MIGRATION AND YOUTH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
The Global Migration Group (GMG) is an inter-agency group bringing together heads of agencies to promote the wider application of all relevant international and regional instruments and norms relating to migration, and to encourage the adoption of more coherent, comprehensive and better-coordinated approaches to the issue of international migration. The GMG is particularly concerned with improving the overall effectiveness of its members and other stakeholders in capitalising on the opportunities of, and responding to the challenges presented by, international migration. The GMG consists of:

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)
- United Nations University (UNU)
- World Bank (WB)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

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A copy of the full report is available at: http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/migrationandyouth
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We live in the “age of mobility.” International migration is a major global trend; an estimated 232 million people live outside their countries of birth.

A significant part of today’s migrant population – more than 10 per cent – are young people aged 15 to 24.

Migration offers countless young people opportunities for education, employment, skills acquisition, personal growth and empowerment that might have been unavailable at home. However, few policies and practices are in place to address comprehensively the challenges facing young migrants, or to realize their potential. Many are confronted with unemployment, discrimination, exploitation, social exclusion and the absence of social protection. While migration can be an empowering experience for women in many cases, migrant girls and young women can also face particular gender-based risks. Especially in times of financial crisis, migrants face hostility and are turned into scapegoats, blamed for unemployment and other social and economic ills. More broadly, both origin and destination societies often perceive migration only as a problem, missing the underlying opportunity offered by energetic and determined young migrants.

Migration has an ever-higher profile on national and international policy agendas. As the world shapes a post-2015 development agenda and new set of sustainable development goals, we must do more to meet the legitimate aspirations and needs of millions of young migrants. It is critical to ensure that migration is a choice, not a desperate necessity, for young people, by providing them with education, decent work, social protection and security in countries of origin.

The intersection of migration and youth remains a large, inadequately addressed challenge for governance in countries worldwide and at the international level. This intersection will become more critical in coming decades, as demographic and structural changes see aging populations and declining workforces in an increasing number of countries, while growing youth populations boost demand for employment, social services and a greater role in decision-making in many developing countries.

This report by the Global Migration Group is the first publication to comprehensively address the multi-dimensional issue of youth migration. It assembles knowledge, lessons learned, good practices and innovative policy perspectives from nearly a score of United Nations agencies and international organizations, as well as academics, civil society representatives, youth leaders and other experts and stakeholders.

Its key messages and policy recommendations address the full range of issues facing governments and societies: better data; more attention to human rights, social protection, gender, employment and education; the facilitation of remittances; the role of local government; encouraging youth participation; mainstreaming youth migration into development policy and planning, as well as the emerging challenges of environmental degradation and climate change displacement.

I commend this report’s practical focus on how to transform youth migration from a challenge to an opportunity. Together, we can empower today’s youth – tomorrow’s students, workers, entrepreneurs, parents and leaders – to achieve their full human potential in a more peaceful, equitable, inclusive and sustainable world.
MIGRATION AND YOUTH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES*

Executive Summary
This Thematic Report by the Global Migration Group (GMG) offers a comprehensive overview of the many facets of youth migration, from contexts of rural marginalization and environmental degradation where many young migrants begin their journey to the challenges they face in countries of destination, such as realising their rights, accessing decent work and social protection. It discusses a range of specific issues, ranging from employment to gender to health, education and participation. The report is intended as an action-oriented contribution to the migration policy debate.

In addition to elaborating on perspectives of 12 UN bodies with GMG membership, it also includes chapters prepared by the OECD, scholars, and non-governmental organisations devoted to youth and migration issues. Going beyond a rich and thorough background introduction, chapters include examples of good practices, succinct messages and concrete, forward-thinking policy options for realising the opportunities offered by youth migration.

YOUTH MIGRATION

Today, there are approximately 232 million international migrants (this estimate includes all people living in a country or area other than that in which they were born,), according to the 2013 UN estimate of global migrant stocks,1 of whom roughly 12 per cent are between 15 and 24 years of age. Young people comprise a considerably larger share of contemporary migration flows.

Acknowledging that it remains difficult to determine drivers of migration among adolescents and youth, the report notes that young people’s motivations to migrate are often linked to the search for decent livelihoods due to lack of employment and/or under-employment, indecent working conditions and poor economic prospects in countries of origin. Furthering education, family reunification and escaping from regions affected by war, persecution, humanitarian crises or natural disasters are also important motives for migration. In many cases, gender-based discrimination, including gender-based violence or restrictions on women’s rights, is another reason for migration.
WHY ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH?

The report focuses on migrant adolescents and youth because they represent a specific category of migrants whose unique needs, rights and challenges are not addressed as part of the larger migration policy debate. It refers to youth/adolescent migrants as persons aged 15-24, those the United Nations (UN) defines as ‘youth’ “without prejudice to other definitions by Member States.” The report on occasion references groups other than those aged 15-24. Several chapters include discussions of internal as well as international migration issues, and certain chapters also address youth/adolescents affected by migration in other ways, such as children born to immigrant parents in destination countries.

Adolescence and youth are pivotal stages of human development, during which young people make the transition from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood. During adolescence the investments and gains of early and middle childhood come to fruition; however, these gains must be sustained and consolidated to ensure an effective transition into adulthood. It is also a period during which social, economic, biological and other events occur that set the stage for adult life.

A positive migration experience during this age period can set young migrants on a successful path toward capitalising on their accomplishments and developing economic and social assets for their future. However, if migration takes place during these years and the circumstances are negative, the experience can have particularly dire and traumatizing consequences for adolescents’ short- and long-term future. Not only can they lose a valuable opportunity for full human development, but their countries of birth and destination stand to lose an enormous potential contribution to social, economic and cultural development.

Getting today’s policies right concerning adolescent and youth migrants also means planning for the future. By 2025 – when the global population is expected to reach 8 billion – countries around the globe will be impacted by demographic changes evolving today. The majority of the next billion people will be born in low- and middle-income countries. While developed countries are simultaneously facing low fertility rates, ageing populations and declining workforces, many less developed countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia continue experiencing higher birth rates and a significant “youth bulge”. The former need workers while growing numbers of young
people in less-developed countries need jobs. Migration will be a major factor in response to those trends.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH MIGRANTS

Adolescent and youth migrants are generally resourceful, resilient, adaptable to new environments and able to learn and speak new languages. Many have skills and qualifications and are familiar with new technologies. For many young people migration represents an important step toward achieving a sustainable life for themselves and their families. For others migration is a way to escape from chronic poverty, violence, gender-based discrimination or the effects of climate change.

In host communities, equality of treatment and opportunity allows migrants to contribute as productive members of communities, as workers, students, entrepreneurs, artists, and consumers. If migration becomes a productive and empowering experience and opens up new opportunities, young people can gain more skills through education and/or work experience and earn higher wages, allowing them to support their families and contribute to the development of their communities of origin as well as the societies where they live and work. Especially for young women, migration can also be a socially empowering experience. As the recipient of remittances or as a breadwinner in a new country, they may gain decision-making power and they may experience greater rights and personal autonomy and be able to participate in political processes.

In all countries, a conducive policy environment can tap into young people’s energy, propensity to innovate and familiarity with new technologies to revitalise economies. The young and mobile represent human resources and development potential for both the countries where they were born and those to which they migrate.

SPECIFIC NEEDS AND VULNERABILITIES OF ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH MIGRANTS

Risks faced by migrants are exacerbated in the case of adolescents and youth. Young migrants are more vulnerable when, in combination with their age and stage of life, they experience isolation, exclusion, discrimination and insecurity. Moreover, in the migration process young people can lose their social networks and may also be without parents or family members to provide guidance and care. Young people may be
particularly affected by xenophobia and discrimination and suffer further marginalization due to lack of fluency in the local language, new and different cultural norms and lack of information about laws and regulations.

Young migrants are particularly vulnerable to risks when they are in irregular situations and face threats of exploitation, trafficking, exclusion, detection, detention and deportation. Adolescent and youth migrants, especially girls, are vulnerable to human rights violations such as child marriage, sexual exploitation, violence and unpaid labour.

To overcome these risks and to enhance their development potential and their contributions to their countries of origin and destination, young migrants need to be able to realise their rights, such as the right and access to education, health care, non-discrimination, including in employment, participation in decision-making, and family life.

**YOUTH, MIGRATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

In framing this report, GMG agencies recognized that migration is not a panacea for achieving development, nor can promoting migration substitute for appropriate public policies on development or on governing migration. However, it is a global reality that, if addressed wisely, migration can benefit all concerned and involve adolescents and youth. GMG members share the premise that the migration experience can be beneficial to adolescents and youth if – and only if – migration policies are anchored in a system that protects young migrants’ human and labour rights.

