discrimination should be a priority for all actors as a step to promote social integration and empowerment of youth. One of the biggest challenges for integration is helping locals/citizens understand that refugees and migrants who have been properly integrated are in fact beneficial to economies and societies. Social media and campaigns can be powerful tools in this respect, by promoting migrant voices and engagement of youth. As young people possess digital literacy and the critical knowledge of new technology, youth themselves should be engaged in producing and sharing evidence-based counternarratives, which can inform responsive policies on migration. Young people are the best advocates for an evidence-based counternarrative that can inform migration policies.
- Young migrants need better access to education and employment opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to become future leaders and entrepreneurs. Reforms and actions are needed to support young migrants to achieve their educational and career goals. This includes both hard and soft skills, as expressed in SDG 4 (education), which includes life-learning education.
- Young migrants need an environment that supports their economic and social integration, and protects them from exploitation. The creation of such an environment needs a direct dialogue between stakeholders, decision makers and youth.
- Technology provides many challenges and opportunities. The challenges are in terms of the inequality and gaps that technology may create among countries and societies, and the opportunities are the offering of alternatives and enhancements in education, social connection, network and development. In the countries of destination, youth migrants can contribute to development by bridging the need gap through the transfer of skills and knowledge. To support them in this endeavour, technology can be made more



readily available to them through maintaining price policies that apply to nationals, as well as introducing applicable/special purchasing or payment plans.

### **3. Young migrants are at particular risk of exploitation**

- As young migrants are a very diverse group of people on the move, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to their challenges, and responses should be tailor-made. It is therefore important to distinguish the needs of young migrants from the general needs of all migrants.
- Specific attention is required for unaccompanied children and adolescents.
- Young women and girls are particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation during their migration journey. It is important to recognize the elements of disadvantage and the triple marginalization that young migrant women and girls often face: being a woman, a migrant and a young person. Specific actions are needed to ensure their protection, address gender equality and empower young women, while trying to understand gender-specific drivers of migration.
- Young people are facing the challenges of migration and displacement at a time of intense cognitive, physical and social development. The tremendous psychological stress and trauma they might be exposed to during the migration process, coupled with the negative impact of pre-existing issues faced by young migrants, can seriously undermine their mental health status and overall well-being. Therefore, policies and strategies targeted at supporting young migrants must pay attention to their mental health and well-being, and need to include the experiences and input of migrant youth.
- We need to consider the needs for protection of young people who move due to climate change. We need to look at how environmental change has exacerbated poverty. Young people may become worn down so that their capacities to migrate erode, thus limiting their opportunities for personal and professional development. Youth can also be effective partners in addressing climate change-induced migration, so there is a need to ensure their involvement in the response.

- We need to consider the transition that young people experience as they reach the age of maturity. As adolescents turn into legal adults at the age of 18, as per applicable international law, they lose certain rights and protections available to them as children, such as access to welfare assistance, education, health care, housing assistance and, in some cases, protection from detention and deportation. At present, there are no legal instruments designed to protect these migrants and accompany their transition to adulthood.
- All efforts need to be taken to address young migrants' vulnerabilities and enhance protection and empowerment of youth. The protection of rights of migrants and the provision of a safe and dignified means of migration will ensure that young migrants are not vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. This includes providing safe means of migration for young people to protect them from human trafficking and smuggling. National child protection and youth empowerment strategies and action plans that mainstream youth needs are required.

#### **4. It is urgent that all relevant actors include youth voices in their policy and decision-making processes**

- Youth possess valuable skills and voices to contribute to their communities and to help build solutions to problems. Nearly 4.3 million young people study in universities outside their countries of origin and many others migrate and bring to their destination countries considerable knowledge and skills. The recent trends in youth migration are determined by a “trinity of drivers”, which Professor Binod Khadria defines as “Age, Wage and Vintage”, namely: counter the ageing of local labour force, minimize the labour costs through lower wages bills of the migrant youth, and an accumulation of frontier knowledge embodied in migrant students.
- Young migrants have an incredible capacity for adaptation and resilience, and can be agents of change while playing a pivotal role in fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. They are key players in building peaceful and inclusive societies. Giving voice to youth is important, and amplifying the voices of migrant youth is essential. There are no better advocates for youth causes than youth themselves.
- The Youth Forum on Migration, convened by the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth during the Marrakesh Conference

(December 2018) highlighted the importance of involving youth in every decision-making process, and made three important calls for action: “Engage with us; Invest in us; and Count us in.”

- Discussing youth migration strengthens the feeling of inclusion in young migrants and will increase their engagement. It is, therefore, important to use the knowledge, dynamism, innovative ideas and expertise of young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies.
- People-to-people contacts and exchanges between young migrants and their peers ultimately foster mutual understanding and counter prejudice and stereotypes, thereby contributing to building more inclusive societies. It is demonstrated that a satisfying coexistence between local community members and refugees and migrants could be achieved by co-designing economic integration solutions that involve and are beneficial to all groups. Projects that are co-designed and co-implemented by the local community and refugees and migrants tend to work better, and in the long term lead to more projects of economic integration.
- Young diaspora has a key role in empowering young people, enabling development back in their communities of origin, and fostering collaboration and development in the communities they are living in. There is a need for an inter-diaspora cooperation that could act in this sense.
- Integration of young people takes place mainly in cities. Local authorities have a key role in creating spaces of social cohesion, in supporting youth entrepreneurship through identifying ways in which young migrants can be partners in migration governance, addressing youth-specific challenges, and empowering them to have greater influence in designing policies that address their challenges. There is a need to increase the capacity of local authorities to engage youth.
- Enhance the inclusion of youth migrants in the host societies and promote youth empowerment by:
  - Promoting cultural diversity in host societies, supporting social inclusion of newcomers (including language acquisition, equal access to services and exercise of rights), promoting dialogue at community level and combatting xenophobia and discrimination.

- Promoting and encouraging young migrants' active involvement as social innovators and social entrepreneurs by increasing investment and programmes promoting entrepreneurship and innovation among youth.

## **5. Recommendations for the way forward**

- The importance of coordinated action in engaging and empowering young people in migration governance was repeatedly emphasized by speakers. Many participants called for building partnerships between different actors, with youth playing a key role in developing policies and programmes that promote good migration management and advance the Sustainable Development Goals. It was agreed that a better framework for migration management must reflect the needs and views of all concerned actors, with particular attention given to the youth.
- Strong calls were made during the interactive debate to:
  - Support member States to develop national youth protection and empowerment strategies and action plans, and to mainstream migration and migrant youth in these strategies.
  - Promote targeted policies that strengthen cooperation between countries of origin and destination and stimulate active involvement of young people to maximize the benefits of young migrants to the society.
  - Promote initiatives aimed at enhancing intergovernmental cooperation and inter-agency and civil society partnerships on youth migration and employment.
  - Promote participation and empowerment of youth in the development of national migration policies and the implementation process.
  - Support the development of “youth-friendly” national diaspora strategies and encourage governments in involving youth in the development and design of migration-related strategies.
  - Involve the private sector through public–private partnerships to increase job opportunities. Engage the private sector, especially key companies and employers, in the discussion while continuing building a conducive and enabling environment that

reduces bottlenecks and encourages jobs and entrepreneurship development.

- Intensify advocacy mechanisms for young migrants to know their rights, including the right to access quality and relevant education, the right to informed choices, protection, equality and non-discrimination. Encourage young migrants to participate in decision-making processes to prevent abuse and exploitation.
- Utilize the knowledge, experience and expertise of young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policy; mainstream and integrate youth policies across sectors; take into account the linkages and impacts of policy objectives; and develop transparent monitoring and accountability framework.