With the approach of 2015, the target year for achieving the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) set in 2000, global debates now revolve around establishing development goals for the post-2015 era. The UN post-2015 Task Team acknowledged migration and mobility as important enablers for inclusive and sustainable development and growth. Global consultations on population dynamics also strongly urged integrating migration into the new development framework.

This report contributes to the discussions about the post-2015 agenda through its comprehensive and exclusive focus on migration as it affects adolescents and youth. It complements and supports the GMG Position Paper on Migration and the post-2015 Development Agenda. The challenge is not only how to make youth and migration
relevant to the global agenda, but also how to make that agenda relevant to youth and the realities of global interconnectedness and mobility.

**CONTENT AND ORGANISATION**

The following summary of chapter content reflects the organisation of the full report into five thematic sections that explore different aspects of the situation faced by millions of young people as migrants, potential migrants, or sons and daughters of migrant parents.

Each chapter describes and analyses an important area of concern related to youth migration and offers policy options that could improve outcomes for young people, the countries they leave, and those they move to. Each chapter identifies key messages and policy recommendations, in some cases specific to concerned government entities and related stakeholders.

The conclusion offers a succinct summary of the key findings of the report. For easy reference, two final sections list the Key Messages and Policy Recommendations from the chapters of the full report, intended for consideration in national policies and practices or by specialised government institutions and non-governmental stakeholders.

**Facts, figures and trends**

Chapter 1: *Youth Migration: Facts & Figures*, authored by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA), and building on the joint work between UN/DESA and UNICEF to gather and analyse data available on youth migration, provides an overview of available facts and figures on youth migration and offers recommendations for improving the evidence base in this regard. It highlights the need for migration data disaggregated by age, sex and other relevant factors to: reveal an accurate picture of the situation of young migrants; gain better understanding of the youth migration phenomenon; and provide the foundation for evidence-based policy-making. The main recommendations are: to strengthen the evidence base on youth migration by investing in collection, dissemination and analysis of age- and sex-disaggregated data; to build the capacity of governments to obtain, disseminate and analyse such data; and to support qualitative and quantitative research.
Respecting human rights, social protection and gender

The second section of the report reviews the manner in which human rights, social protection gender and refugee protection intersect with youth migration. The first chapter, Human Rights of Adolescents and Youth in the Context of Migration, was prepared under the auspices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with contributions by the National University of Lanús (Argentina), the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) and UNICEF. The chapter describes how, despite an international framework designed to protect and promote the rights of all individuals, and despite the specific provisions of the CRC protecting those under the age of 18, adolescent and youth migrants experience numerous human rights violations. The chapter includes an in-depth look at the impacts of immigration-related detention and restricted access to education on the rights, well-being and development of undocumented adolescents and youth, highlighting specific challenges around mental health and psycho-social development. The contribution concludes by calling on the international community and national policy-makers and stakeholders to adopt a rights-based, age- and gender-sensitive, and equity-focused approach to youth migration and development, stressing that the special protections granted to children under international and national law and policy should not automatically disappear when the child reaches 18 years.

The third chapter, Role and Relevance of Social Protection, prepared by Patrick Taran, Global Migration Policy Associates, based on submissions by Sheila Murthy and Natalia Winder of UNICEF and contributions by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and publication co-editors, explores the social protection rights and needs of migrant adolescents and youth. It highlights social protection measures that could be offered to young migrants in countries of origin and destination to ensure their access to essential services, health care, and a minimal standard of living. The chapter focuses particularly on social security coverage, from which many young migrants are excluded due to their migration status – or are subject to losing upon departure from their country of origin or when they move from country to country. Facilitating equitable access to social protection, including health care and/or insurance for young migrants and their families, enhances their well-being and development contributions. Overall, the chapter recommends incorporating migrant youth into national social security systems.
Chapter 4: *Adolescent and Young Women Migrants*, written by Professor Susan Martin of Georgetown University in consultation with UN Women, examines the lives, needs and accomplishments of adolescent girls and young women affected by migration. It describes the causes and forms of their migration, gaps in law and policy, and three areas of particular importance in understanding the impact of migration on gender roles and on young women: education, health and employment. The gender issues analysed in this chapter and reflected elsewhere in the text highlight similarities, differences and inequities that exist in both origin and destination countries, which may be reinforced or weakened by economic, political and social institutions. Equality for adolescent and young women migrants must be considered in policy and practice through the development of gender-responsive measures, laws and practices to protect their rights.

Chapter 5: *The Refugee Dimension: Adolescents’ and Youths’ Right to Seek and Access Asylum and Protection* was prepared by Noëmi Fivat with Monika Sandvik-Nylund, Grith Norgaard and Sumbul Rizvi of UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). It focuses on the risks and vulnerabilities facing the growing number of adolescents and youth, including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), seeking refugee protection in a context of increased mobility but intensified control over movement of people. It provides case studies of refugee youth and unaccompanied minors, and details challenges in ensuring access to refugee protection and to appropriate services and child protection in mixed flows. The chapter discusses and recommends implementation of five key responses: protection sensitive entry systems, child protection systems, alternatives to detention of children and adolescents, family tracing and reunification for UASC, and expanding regularized migration alternatives.

**Employment, education and health**

Seven chapters of the GMG report address issues related to employment, education and health, issues that impact on the policy agendas of different government institutions as well as social partners and civil society. The sixth chapter, *Youth-Migration-Employment: Burning Issues for Governance, Development and Social Cohesion Worldwide*, written by Patrick Taran of Global Migration Policy Associates in collaboration with the ILO, explains the centrality of employment and decent work to migration, highlighting the risks of precarious work, exploitation and sub-standard working conditions to which many adolescent and
Youth migrants are susceptible. It highlights labour market and demographic trends that are fomenting significantly increased demand for migrant skills and labour in many countries, and outlines policy challenges and possible solutions. The chapter concludes that ensuring decent work for young migrants contributes toward realising both the economic and social development benefits of migration and young peoples’ social protection and inclusion.

Chapter 7: Labour, Employment and Youth: Perspectives from West Africa, prepared by Drs Eleni Bizas and Jérôme Elie of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, highlights that intra-regional mobility is the most common among youth in the context of Africa’s regional economic communities, where migration is key to integration and development. It identifies and discusses policy needs in six critical areas: education, decent work, safe mobility, labour-intensive investment, health services and protection. Policies that address the obstacles posed by local realities could alternatively enable youth to stay at home, make migration safer for those on the move, or empower youth to maximise their potential when seeking employment in local, regional or global markets. Recommendations for policy-makers include: strengthen implementation of international and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) legal frameworks; improve data gathering; focus on education and training for rural youth; provide information about available employment; and incorporate migration into economic and social development policies and strategies.

Chapter 8: Labour, Rural Youth and Migration, prepared by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), explores conditions in the rural areas from which many young migrants begin their journey, and urges policy measures aimed at providing employment, financial credit and market opportunities as alternatives to migration for young people as well as at encouraging return from abroad, in order to retain or return talent and social and financial capital in/to places of origin. The overarching message of the chapter is that decent work, economic growth and sustainable development that increase opportunities and social mobility for youth are critical to ensuring that migration is a matter of informed choice rather than necessity. The theme of its recommendations is to provide youth in rural areas with alternatives to outmigration.

Remittances sent by migrants to family members remaining at home play an important role in poverty reduction. Chapter 9: Remittances, Development and Youth builds on
contributions by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the University of Sussex. It explores obstacles faced by young people seeking to send remittances, noting that remittances by young migrants play an ever-stronger role in the economies of many developing countries, often helping the most disadvantaged families. The chapter highlights the need for measures to facilitate remittances and lower their costs for young migrants, as well as to enhance access by young migrants to financial services.

Chapter 10: Offspring of Immigrants in OECD Education Systems and Labour Markets, contributed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), offers perspectives from OECD countries on an important group of children and young people: the children of immigrants, either born in the destination country or who migrated with, or joined, immigrant parents. It shows that although children of immigrants constitute a substantial and growing share of youth in many OECD countries, their educational achievement and access to employment often lag behind peer nationals. It recommends several steps to include children of immigrants in integration policies through targeted approaches, such as expanding their access to pre-school, increasing their opportunities for job training and apprenticeships, and incorporating their parents into labour markets.

Chapter 11: Migration and Tertiary Education, prepared by UNESCO, points out that the number of youth studying abroad is growing rapidly, creating a need for international cooperation and regulatory agreements to oversee quality control of higher education and accreditation frameworks. It further stresses the need for dialogue and cooperation among countries to acknowledge educational qualifications obtained in other countries. Enhancing quality and harmonising standards of cross-border tertiary and vocational education can lead to ‘win-win’ situations for students and employers in both countries of origin and destination. To facilitate mobility for higher education, regional frameworks on accreditation, qualifications and quality assurance represent an important first step.