“Nothing for young people without young people”, H.E. Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, highlighted in her keynote remarks.

Engaging with youth is a priority for IOM. The Organization has been committed to developing specific activities targeting youth and addressing their needs and vulnerabilities. More recently, IOM developed an Action Plan, aligned with the United Nations Youth Strategy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which initiatives, programmes and activities are proposed for young people on the move. This IDM is part of this strategy, focusing on gathering knowledge and expertise on youth, facilitating evidence-based global awareness on youth, and encouraging collaboration and partnerships between youth and key actors. Unlocking the Potential of youth to Respond to the new challenges and opportunities of migration





## **International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) 2019**

# **Unlocking the Potential of youth to Respond to the new challenges and opportunities of migration**

*Second session of the International Dialogue for Migration 2019  
15-16 October 2019*

*Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG)*

## **AGENDA**

### **Background**

To elaborate further on discussions and recommendations regarding youth and migration held at the first session of the 2019 IDM, which took place in New York on 28 February, this second session will emphasize unlocking the potential of youth and enabling them to respond to the challenges and opportunities of migration.

This session will engage young actors and experts in a dialogue with policy and decision makers and relevant international, regional and national actors, as well as with businesses, scholars and diaspora groups, to exchange on the challenges young migrants encounter, and how to boost their potential while overcoming these challenges through partnerships. The session will explore the potential of diaspora communities to engage and uplift young people on the move and the resources available to migrants and further actions that must be taken to ensure their successful integration, particularly looking at psychological challenges and well-being. In addition, the workshop will analyse the multi-faceted role of technology in the lives of migrant youth, environmental challenges, and the future of work.

15 October	
10:00–11:00	<b>Opening session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr António Vitorino</b>, Director General, International Organization for Migration</li> <li>• <b>H.E. Ms Ghada Waly</b>, Minister of Social Solidarity, Egypt</li> <li>• <b>Mr Christian Leffler</b>, Deputy Secretary-General for Economic and Global Issues, European External Action Service, EU</li> <li>• <b>H.E. Mr Ahmet Erdem</b>, Deputy Minister of Family, Labour and Social Services of Turkey</li> </ul>
11:00–13:00	<b>Panel 1: Youth Migration and Technology: enabling opportunities over risks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>H.E. Ms Natalia Alvarez Rojas</b>, Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Security, Costa Rica</li> <li>• <b>Mr Houlin Zhao</b>, Secretary-General, ITU</li> <li>• <b>Ms Sara Grubanov-Boskovic</b>, Scientific Project Officer, Demography, Migration and Governance Unit in the European Commission's Joint Research Centre</li> <li>• <b>Mr Carlo Rasmus Schwarz</b>, Ph.D. student, University of Warwick</li> <li>• <b>Mr Nadir Nahdi</b>, Producer and Founder, BENI</li> </ul>
13:00–15:00	<i>Break</i>
<b>13:30–14:30</b>	<b>High-Level Event on African Youth and Sustainable Development</b>
15:00–16:00	<b>Migrant's Voice Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr Khaled Karri</b>, Entrepreneur</li> <li>• <b>Ms Thana Farooq</b>, Documentary photographer</li> </ul>
16:00–18:00	<b>Panel 2: Boosting young people's potential for development through diaspora engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr Max Trejo Cervantes</b>, Secretary-General, International Youth Organization for Ibero-America</li> <li>• <b>Ms Pascale Dahrouj</b>, Senior Adviser, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon</li> <li>• <b>Ms Harivola Mirana Ravokatrasonlofo</b>, Attaché, Permanent Mission of Madagascar in Geneva</li> <li>• <b>Mr Dejan Bojanic</b>, Chief Executive Officer, Save the Children Youth Sweden</li> <li>• <b>Mr Tashi Lama</b>, Entrepreneur, Co-Founder, Thank God It's Fair Wear</li> <li>• <b>Ms Hariniaina Ranjoro</b>, Youth Volunteer from the Malagasy Diaspora</li> </ul>



16 October	
10:00–11:00	<p><b>Case study challenging traditional norms around youth migration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms Nanjala Nyabola</b>, Co-editor of the African Migration Report</li> <li>• <b>Ms Walusungu Ngulube</b>, African Union Youth Volunteer Corps alumna, young migrant professional</li> <li>• <b>Ms Basma Serag</b>, Steering Committee Member, World Youth Forum, Egypt</li> <li>• <b>Mr Mickaia Rabibisoa Andrianaivonira</b>, African Migration Report Cover Contest Winner</li> </ul>
11:00–13:00	<p><b>Panel 3: Youth as agents of integration and social cohesion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr Mohamed Ould Abdi</b>, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Employment, Youth and Sports, Mauritania</li> <li>• <b>Ms Alessia Falorni</b>, Mentor and member of the TandEM student committee, University of Pisa, Italy</li> <li>• <b>Ms Rola Isaa</b>, Former mentee and current mentor for TandEM, University La Sapienza, Italy</li> <li>• <b>Mr Phungula</b>, Advisor, Consumer Protection Services</li> </ul>
13:00–15:00	<i>Break</i>
15:00–16:00	<p><b>Panel 4: Enabling youth to overcome environmental challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms Giulia Mancini Pinheiro</b>, Regional Focal Point of the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth</li> <li>• <b>Ms Nina Birkeland</b>, Adviser, Disaster Displacement and Climate Change, Norwegian Refugee Council</li> <li>• <b>Mr Ibrahima Faye</b>, CEO and Founder, Senagriculture</li> <li>• <b>Ms Zakiyyah Ali</b>, Student, University of South Pacific, Fiji</li> </ul>
16:00–17:00	<p><b>Panel 5: Building adaptation and resilience of young people on the move</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr Steve McGlynn</b>, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Australia in Geneva</li> <li>• <b>Ms Nadia Khouri</b>, Deputy Director, Tahaddi Lebanon</li> <li>• <b>Ms Ourania Kirka</b>, Psychologist, Hestia Hellas, Greece</li> </ul>
17:00–17:50	<p><b>Panel 6: Youth migration and future of work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms Joanna Napierala</b>, Policy Analyst, Joint Research Centre European Commission</li> <li>• <b>Ms Maria Prieto</b>, Specialist, Future of Work, ILO</li> </ul>
17:50–18:00	<b>Closing remarks</b>




## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

“Unlocking the potential of youth to respond to the new challenges and opportunities of migration” was the title given to the second and last session of IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) of 2019, held at the Geneva International Conference Centre, Switzerland, on 15 and 16 October.

The second session of the **#IDM2019** gathered more than 380 participants from youth organizations, high-level government offices, NGOs, academia, the private sector and international and regional organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union. The diverse group of speakers in terms of origin, age and background offered a comprehensive portrait of actions, practices and opportunities to support and encourage youth involvement in policy and decision-making processes.

The opening session was led by the IOM Director General, Mr António Vitorino; the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, H.E. Ms Ghada Waly; the European Union Deputy Secretary-General for External Action Service, Mr Christian Leffler; the Turkish Deputy Minister of Family, Labour and Social Services, Mr Ahmet Erdem; and the Ugandan Minister for Internal Affairs, Mr Gen Odongo Jeje Abu. The speakers highlighted the importance of harnessing the potential of youth to unlock opportunities, and recognized the unprecedented awareness and engagement of youth. There was a common acknowledgement of the need to invest in young people, while recognizing them as leaders and agents of change to achieve the required transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies.

IOM has committed itself to “listen, learn and act”, following the lessons learned and recommendations made by youth and other speakers through the identification of strategies and partnerships that contribute to supporting young migrants. As speakers stressed, the focus is not just about working for the youth, but rather working with them, involving them and creating an environment that recognizes solutions they identify for themselves.