The final chapter in this section, Health, Youth Migration and Development, provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), focuses on the social determinants of migrant health. It examines how the failure to protect and promote rights, along with restrictive immigration and employment policies and pervasive anti-immigrant attitudes, lead to unequal access to health care and services, thus increasing the health risks of young migrants. Since certain health risks are elevated for young migrants and further heightened
by other risks associated with migration, the overarching recommendation is to ensure that adequate health services are available for, and accessible by, adolescent and youth migrants.

**Mainstreaming migration**

The third section of the book explores the issue of mainstreaming migration; that is, the incorporation of migration into national governance frameworks, mandates, policy-making and activities related to development planning, as well as activities of local governments. It also explores the crucial concern of youth migrant participation.

Chapter 13: *Mainstreaming Youth Migration into National Development Strategies*, prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), assesses the extent to which youth migration has been incorporated into development planning, through an analysis of relevant policies and programmes. It finds that most countries fall short in this endeavour. The chapter highlights promising approaches and urges greater efforts to mainstream youth migration into all relevant aspects of governance, which it argues is critical to achieving coherent and effective policy and practice.

The next chapter (*Local Authorities, Migration and Youth*), contributed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), underscores the centrality of local government in addressing the impact and consequences of migration and migrants – migrant youth in particular – on local economies, employment, services and community life. It urges local authorities to pay special attention to the integration of migrant communities and to involve migrant youth in consultations and activities. Since cities are epicentres of human mobility, local authorities are well-placed to identify and address issues faced by young migrants and encourage youth involvement through local policies and practices.

Chapter 15: *Strengthening Participation by Young Migrants*, was prepared by Patrick Taran of Global Migration Policy Associates and Alison Raphael, UNICEF editorial consultant, with inputs from several sources including UN-HABITAT, UNESCO and UNICEF. The chapter highlights imperatives and challenges of young migrants’ participation in the life and decision-making of the communities where they live and in the policies that affect them. It grounds discussion in the rights to youth and adolescent participation enumerated in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. It discusses concepts and definitions for youth participation, including community, social and political participation as well as in
policy making. It recommends facilitating migrant youth participation in civil society organisations, unions and community groups; recognizing migrant youth and diaspora organisations, facilitating networking and joint projects between young locals and young migrants, and involving government and non-governmental stakeholders.

Environmental change and migration

The chapters in this section highlight the vulnerability of young people to the effects of environmental degradation and climate change, as well as their potentially instrumental role in encouraging local development and resilience. A brief introduction to the section by Dr Benjamin Schraven of the German Development Institute highlights the complex and interrelated environmental, socio-economic, cultural, political and demographic factors that influence the climate change/environmental degradation-migration nexus.

Chapter 16: Youth, Environmental Change and Migration, by the IOM and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), discusses environmental change as a migration trigger, observing that different types of environmental change lead to different types of migration. It highlights that migration should not be viewed as a failure to adapt to environmental change; on the contrary, migration is often part of adaptation strategies. The chapter provides an analysis of the relationships between young people, migration and environmental change, stressing the urgent need to improve the knowledge base on the inter-linkages between youth migration and environmental change.

The other chapter in this section (Climate Change, International Migration and Youth), authored by Professor Susan Martin of Georgetown University, reviews the current understanding about climate change and migration, emphasising the now-recognised potential for climate change to uproot large numbers of people. In this context, youth may migrate locally or internationally, and migration may be voluntary or forced. It notes that climate change-displaced migrants tend to be young people who are responsible for supporting their families in the face of environmental disaster, via financial or in-kind remittances.

Both of these chapters make the case that changes in the environment (whether sudden or gradual onset), directly and indirectly influence the propensity to migrate; that these changes and the resulting displacement are likely to increase in the coming years and will particularly impact youth; and that existing laws, policies and institutional arrangements
are inadequate to deal with this complex phenomenon. Overall, this section presents several recommendations that underline the need for more research and data-gathering and for the development of common guiding principles, particularly regarding the protection of those displaced as a result of environmental or climate change. In particular it stresses the importance of youth-sensitive, participatory and proactive approaches, including comprehensive migration governance strategies and development agendas, as well as support for disaster risk reduction and humanitarian responses.

KEY MESSAGES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The final sections of the GMG report, bringing together Key Messages and Policy Recommendations from all 17 chapters, are included in full below. The key messages provide a summary overview of the main issues and challenges identified in each chapter of the report. The recommendations are likewise reproduced from each chapter.

Together, the recommendations suggest a comprehensive policy agenda to address youth migration. It should be noted that the listing does not reflect any prioritisation by the GMG, nor does it select a ‘short list’ for concentrated advocacy. Several sections convey general recommendations for national policy and practice regarding youth migration, while others focus on specialised areas of policy and the respective government institutions and non-governmental stakeholders.
NOTES

MIGRATION AND YOUTH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES*

Introduction
International migration has become the face of globalisation—a symbol of the world’s growing interdependence. At the same time, the largest generation of youth in history demands attention: they are highly connected through technology and social networks, they need education and decent jobs, and they want a say in their future. Empowering young people is one of the top five priorities of the UN Secretary-General’s Five-Year Action Agenda.

Although human mobility has gained increasing international attention in recent years, migration by young people has been mostly absent from global policy debates and national policies.

The Global Migration Group (GMG) is convinced that with the right policies in place, youth migration can represent a triple-win, benefiting young migrants, the countries they depart from, and their countries of destination. The policy responses advanced in this report can transform youth migration from a challenge into an opportunity, empowering today’s youth—tomorrow’s students, workers, entrepreneurs, parents and leaders—to achieve their full human potential.

UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund), the GMG chair for the first half of 2011, proposed a joint GMG thematic report analysing the positive and negative impacts of international migration on young people from a rights and gender perspective. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), in its capacity as the next GMG chair, assisted in launching the process. The report would build on the outcomes of the GMG Symposium Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development, held in New York on 17-18 May 2011. The purpose was to provide a common GMG policy and advocacy platform from which to support policy-makers, civil society and other stakeholders to design and implement evidence-based policies that maximise the positive effects of migration and help young migrants to realise their rights.

The resulting report provides a broad compilation of data, research findings and experience from GMG member agencies and academia, offering an extensive evidence base for policy and practice. The report is intended to be user-friendly and practical, and includes key messages and concrete recommendations for policy-makers and other stakeholders.
The report was a collaborative effort. GMG member agencies prepared chapters on youth migration concerns in their areas of competence, and academic specialists were invited to prepare several chapters. Civil society organisations contributed text incorporated in various chapters. The present document is a summary of the full GMG report.

**YOUTH MIGRATION**

Today, there are approximately 232 million international migrants, according to the 2013 UN estimate of global migrant stocks (measuring the number of migrants at a particular point in time). Around 12 per cent of international migrants (roughly one out of eight) are youth (defined here as those between 15 and 24 years of age). Data on migration flows – the change in the number of migrants over a period of time, as distinct from stocks – is generally less reliable and age-specific.

Acknowledging that it is difficult to determine with precision the drivers of youth migration, the report notes that young people's motivations are often linked to the search for sustainable livelihoods, due to lack of employment and/or under-employment, absence of decent working conditions, and poor economic prospects in countries of origin. Furthering education, family reunification or formation, and escaping from regions affected by war, persecution, humanitarian crises, or natural disasters are also important drivers. For women, gender-based discrimination, including violence or restrictions on their rights, is another motive.

**WHY YOUNG PEOPLE?**

This report focuses on youth in the context of migration: persons aged 15-to-24 years as defined by the UN (“without prejudice to other definitions by Member States”). This cohort represents a specific category of migrants whose unique needs, rights and challenges are not being adequately addressed by the larger migration policy debate.

On occasion, the report refers to other age groups, notably children (0-to-17) and adolescents (10-to-19). The age range covered by “youth” sometimes overlaps with that of childhood and adolescence, periods during which individuals face specific vulnerabilities and have additional protection needs that are often ignored or placed at risk during the migration process. Because of this overlap, several chapters of the report refer to adolescents as well as youth, and stress that all those under the age of 18 who are
impacted by migration in countries of origin, transit and destination, regardless of status, are protected by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Youth is a pivotal stage of human development during which young people make the transition from childhood to adulthood and from dependence to independence and interdependence. This transition (social, economic, biological) is fundamental to safeguarding, shaping, further developing, and deploying their human and social capital. It is during this period that young people make important decisions about their lives – particularly their ethical, social, economic, cultural, political and civic positioning and role – setting the stage for adulthood. While it is during adolescence that the investments and gains of early and middle childhood come to fruition, these gains must be sustained and consolidated to ensure an effective transition to adulthood.7

Young people’s choices and the way they decide to pursue them have a significant impact not only on their own lives and opportunities for human development, but also on the lives of their societies and communities, both in the medium and long term. The youth years pose both challenges and opportunities. They represent a period during which the efficiency of interventions throughout childhood and adolescence can be tested, assessed and, as a result, further improved or re-considered. At the same time, policy decisions affecting this age group can either maximise or hamper the return on investment in earlier stages of the life cycle.

A positive migration experience can set young migrants on a successful path toward capitalising on their accomplishments and developing economic and social assets for their future. However, if the circumstances are negative, migration can have particularly dire and traumatic consequences for young peoples’ short and long-term future. Not only they lose a valuable opportunity for full human development, but their countries of birth and destination stand to lose an enormous potential contribution to social, economic and cultural development.

Getting today’s youth migration policies right also means planning for the future. By 2025 – when the global population is expected to reach 8 billion8 – countries around the globe will feel the impact of today’s demographic changes. The majority of the next billion people will be born in low- and middle-income countries.9 While developed countries are simultaneously facing low fertility rates, ageing populations and declining workforces, many less-developed countries continue to experience higher birth rates and a significant
The former need workers, while growing numbers of young people in less-developed countries need jobs. Migration will be an increasingly important factor influencing the response to these trends.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG MIGRANTS**

Young migrants are generally resourceful, resilient, adaptable to new environments, and able to learn and speak new languages. Many have skills and qualifications and are familiar with new technologies. As noted earlier, for some young people migration is a way to escape from chronic poverty, violence, gender-based discrimination, or the impact of climate change.

For most young people migration represents an important step toward achieving a sustainable life for themselves and their families.

Adolescent girls in developing countries are migrating in ever greater numbers. While migration can be risky, it can present adolescent girls with new opportunities that are unavailable in their home villages and towns – provided necessary safety nets and resources are in place. When migrant girls can take advantage of the benefits, they can be a powerful force for change in the developing world – improving lives and reducing poverty in their communities and countries.11

In countries of destination, equality of treatment and opportunity allows migrants, including young migrants, to contribute as productive members of their communities: as workers, students, entrepreneurs, artists and consumers. If migration becomes a productive and empowering experience and opens up new opportunities, young migrant women and men can gain more skills through education and/or work experience and earn higher wages, allowing them to support their families and contribute to the development of their communities of origin, as well as the societies in which they live and work. For young women, migration can also be a socially empowering experience: as the recipient of remittances or as breadwinners or students in a new country, young women may gain decision-making power and experience greater personal autonomy.

In all countries, a conducive policy environment that respects human rights principles and standards can enhance young people’s energy, propensity to innovate, and familiarity with new technologies, thereby helping to revitalise national economies. The young and
mobile represent human resources and development potential for both the countries where
they were born and those to which they migrate.

Young migrants’ engagement in community life and organizations where they reside and
their participation in policy making and implementation is key to mobilizing them to realize
– and often to enhance – the opportunities migration gives rise to.

The United Nations 2013 World Youth Report offers further perspective on the
situation of migrant youth, highlighting concerns, challenges and successes
experienced by young migrants told in their own voices.\textsuperscript{12}

**SPECIFIC NEEDS AND VULNERABILITIES OF YOUNG MIGRANTS**

Risks faced by migrants are exacerbated in the case of youth, especially those under 18
years of age, particularly when they are in irregular situations and face threats of
exploitation, trafficking, exclusion, detection, detention and deportation. Young migrants,
especially girls and young women, are vulnerable to human rights violations such as
child marriage, sexual exploitation, violence and unpaid labour. Many young migrants
face deskilling and precarious employment in so-called 3-D jobs (dirty, dangerous and
degrading), despite having higher educational or skills-training qualifications.

Unaccompanied minors and children and adolescent asylum seekers, refugees, and stateless
persons commonly face absence of international protection, exposure to detention, non-
respect for their ‘best interests’ in treatment and procedures, and lack of access to essential
services and national child protection systems.

During the migration process young people can lose their social networks and may also
be without parents or family members to provide guidance and care. Due to their age
and developmental stage, young migrants are more vulnerable to migration experiences
that result in isolation, exclusion and insecurity. They may be particularly affected by
xenophobia and discrimination, and suffer further marginalisation due to lack of fluency
in the local language, new and different cultural norms, and insufficient information
about laws and regulations in their new country. To overcome these risks and enhance
their development potential and contributions to their countries of origin and destination,
young migrants need to be able to realise their rights without discrimination, including
their right to education, health, work, family life, and participation in decision-making and
community life.
YOUTH, MIGRATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

In framing the report, GMG member agencies acknowledged that migration is not a panacea for achieving development, nor can promoting migration substitute for appropriate public policies. However, migration is a global reality that, if addressed wisely, can benefit all concerned.

GMG members share the premise that the migration experience can be beneficial to youth if, and only if, migration policies are anchored in a system that protects young migrants’ human rights, including labour rights, and enables meaningful engagement in decisions and processes that affect them.

With the arrival of 2015, the target year for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set in 2000, global debates revolve around establishing development goals for the post-2015 era. The UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda acknowledged migration and mobility as important enablers for inclusive and sustainable development and growth. Global consultations on population dynamics also called for integrating migration into the new development framework.

The GMG report contributes to discussions about the post-2015 UN Development Agenda through its comprehensive and exclusive focus on the impact of migration on youth. It complements and supports a GMG Position Paper on Integrating Migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The challenge is not only how to make youth and migration relevant to the global agenda, but also how to make that agenda relevant to youth and the realities of global mobility and interconnectedness.
NOTES

5 The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child as “every human being below the age of 18 years” (CRC Article 1). Children may be granted certain rights and responsibilities at different ages by national legislation; however, there is international consensus on the legal definition of a child stemming from the CRC.
6 Adolescence is defined as the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. Therefore, it is very individual and there is no scientific or legal consensus on a specific age definition. The United Nations uses the age cohort 10-19 when referring to adolescence. However, individuals may experience some of the key physiological and psychological changes from an age earlier than 10, and later than 19 years. The upper boundary of adolescence is often raised to 21 or 25 years of age in contexts dealing with physical, social and mental health and development, with reference to on-going development during these years. Adolescence itself is not usually defined in legislation, though definitions are often linked to national laws setting the age of majority and legal ages for additional rights and responsibilities associated with adulthood.
9 Danzhen You and David Anthony (2012), Generation 2025 and Beyond, UNICEF, New York.
14 See for example, United Nations Development Group (2013), A Million Voices: The World We Want. Available at: http://www.worldwewant2015.org/bitcache/cb02253d47a0f7d4518f41a4d11e33022991089?vid=422422&disposition=inline&op=vie w. See also the 2013 Dhaka Declaration on Global Population Dynamics. Available at: http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/319783
YOUTH MIGRATION: FACTS & FIGURES*

Chapter 1
Clear definitions and timely, comparable, accessible and reliable data are the cornerstones of any successful policy intervention. This chapter outlines some of what is known about young migrants to date and presents data and other challenges faced by policymakers and stakeholders when designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating migration policies affecting youth.

The main focus of this report is on migrants between 15 and 24 years of age, who in 2013 represented about one-eighth (28.2 million) of the 232 million international migrants worldwide. Children are defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child as people below 18 years of age unless, under national laws applicable, majority is attained earlier (Article 1). Adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood, though no legal definition exists. For analytical purposes, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) divides adolescence into three stages: early (10-to-13 years), middle (14-to-16 years) and late (17-to-19 years). Although no legal definition of ‘youth’ has been established, the United Nations (UN) defines persons aged 15-to-24 as youth (“without prejudice to other definitions by Member States.”)¹

Despite some progress, the data needed to enable policymakers and stakeholders to fully understand the role of youth within migration patterns worldwide and the specific motivations that drive them remain insufficient. The UN’s Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UNICEF are attempting to fill this void by developing comparable estimates of the global stock of international migrant children and youth for all countries and regions. Data disaggregated by age and sex, among other factors, are important to better understand the experience of young people on the move. Detailed data also serve as the foundation for an evidence base upon which migration policies and programmes can be built to protect the human rights of young migrants.

WHAT DO AVAILABLE DATA TELL US?

Information on migration is often gathered as part of population censuses or through administrative surveys. Global estimates of levels and trends in youth migration enable policymakers to design evidence-based policies that will maximize the positive effects of migration and minimize its negative effects on families and communities in both countries of origin and destination.²

*Prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Migration Section.

This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF*
Young people are more likely than older people to migrate

The age selectivity of international migration is well known: all things being equal, younger people are more likely to migrate than older people. As migrant flows to selected traditional and non-traditional destination countries in Europe show, a large proportion of foreigners entering a country as migrants in any given year are young adults⁵ (Figure 1.1). According to the data for these countries, the age distribution of migrants generally peaks in the mid-to-late-20s. Figure 1.1 shows that most migrants are between the ages of 23 and 27. Adolescents and youth aged 15-24 account for between 19 and 34 per cent of international migrants: on average, one in four newly arriving migrants to these countries is in this age group. Youth between the ages of 18 and 29 also account for a large proportion of international migrants.