 <p><b>DATA AND STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop strong data and statistics for evidence-based policies.</li> <li>✓ Benefit from technology to gather non-traditional data for immediate responses.</li> <li>✓ Enable an environment that connects countries of origin, transit and destination to find cohesive solutions.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>MAINSTREAM YOUTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Involve youth diaspora in their countries of origin and destination.</li> <li>✓ Harness the potential of youth to identify opportunities and develop informed policies.</li> <li>✓ Develop open spaces for communication and interaction with youth.</li> <li>✓ Promote education as a tool to break down barriers.</li> <li>✓ Involve youth to respond to environmental challenges.</li> <li>✓ Equip youth to tackle the challenges related to the future of work.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>WELL-BEING OF YOUNG MIGRANTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Carry out comprehensive solutions to address social cohesion and integration.</li> <li>✓ Address youth vulnerabilities: physical and psychosocial needs.</li> <li>✓ Challenge realities and narratives.</li> <li>✓ Promote storytelling as a way to counteract stereotypes, fake news and misperceptions while bridging different cultures.</li> <li>✓ Increase awareness by listening and amplifying their voices.</li> </ul>
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This **#IDM2019** was structured around six main panels, and time was also dedicated to a presentation of young migrant voices, an African Union case study and a side event on “African Youth and the SDGs”. The panels covered:

- The role of technology in enabling opportunities over risks;
- Boosting young people’s potential for development through diaspora engagement;
- Youth as agents of integration and social cohesion;
- Enabling youth to overcome environmental challenges;
- Building the adaptation and resilience of young people on the move; and
- The implications of the future of work on young migrants.

Numerous examples showed local, national, regional and worldwide practices to improve quality of life for young migrants, including the establishment of alliances such as the African Union–EU Youth Cooperation Hub and the Young Mediterranean Voices initiative; introducing storytelling as a way of confronting the stereotypes and negative narratives about migration, as well as bridging different cultures; and the essential role of the diaspora to ensure long-lasting and sustainable responses. It was also during this time that the first-ever

– yet to be published – African Migration Report was introduced. The report aims to rebalance the conversation about African migration away from the dominant, yet overly narrow, narrative of irregular migration to Europe.

Below are the outcomes and conclusions of the discussions that took place in Geneva based on the three main gaps identified in the first IDM session in New York:

## A. Data and strategies

It is necessary to build the capacity for better collection of data and statistics to understand who these young migrants are, where they are and what their needs are. New technologies allow for greater opportunities and possibilities to gather non-traditional data; however, they require more responsibilities. One challenge with the use of technology includes the need to combat and counteract misinformation and fake news. To be equitable, there is a need to increase connectivity, because about half of the population is not yet connected. Strategies need to link countries of origin, transit and destination.

- **Develop strong data and statistics for evidence-based policies:** As there is not a universal definition of youth, disaggregating data by age can provide clearer space for actual analysis and targeted responses. Big data can contribute by addressing the challenge of gathering immediate figures. Non-traditional data can provide more flexible and timely information. The Big Data for Migration Alliance (BD4M), launched by the Joint Research Centre from the European Union in 2018, includes a range of tools that vary from mobile phones to air passenger data to social media such as LinkedIn or Facebook, among others. Likewise, non-traditional data may provide spaces to gather information on circular and irregular migration that traditional data cannot. Potential limitations rely on the fact that big data is mainly collected by private sector; issues such as ownership, technological sustainability and costs may hinder its access.
- **Benefit from technology as a tool for young migrants' engagement:** Technology is an important tool for young people. It can be a vehicle to provide information for those who are considering migrating, those in transit or upon arrival. The use of technology can help in education and learning, sharing good practices or understanding perceptions. It helps young people with adaptation to

new places and supports them to achieve better opportunities. Big data analysis, mobile phones, social media or networks, call centres and apps such as MigApp are some tools to support migrants.