Figure 1.1. Age Distribution of Inflows of International Migrants by Year (Selected Countries)
While youth constitute a formidable part of the migrant population, children under age 15 represent a smaller, yet significant, proportion. However, children are also affected by migration in other ways: many are left behind when a parent or parents migrate, or are born to migrant parents outside the country they know as home.
International migration overall is increasing; the number of migrants has grown from 154 million in 1990 to 175 million in 2000, 221 million in 2010 and 232 million in 2013, the latest year for which data are available. Of the total international migrant stock in 2013, an estimated 28.2 million were between the ages of 15 and 24 (Table 1.1)\(^4\), which represents around 12 per cent of the total migrant population (Table 1.2). The number of young migrants increased from 23.2 million in 1990 to 28.2 million in 2013. Calculations of the number of young migrants are affected by the way children born to international migrants are classified. In most destination countries, children born to immigrants from another country are included among the native-born population. Children are also underrepresented in global migrant tallies due to
restrictive government policies that discourage migrants from bringing family members, including children, with them.

Over 12 per cent of international migrants were between the ages of 15 and 24 in 2013, but that share has decreased since 1990

Table 1.2. Percentage of International Migrants in Selected Age Groups, by Development Group, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development group</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>0-14</th>
<th>15-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>15.1</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed countries</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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</tr>
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<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15.7</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>


The proportion of migrants aged 15-to-24 among all international migrants is generally higher in developing countries than in developed countries, and is highest in countries designated as ‘least developed’ (Table 1.2). This can be partially explained by the fact that a continuous inflow of young migrants is replacing older generations of migrants; thus there is no significant aging of the migrant population in destination countries. In 2013 adolescent and youth migrants accounted for 10.2 per cent of
international migrants in developed countries, 14.9 per cent of those in developing countries, and 20.9 per cent of those in least-developed countries (Table 1.2). When young migrants move to least-developed countries, it may jeopardise their future well-being, as educational and labour-market opportunities are liable to be more constrained than in developing or developed countries, leaving migrant youth unable to increase their human capital or to find good-paying jobs, and thus to save or send money home.

**Just about half of all migrant youth in the world live in developing countries**

**Table 1.3. Percentage Distribution of Migrants in Selected Age Groups, by Development Group, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development group</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>25-34</th>
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<tr>
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<td>41.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


**Developed countries host the majority of international migrants**

In 2013 developed countries hosted about 59 per cent of all international migrants and almost half (49 per cent) of those aged 15-to-24 (Table 1.3). About one-third (34 per cent) of all migrants in developed countries were under the age of 15. In 2013 some 51 per cent of migrant adolescents and youth worldwide lived in developing countries; the largest number were residing in Asia -- 10.3 million (36 per cent). Europe
has the second largest population of adolescent and youth migrants, with 7.3 million (26 per cent), and North America has the third largest, with 5.4 million (19 per cent). Africa hosts an additional 3.4 million youth migrants and Latin America and the Caribbean host 1.1 million, while Oceania hosts the remainder – 750,000.

**Women account for less than half of migrant youth**

Globally, 46.5 per cent of migrants aged 15-to-24 are young women or girls; similar to the percentage of females in the total migrant population (48 per cent). That said, the share of females among all migrants declined slightly: from 48.8 per cent in 1990 to 48 per cent in 2013. Despite a slight increase in the share of female migrants in developed countries between 1990 and 2013, the corresponding share for developing countries declined (Table 1.4).

### Table 1.4. Percentage of Women and Girls Among International Migrants in Selected Age Groups, by Development Group, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development group</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developing countries</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In developed countries women and girls constitute 48.9 per cent of adolescent and youth migrants and 51.6 per cent of the total migrant population in developed countries.

In developing and least developed countries, women and girls represent a somewhat smaller proportion of the total migrant population (43.0 and 45.3 per cent, respectively) due to the rising proportion of males. Nevertheless, female representation among youth migrants in developing countries is slightly higher than in the overall migrant population of those countries (44.1 versus 43 per cent, respectively).

Over time, the share of young female migrants among all migrants in developing countries has been declining: from 46.4 per cent in 1990 to 44.1 per cent in 2013, but remained almost unchanged in developed countries (48.4 per cent in 1990 versus 48.9 per cent in 2013). In least-developed countries, the trend is mixed, rising from 46.2 per cent in 1990 to 47.7 per cent in 2000, and reaching 44.7 per cent by 2013.

**Developing countries experienced the most rapid growth of young migrants**

At the global level, estimates suggest that between 2000 and 2013 the most substantial increase in the number of young migrants occurred among those aged 30 to 34 (2.7 per cent), followed by young people in the 25-to-29-year-old age group (2.4 per cent).

While developed countries saw negative growth rates for young migrants aged 10-to-14 and 15-to-19 in 2000-2013, the opposite was observed in developing countries. The highest annual average growth rates (3.3 per cent) in developing countries is estimated to have occurred among migrants aged 30-to-34 (Table 1.5).
Table 1.5. Annual Average Growth Rate of the Population in Selected Age Groups, by Development Group, 1990-2000 and 2010-2013 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development group</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>30-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>1990-2000</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000-2013</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed countries</td>
<td>1990-2000</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000-2013</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>1990-2000</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000-2013</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least developed countries</td>
<td>1990-2000</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000-2013</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developing countries</td>
<td>1990-2000</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000-2013</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE MIGRATE?

Reliable, comparable data on individual migrants is insufficient to draw definitive conclusions about why young people migrate. But certain assumptions can be made based on empirical and other evidence: most young people migrate in search of a better life for themselves and their families. Some move to escape poverty, violence, unemployment or the effects of climate change; others, to study abroad, reunite with their families or get married. Migration decisions among young people appear to be related to major life transitions, such as obtaining a higher education, starting work or getting married.

The number of young people studying abroad is increasing

Globalisation has led an increasing number of young people migrate to study abroad. From 1975 to 2009 the number of foreign-born students enrolled in tertiary education increased fourfold – from 0.8 million to 3.4 million. Although the number of foreign students continues to rise in both developed and developing countries, the increase has been sharper in developing countries, where the average number of foreign students more than tripled in a decade (from 130,000 in 1999 to 443,000 in 2008). Over the same period, the proportion of foreign students studying in developed countries declined from 92 per cent to 84 per cent.
Young migrants seek work in variety of industries, but unemployment remains worrisome

Adolescents and youth also migrate to seek jobs, but little can be said about their numbers because of the dearth of data disaggregated by age. In addition, understanding the role of youth in labour migration dynamics requires knowing whether a migrant worker is being admitted to a country for the first time or is being...
readmitted after the renewal of a visa or work permit. Indirect evidence suggests that young people may account for a significant proportion of new migrant workers. In the health sector, for instance, young women in sending countries such as the Philippines are known to enrol in nursing schools that cater to the certification requirements of receiving countries, so that successful candidates can migrate as soon as possible, probably while in their 20s. Seasonal worker programmes that engage labourers from the agricultural, construction or tourism sectors are also likely to favour young workers, who may be perceived as better able to adapt both to a new environment and to the demands of the work involved.

Some ‘temporary worker’ programmes are explicitly designed to attract young people. Australia and New Zealand, for instance, allow the entry of students on holiday who wish to work temporarily in those countries (admitted as ‘working holiday makers’). Several countries have programmes allowing the admission of ‘trainees’ who work while improving their skills. Although trainee programmes generally do not establish an explicit age criteria for admission, the expectation is that the trainees will be young. Countries that admit trainees include Germany, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland and the United States. 7

Even when young migrants are not admitted explicitly for employment purposes, they are more likely to be economically active than non-immigrant youth. However, adolescent and youth migrants may fare worse in the labour market, due to a lack of work permits or certificates and language deficits. In developed countries, data typically show that unemployment is higher among young migrants than older migrants and non-immigrant youth. 8

High unemployment among young migrants can be indicative of problems in adapting to the host society, as well as host country discrimination and xenophobia. Studies in selected countries suggest that living in a host country as a young child increases the chances of successful adaptation. 9 Young children more easily acquire fluency in the local language, a major advantage in later life. When girls and boys migrate as teenagers, both language acquisition and adaptation are more difficult.
Joining family members, including spouses, is a major reason given for migration

Many young people migrate to reunite with their families. Admissions of immediate relatives (especially spouses, children and parents of citizens and migrants with permanent residence status) accounted for at least half of all admissions to Australia, Canada, France, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden and the United States in 2003. Some countries allow the admission of unmarried offspring (under the age of 21) of citizens and permanent residents, some of whom would be included in the category of 'migrant youth'. But here again, the lack of data classified by age makes it impossible to arrive at an accurate estimate of youth migration for the purpose of family reunification. The need for age-disaggregated data also includes knowing the age of the spouse when a husband or wife migrates to be with their partner.

Empirical evidence suggests that most international marriages involve young people, and that brides tend to be in their 20s. Given the increasing numbers of young people who travel internationally, marriages between people of different nationalities are occurring more frequently. Marriage may be the reason for migration, or migration may lead to marriage. In nearly all countries the spouses of citizens are allowed to immigrate and are granted the right to reside in the host country. Spouses constitute a sizable proportion of the migrants admitted by major receiving countries. In 2003, for example, 45 per cent of all long-term immigrants in France were spouses from abroad, and spouses of U.S. citizens accounted for 28 of all persons granted U.S. permanent resident status in 2009.

Another aspect of family migration that has gained importance over the past two decades is migration for adoption. In 2005, approximately 40,000 children migrated annually as a result of inter-country adoptions, nearly double the estimated 20,000 adopted annually in the 1980s. The children involved may be aged 15 or over, and thus be categorized as adolescents.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and unaccompanied minors migrate in search of protection

Humanitarian migration includes refugees, asylum-seekers and other persons in need of protection, including unaccompanied minors. Although the UN High Commissioner for Refugees publishes data classified by age, the age groups used do not explicitly show the percentage of persons aged 15-to-24. At the end of 2009, 41 per cent of
refugees were under age 18; 15 per cent were aged 12-to-17. Since most refugee populations originate in countries with relatively young populations, the proportion of young people among refugees tends to be high.¹⁴

Data on the age of asylum-seekers are scarce, but available evidence suggests that 27 per cent are under 18, and therefore classified as children. Young single men are more numerous among asylum-seekers than young single women, who are more likely to seek asylum as part of a family group, or to be married.

Unaccompanied minors are persons under the age of majority who find themselves in a country other than that of their nationality, and who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian or other adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for them. Without adult protection and care they become easy prey for unscrupulous employers or traffickers.¹⁵ In 2009 some 12,200 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum in the European Union, according to Eurostat.¹⁶ Most were boys between the ages of 16 and 18 originating primarily from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. Their main countries of destination were France, the United Kingdom and Sweden.
KEY MESSAGES

- Some 28.2 million international migrants are adolescents and youth; they have moved to countries all around the world, and their presence deserves notice and policy attention in all destination countries.

- To design, implement, monitor and evaluate policies related to youth migration in countries of origin and destination, it is vital to understand who young migrants are and why they are moving. Such an understanding is limited by the lack of detailed data, without which it is impossible to arrive at a clear characterisation of the migratory experience of youth.

- With international migration high on the United Nations development agenda the relationship between aging populations and youth seeking to migrate, in the context of overall economic and social change, are key topics to be considered in the global debate.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Understanding the role of young people in the dynamics of international migration requires strengthening the evidence base upon which policies and programmes depend. This can be accomplished by expanding the collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by age, sex, country of origin, education, occupation and skill level. Other relevant information, such as migration status, issuance of entry, exit and work permits and documentation on changes in nationality would help complete the picture.

- In addition to collecting more, and more detailed, data and making it available, robust and long-term institutional capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate such data, particularly in developing countries, is needed.

- The international community should facilitate access to data generated by administrative records and consider funding a dedicated survey programme in countries that lack adequate migration data.
NOTES

1 United Nations (1981), 'Report of the Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year', UN document A/36/215, Annex, United Nations, New York. Due to data limitations, and because specific cohorts (such as children and adolescents) face different human rights challenges, this report occasionally refers to groups other than those aged 15-24.

2 This section focuses on the analysis of a new set of estimates prepared by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), namely, estimates of the number of international migrants by five-year age groups and sex in 196 countries or areas of the world for the years 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013. The estimates were derived mostly from census data referring to foreign-born migrants classified by age and sex. For some countries, population registers or large sample surveys were the source of age-disaggregated data on international migrants. In addition, for countries where the data on migrants referred to foreigners rather than to the foreign-born, those data were used instead. The estimates should be referenced as: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2013, Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Age and Sex (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2013), see also www.unmigration.org.

3 The data presented in Figure 2.1 refer to foreigners establishing residence in a country for at least a year and include data for 2008 and 2009 for the following countries: Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and Sweden.

4 The estimates are measures of the stock of international migrants and represent the cumulative effect of net inflows and outflows of migrants by age and sex as well as the impact of mortality. The age distribution of international migrants at a particular time is shaped by the migration experience of a country over the past 70 or 80 years. For the population under a given age, say 30, the past 30 years of migration experience is imprinted in that population.


HUMAN RIGHTS OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG MIGRANTS PARTICULARLY THOSE IN IRREGULAR SITUATIONS *

Chapter 2
International migration is emerging as one of the key issues affecting youth. Whether on their own or with family, adolescents and youth are increasingly migrating in search of survival, security, improved standards of living, education or protection from abuse. Although young migrants have great potential to contribute to the populations they join and migration presents myriad positive opportunities for young migrants, it is crucial for migration policy-makers to recognise that adolescent and young migrants are particularly at risk of human rights violations.

Migration policies and practices that fail to respect human rights leave the door open to a host of ills: marginalisation and discrimination; exploitation of young migrants as cheap, disposable labour; making them scapegoats for xenophobic rhetoric and practices and casualties in an ill-defined war against “illegal migration”. When policies fail to pay attention to the human beings who make up migration flows, they contribute to inequality, injustice and incoherent policy responses.

Limited regular channels for migration and policies that aim to reduce irregular migration – including punitive measures for irregular entry and stay and restricted access to rights and services in destination countries – make young migrants further at risk of human rights abuses and limit the opportunities and benefits of migration.

Despite an international framework designed to protect and promote the human rights of all individuals – with specific provisions protecting those under the age of 18 – adolescents and youth experience numerous human rights violations in the context of migration. Restrictions on regular migration impact the way parents and families migrate, increasing the likelihood that children will: be ‘left behind’ in countries of origin, enjoy reduced access to rights and attempt irregular migration. Many migrants – in particular those with irregular migration status – face restricted access to basic rights and services in countries of transit and destination as a result of laws, policies and practices. This paper explores key issues in relation to civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for undocumented adolescents and youth, using the examples of immigration detention and education by way of illustration.

*This chapter, prepared under joint auspices of OHCHR and UNICEF, is based on submissions by François Crépeau, Special Rapporteur on Migrants with the assistance of Bethany Hastie of McGill University; Pablo Ceriani and Alejandro Mortachetti of the University of Lanús; Michele LeVoy and Lilana Keith of the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM); and Patrick Taran of Global Migration Policy Associates (GMPA).

This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF*
Box 2.1. Definitions of Adolescence and Youth

‘Adolescence’ is generally understood to be the period following the onset of puberty, during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. The transformation to adolescence is very individual, and there is no scientific or legal consensus on a specific definition of age. The United Nations (UN) uses the age cohort 10-19 when referring to adolescence, although adolescence is not usually defined in national legislation. Similarly, there is no agreed global definition of ‘youth;’ very few countries use the UN definition (age cohort 15-24) when collecting global statistics on youth. In some countries "youth" begins at 12 and in others only ends at 35. In the absence of a universal consensus, in this chapter the term ‘adolescent’ refers to the age cohort 10-18, and ‘youth’ to the age cohort 19-29.

In some countries, then, ‘adolescents’ and even ‘youth’ may also be “children,” as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which defines a child as ‘every human being below the age of 18 years’. When using the term ‘adolescent’, this chapter refers to the group of children, aged 10-to-18.

In countries where adolescents enjoy additional legal entitlements and rights because they are under the age of 18 (thus legally ‘children’), this rarely extends to resolving their immigration status and can result in prolonged periods of anxiety about the future. Even adolescents or youth with nationality in a country can be severely impacted by migration policies; for example, if a parent or sibling is undocumented. As well as constant fear that a family member will be detained or deported, young nationals may face reduced access to services or be detained or deported because of their parents’ migration status. ‘Returned’ adolescents and youth – those deported to their or their parents’ country of origin – also face numerous human rights challenges, particularly if they have spent most of their formative years in the country of destination. Furthermore, by virtue of their age and lack of experience, all adolescents and youth migrating outside formal channels, especially young girls, are particularly vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, trafficking and other rights violations.