- **Enable an environment that promotes cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination:** This can include better collection of data and statistics, the creation of platforms that connect skilled migrants with those who require help, as well as the recognition of qualifications, skills development or networking. One example of cooperation is the continental strategy launched by the African Union in April this year called the “1 Million by 2021 Initiative”, which aims to direct investment towards millions of African youth in the areas of employment, entrepreneurship, education and engagement, through leveraging partnerships and private sector opportunities. This is a wide-ranging endeavour that looks at the development of start-ups and promotes the establishment of internships and apprenticeships to nurture leadership skills in young people.

## **B. Youth Mainstreaming**

Empowering youth is an investment for creating stronger future generations. Youth have a role to play in sustainable development that can be enhanced by ensuring their access to capacity-building, knowledge, technology and training.

- **Involve youth diaspora as key agents of change:** Young members of the diaspora contribute to their countries of origin, transit and destination through remittances, transferring knowledge and skills, connecting people and resources, or sharing and understanding other cultures, which helps to break negative and harmful stereotypes. Recommendations to engage diaspora include (a) gathering a sound knowledge of the diaspora abroad (assessing their needs, their numbers or how are they are willing to contribute); (b) establishing proper means of communicate with them; (c) enabling an environment to engage them through the development of policies such as the right to citizenship or to vote; (d) developing strategic partnerships between the State, international organizations and civil society to build frameworks to link the youth with the diaspora; (e) generating outreach and partnership policies to involve diaspora (numerous examples show their critical role in crisis management); and (f) enhancing national policy and co-developing a national

migration strategy. The Young Malagasy Diaspora Programme, organized by the Government of Madagascar in partnership with IOM, is a successful practice that involves young Malagasy diaspora volunteers with local communities by facilitating the transfer of skills, knowledge and experience. Such engagement challenges stereotypes and helps break down barriers and build connections.

- **Harness the potential of youth to unlock opportunities for more informed and inclusive policies and strategies:** The active participation of youth in policy dialogue, good governance, social justice, inclusion and social cohesion have proven to be key for the identification of long-standing and sustainable solutions. Several examples showed how involving youth in policymaking provides a more inclusive, integrated and innovative approach.
- **Develop open spaces of communication and interaction with youth:** Clear spaces for communication should be created to allow youth to learn, engage and be empowered through meaningful participation. Several initiatives were introduced in which young people's voices have been invaluable in decision-making processes. This includes subjects from stability and conflict prevention to development and achievement of SDGs, or promoting other international frameworks (such as the Paris Agreement or Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030). Examples of youth involvement initiatives include the International Youth Organization for Ibero-America, the EU–African Union Youth Cooperation Hub and the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth.
- **Promote education as a powerful tool to break down barriers:** Education is a powerful tool for youth integration. Schools or learning centres are the first place for integration, and serve as a bridge between young migrants and local youth by promoting dialogue, mutual understanding and cohesion. An example given was TandEM – Towards Empowered Migration Youth in Southern Europe – which implements languages classes, interreligious and intercultural dialogues and social media campaigns in universities, connecting local and newcomer students fighting xenophobia and prejudice, while promoting inclusion.
- **Involve youth to respond to environmental challenges:** Youth can play a key role in building resilience and contributing to disaster risk reduction. Solutions to address environmental challenges have

to be found and implemented collectively, and this includes youth as a potential group of exoduses, especially from rural areas to cities due to climate change. Senagriculture is a successful example from Senegal that involves technology and innovation, and brings together rural supply in line with urban demands, highlighting the need for young people to participate, increase awareness, involve the diaspora, leverage knowledge and ensure that young farmers have access to key information so they can learn to improve and share their concerns.