Additional protections afforded to adolescents often end abruptly when they reach the age of majority (usually 18 years). For example, in some countries adolescents are protected from immigration detention and deportation, but can be targeted for enforcement as of their 18th birthday. Similarly, undocumented adolescents may be entitled to compulsory education (notwithstanding barriers in practice), but not to access higher education or enter the labour market.
This sudden change in treatment does not reflect research on physical and mental development in humans. On the contrary, research shows that cognitive and social-emotional development continues after the age of 18, providing strong justification for additional protections for youth.\textsuperscript{15} As they make the transition from childhood to adulthood, undocumented adolescents and youth are forced to adjust to the reality and limitations of living with irregular migration status. The impact is largely unexplored, but may leave them particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and present significant psycho-social and developmental challenges. These challenges are not only harmful in the short-term, at a critical stage of their development, but severely limit the opportunities and benefits of migration enjoyed by individuals and their communities in the long-term as well.

Current migration policies generally fail to consider age, leaving adolescents and youth in a state of near ‘invisibility.’ The impact of migration policies on these groups, in terms of respect for the principle of non-discrimination and protection of other human rights, merits urgent attention and study. Efforts to do so, through the design and implementation of evidence-based policies, are hampered by the lack of reliable data on the number, age and gender of young migrants,\textsuperscript{16} as well as on the specific conditions and treatment they face.

This chapter considers some of the main challenges regarding access to basic human rights for migrants, with particular emphasis on undocumented adolescent and young migrants. The first section offers an overview of relevant human rights and child rights frameworks. The second section looks more closely at a number of challenges facing adolescents and youth in the context of migration: the political and policy context, the ‘pathways’ that can lead to irregular status, the reality of children of migrant parents unwillingly ‘left behind’ in countries of origin and gender-related factors. The third section offers an in-depth look at the impacts of immigration-related detention and restricted access to education on the rights, well-being and development of undocumented adolescents. Immigration detention was selected as it exemplifies immigration policy and practice that violate an array of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. It is pertinent both due to the extent of the rights violations incurred, its systematic use and widespread acceptance as a legitimate measure to control migration. Education was selected as one of the most fundamental and well-recognised rights globally, both in itself, and as key to empowerment and
development. When considering the opportunities and benefits of migration for individuals and societies, access to education is pivotal. Education is also a pertinent example because of the clear differentiation in treatment between those under 16 or 18 years of age and those older, raising a number of specific issues for undocumented adolescents and youth.

**INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK**

Under international human rights law all individuals, irrespective of their immigration or administrative status, hold civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. These rights are formally guaranteed in international legal instruments, including the International Bill of Human Rights – comprising the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) – and other core instruments.  

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**Box 2.2. Guiding Principles for the Realisation of Human Rights**

Certain core principles guide the realisation of human rights. All states must avoid discrimination in access to basic rights (including on the basis of immigration status), fulfill minimum core civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights obligations with immediate effect. States must furthermore take progressive steps towards the full realisation of economic, social and cultural rights.  

Using the "maximum of its available resources," every State is obliged to respect (refrain from violating); protect (prevent third parties from violating); fulfill (take positive measures to guarantee enjoyment of, through legislation and adequate funding); monitor (measure progress toward); and promote (ensure the broadest possible awareness and understanding of) human rights.

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Both the ICESCR and ICCPR include specific provisions related to the treatment of migrants, including undocumented adolescents and youth. For example, all people within a state’s jurisdiction are entitled to the right to education, an adequate standard of living (including housing, food, water and sanitation), health and protection of the family unit. Civil and political rights include the right to equality before the law; birth registration; life, liberty and security of person; freedom of expression and association, and freedom from torture and inhumane and degrading treatment and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. Rights related to the prohibition of forced labour, and international human rights and labour standards recognising the right to work, rights
at work and to decent work, as well as freedom of association, are also considered applicable to all migrants in an employment relationship, formal or informal, and regardless of immigration status\textsuperscript{20} and are pivotal given undocumented workers’ vulnerability to workplace exploitation.\textsuperscript{21}

The human rights framework provides additional protections for those under the age of 18, as spelled out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). States parties to the CRC must ensure that its provisions and principles are fully reflected and given legal effect in relevant domestic legislation.\textsuperscript{22} Policies must be guided by four general principles:

1. Non-discrimination
2. The best interests of the child
3. The right to life, survival and development
4. Children’s right to express their views, and be heard, in all matters affecting them.

In addition to these overarching principles, the CRC sets out a number of particular rights of all children, including: the rights to access health care and education;\textsuperscript{23} to social security;\textsuperscript{24} and birth registration;\textsuperscript{25} along with the right to protection from: arrest and detention, except as a means of last resort;\textsuperscript{26} separation from parents;\textsuperscript{27} and to special protection and assistance when deprived from a family environment.\textsuperscript{28} Further, the detention of children on the sole basis of migration status is not in accordance with the CRC. The CRC Committee has reiterated that the detention of a child because of their or their parent’s migration status constitutes a child rights violation, and always contravenes the best interests of the child.\textsuperscript{29}

All children also have a right to be protected from economic exploitation, hazardous labour\textsuperscript{30} and violence.\textsuperscript{31} The CRC also guarantees the child’s right to continuity, which is particularly relevant in situations where children and adolescents settle in a destination county but may be subject to deportation proceedings.

States parties to the CRC are committed to provide the fundamental rights set out in the treaty to all children within their jurisdiction, without discrimination of any kind, not only those who are nationals of the state: “the enjoyment of rights stipulated in the Convention ... [must] be available to all children...irrespective of their nationality, immigration status or statelessness.”\textsuperscript{32}
A child rights-based approach to migration policy would seek to ensure that the best interests of the child are the primary consideration at all stages of the process, and that rights afforded specifically to children under the CRC are fulfilled.

**Box 2.3. Regional Treaties Provide Special Protection for the Rights of Youth**

The Ibero-American Convention on Youth Rights and the African Youth Charter recognise young people as a group whose rights deserve special protection. They commit ratifying nations to protecting their human rights, including preventing discrimination, promoting employment, and vocational training.

The African Youth Charter further stipulates that “Every young person has the right to leave any country, including his/her own, and to return to his/her country.” It also calls upon States Parties to “promote and protect the rights of young people living in the diaspora.” (Article 21).

**CHALLENGES FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH**

Despite this comprehensive human rights framework, migrant adolescents and youth face numerous violations of, and barriers to, accessing their human rights. These barriers and violations are often compounded when youth and adolescents lose their regular residence status or have migrated irregularly.

Immigration policies and conditions in countries of transit and destination may subject adolescent and young migrants – especially those without regular migration status -- to enforcement practices (such as identity checks, immigration raids and detention) in circumstances that contravene international human rights standards. Adolescents and youth may also experience restricted (or no) access to rights and certain public services, such as birth registration, education, housing, health and social security – both in law and in practice – with significant negative implications for health and well-being, development and opportunities in both the short and long term. It is also important to consider the disproportionate impact of limited access to services such as sexual and reproductive health care and women’s shelters on young migrant women and girls.

Some states – both countries of origin and destination – have developed laws and policies to protect the rights of undocumented migrants, including adolescents and youth, as can be seen in the examples of Ecuador for its migrants abroad, and Argentina for its migrant residents, in Box 2.4.
Box 2.4. National Legislation Mandates Protection of Migrants, Regardless of Status, in Ecuador and Argentina

In Ecuador, according to the Constitution (2008) migration is a human right. Article 40 explicitly states that no person can be deemed “illegal” because of their migrant status. Further, it states that:

“The State, through the relevant entities, shall develop, among others, the following actions for the exercise of the rights of Ecuadorian persons abroad, regardless of their migratory status:

1. Provide them and their families, whether they live abroad or in the country, with assistance.
2. Provide care, advisory services and integral protection so that they can freely exercise their rights.
3. Safeguard their rights when, for any reasons, they have been arrested and imprisoned abroad.
4. Promote their ties with Ecuador, facilitate family reunification and encourage their voluntary return.
5. Uphold the confidentiality of personal information located in the files of Ecuadorian institutions abroad.
6. Protect transnational families and the rights of their members.”

In Argentina, migrants and their families, regardless of status, are entitled to access to services under the same conditions as nationals, particularly in relation to health and education.  

Even when services, are legally required to be made available to migrants by law, adolescent and young migrants may be unable to enjoy their rights in practice, particularly when in irregular situations, due to: administrative obstacles (demands for identity documents, social security numbers and proof of address); complex judicial and other systems; discrimination; lack of information and training (both for service providers and migrant families); financial barriers; linguistic hurdles; fear that accessing services will result in immigration enforcement; and mental health challenges among others.