- **Integrate youth while tackling the future of work:** Preparing youth at home and abroad, investing deeply in the skills on demand and looking at the future of work require a holistic view that considers relevant drivers such as technology, demographic transformations, climate change and setbacks in globalization. Automatization and digitalization will require adaptation and filling the gaps that exist among countries and economies. Informal economies will be difficult to manage in contexts highly dependent on technology. Work in the future will mostly be done online and could be done remotely. Access to platforms will prevent people from migrating in search of jobs, a model that challenges social protection and other labour rights. Linking skills with those who require them will be mainly done through online platforms.

### C. Well-being of young migrants

There is a need for comprehensive solutions that foster inclusion and social cohesion. Solutions require a holistic view that considers young migrants' vulnerabilities and needs, their psychosocial and physical well-being, but also their involvement in addressing negative perceptions, stereotypes and narratives to counteract a language of hate and establish bridges based on commonalities.

- **Comprehensive solutions to address social cohesion:** Social cohesion is a continuous process that requires a multidimensional approach while keeping the youth at the centre. This includes the development of public policies; empowering through representation and inclusion at all levels; building resilience through education, health care and social dialogue; adding value to peer-to-peer learning; establishing mentorship opportunities; and looking for synergies “with the other” to eradicate stigmas and contribute to decreased inequalities.

- **Address youth vulnerabilities, physical and psychosocial needs:** Physical and psychosocial stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health issues or disabilities require specific assistance and attention. The aim should be to identify the fears that disable and prevent young migrants from participating and integrating in their new communities. Specific well-being programmes need to provide counselling support while fostering administrative process and easier access to health care. Psychosocial support with a holistic approach involves all aspects of the person, including cultural, religious and social, and is an approach that contributes to successful integration processes.
- **Challenge realities and narratives:** Promotion of negative narrative through fake news or echo chambers<sup>91</sup> should be a central focus. There is a need for building awareness on how social media contribute to the negative rhetoric around minorities and migrants, leading to hate speech and misinformation. Evidence has been generated linking violent attacks with the polarizing effect of social media; the existence of echo chambers and the lack of exchange of ideas between different communities have increased negative perceptions, xenophobia and radicalization. Effective strategies require solutions targeting both offline and online spaces. Efforts must be made for more interactions between these segregated communities, such as increasing analysis and data that render the negative speech inaccurate. The new African Migration Report interrogates the distortions that characterize African migration, mostly portrayed as irregular mass exodus by African youths from the continent to other parts of the world through the Mediterranean and other illegal channels. The report responds to the need to build a new narrative and perception of African migration that is nuanced and fact-based. Unpacking the data shows that most African migrants remain within Africa, and while women constitute almost half of the total migration, they stay relatively close to home, whereas men travel further. The report highlights that African youth are not only a large part of the conversation regarding how migration within the continent will evolve, but they themselves will be some of the prime determinants of its success.

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91 Echo chamber: An environment in which a person encounters only beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own, so that their existing views are reinforced, and alternative ideas are not considered.



- **Storytelling as a way to confront stereotypes and build bridges between cultures, while combating fake news and echo chambers:** Using stories as simple as the love of a grandmother can help build bridges among communities and identify commonalities between youngsters from different origins, thereby showcasing the human side of migration. Putting a face to the story helps leverage influence with meaningful answers and can help break echo chambers. The YouTube channel BENI, a collection of young migrant voices or images of children showing their wishes for the future in refugee camps in Yemen, are some examples that help raise awareness among young people.
- **Increase awareness by listening to youth and amplifying their voices:** This is not about showing only the successful stories, but also learning what happened to those who did not succeed and those who had to return. Learning from their needs and vulnerabilities and how they confronted their lack of integration or reintegration will help to identify solutions and prevent these stories from happening again.

There is a need to look at the big picture: demographics and technology are transforming our lives in an ever-changing world where the environment or the future of work plays a key role for migrants' inclusion and social cohesion. Actors need to be engaged with youth, address their vulnerabilities, work for the youth, with the youth and by the youth, and give them a more prominent role in the political agendas.