In addition, although access to employment is a key avenue for social inclusion for migrants, including young migrants, access to the labour market is often highly restricted for migrant youth due to high levels of discrimination in obtaining employment as well as absence of recognition of qualifications and experience. Young migrants in irregular situations generally face the impossibility of obtaining authorized employment. Nevertheless, the majority of migrant youth do need to work to support themselves and their families. Young migrants in irregular situations usually end up in informal, unregulated and unprotected working situations. Therefore, lack of protection of labour rights for all migrant workers, regardless of their migration status, remains a critical issue.
Despite international law which provides that migrant workers should be primarily treated as workers rather than migrants, with all the guarantees that labour law affords, in practice many migrants are unable to defend their labour rights in many destination countries. This is especially true of young migrants, who often find themselves working in low-wage and informal sectors of labour markets where their rights are inadequately defined, particularly when they are undocumented. These young migrants are often exposed to high levels of exploitation, abuse and violations of labour rights protection with no access to formal social protection and very limited or non-existent coverage by labour standards or their enforcement. Migrant workers in temporary, sponsor contract, or other precarious status situations where their status is dependent on their employment relationship with a particular employer, are frequently dismissed if they challenge labour rights violations, and consequently lose their status. Thus, young undocumented migrants, and those with precarious and dependent statuses, are made ‘zero risk victims’ for exploitation and abuse, as they are unable to access justice for labour rights violations. On the contrary, they can be threatened with, and are at risk of deportation if they report labour rights violations, often without adequate access to legal resources to challenge such proceedings.

Along with an absence of formal channels for migration and regularisation, these factors impact broadly on human rights of migrant youth, including the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to development, and can have significant short- and long-term impacts on their health and well-being. Further, particularly for undocumented youth, lack of access to employment and decent working conditions and opportunities to pursue careers can be demoralizing and exclusionary. Qualitative interviews among young undocumented people describe their feelings of alienation, shame, rejection, and frustration at having skills they are unable to use. The point of completing education and making plans regarding careers is questioned when young people find themselves restricted to working in low-wage sectors of the labour market, alongside their parents.

While exclusion from work is an important factor, alienation and perception of rejection by migrant youth and adolescents often derives from their restricted access to or exclusion from a broad range of spaces – including education, public services, even from communal public spaces (see recent Swiss discussion of exclusion of asylum
seekers/irregular migrants from vicinity of public facilities such as schools and swimming pools) – especially when they are in an irregular situation.

**Box 2.5. Pathways to Irregular (undocumented) Status**

There are many pathways to irregular migration status, which can reflect a variety of situations. Individuals may enter a country regularly, but move into a situation of irregularity after loss of employment or residence status, arbitrary confiscation of documents by public officials, employers, rejection of a claim for international protection, etc. In such cases, migrants may have already developed personal ties and connections and decide to stay with their families in the destination country. Thus immigration status can be temporary and transient, and many migrants experience different statuses at different times. For example, they may migrate regularly, lose their status, and later have the opportunity to regularise their status.

Adolescents are especially prone to becoming undocumented since, as children, their migration status is linked directly to that of their parents (unless they acquired nationality on the basis of being born in the destination country). When a parent’s visa or work permit expires, their children usually lose regular status. Independent consideration of the best interests of the child is rarely given when deciding on parents’ applications for residence status, making children particularly vulnerable to inappropriate refusals of regularisation. Children frequently inherit their parents’ migration status, even when they are born in the destination country, due to restrictions on access to nationality in destination countries and arbitrary practices that tie birth registration to parents’ migration status.

Prior to, and more so in the wake of the global financial crisis, many governments have been limiting the avenues for regular migration (including family reunification), and developing harsher deportation and detention policies. One result is that irregular channels are the only migration alternative for many. Where family reunification is restricted to younger children, adolescents and youth may be excluded as of age 15 or 16. At the same time, regular employment opportunities are increasingly focused on particular work sectors, which often are highly skilled, which therefore can exclude young migrants lacking the specific expertise required. These trends severely limit regular migration opportunities for adolescents and youth, contributing to the increase of migrants ending up in irregular or undocumented situations.

Young migrants, particularly adolescents, may and often will transition between regular and irregular status and different categories during the course of their migratory journey. For example, children ‘left behind’ by parents in countries of origin may migrate irregularly and unaccompanied to join their parents. If they do not qualify for official family reunification within the destination country, they may become undocumented, even when living with parents who enjoy regular status. A family may be able to regularise the young person’s status at a later stage, or the same adolescent or young person may later qualify for regularisation based on years of residence and ties to the country of destination.

Additionally, in many countries economic and social rights are threatened by the adoption of strict economic approaches to social rights that increase restrictions on
access to essential social services.\textsuperscript{45} New political threats – such as the proliferation of xenophobic and criminalising speech about undocumented migrants – appears to encourage further restrictions of migrants’ economic and social rights, including access to education and health for adolescents and youth and freedom of association. Some national governments that formally ‘criminalise’ irregular migration have enacted laws and policies that impose a duty on public officials (government employees, including social workers, and in some cases even health care and education workers) to report the presence of undocumented migrants to migration authorities.

Such policies effectively negate the rights of undocumented adolescents and youth to access services. However, these reporting requirements have often been contested by local government authorities, by professional bodies, and by judicial initiatives, given their potential to undermine public health, labour law enforcement, children’s access to schooling and social cohesion.

When migration is managed as a control function of the State utilizing criminal law provisions and relying on police activity for enforcement, undocumented migrants are effectively denied access to justice, as reporting crime or abuse can lead to their deportation. This situation makes undocumented adolescents and youth particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, as young migrants will not report crimes, including hate crimes and hate speech, or seek the assistance of police.\textsuperscript{46}

Enforcement practices can make everyday activities – such as travelling by car or crossing the street – fraught with anxiety and fear, since they could lead to arrest, detention and deportation if the police stop a young person for any reason. Criminal prohibitions on providing assistance, services or basic needs to undocumented foreigners further exclude young migrants from realizing basic rights, including to housing, health and work because they are denied vital protections and access to redress. Added to direct restrictions on opportunities for undocumented adolescents and youth, fear and social exclusion further limit their ability to engage and contribute to their societies, as exemplified in the testimony below.\textsuperscript{47}
Box 2.6. Testimony: Potential of Undocumented Youth Jeopardised in the United Kingdom

“Your young years passing by and you are like in that capsule, you see. You can’t realise yourself fully. If you have some skills, opportunities or talents, anything that you can demonstrate… if you are a good worker or a craftsman, anything that you can use and give some benefits to this society, you can’t ‘open’ it because you are in this capsule. You are locked in because you are afraid. You are afraid to say a word about yourself. That’s how it really is.”

(Natalia, 26, Ukrainian, interviewed by A. Bloch, N. Sigona & R. Zetter)

The implications for social cohesion of having a group of disenfranchised and excluded young people must also be considered. Civil society organisations supporting undocumented adolescents and youth have reported concern that due to lack of employment possibilities the youngsters they work with may be forced to turn to petty crime to survive. As many countries deny regularisation and prioritise deportation of migrants with a criminal record, the negative implications for undocumented adolescents and youth cannot be underestimated. This is particularly problematic for undocumented young people who have spent much of their life in a destination country, but face deportation (or perpetual irregular status) due to a misdemeanour during adolescence or youth.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS ‘LEFT BEHIND’

An important issue bound up in migrant’s rights protection and access to legal status for migrants is the welfare and rights protection of children as well as adolescents ‘left behind’ by migrating parents. When a parent’s migration status is irregular, it is difficult to return home to see their children or attend family events, since a subsequent safe and authorized re-entry into the country of employment is not assured. This leads to long periods of family separation that can undermine young peoples’ well-being. In addition to the emotional impact of parental absence, migration also poses a challenge to the right to family life and can significantly impact access to other rights.

Since families often use all their available funds (or borrow to raise funds) for a family member to migrate, those left behind may be living in poverty for some time. This can force adolescents to drop out of school – either to work or take over household responsibilities – if the migrating parent is not able to provide sufficient funds through remittances. Moreover, the assumption that children of migrant parents are supported
via remittances can lead to their exclusion from programmes to aid disadvantaged children, thereby increasing family members’ vulnerability to poverty and social exclusion.

Although children of migrating parents who remain in their country of origin do not usually face legal discrimination, they can face numerous practical obstacles to enjoying basic rights. For example, if a parent has not registered their child’s birth or formally declared an adult to serve as legal guardian, children face administrative hurdles for receiving health care, education and other services. Even when a parent's physical presence is not required, their identity documents may be needed to access vital services. Challenges related to lack of a formal birth certificate can affect children well into adolescence and youth, and even lead to statelessness if a young person later migrates and is unable to provide proof of nationality.49

Not only do these limitations affect adolescents' enjoyment of their adolescence, they have long-term impacts on personal development, limiting the benefits gained from migration for individuals, families and the societies they live in.

Some countries of origin have begun to take steps to address these negative impacts of migration on families ‘left behind’, such as social security systems for migrant workers that offer protection and support.

**Gender-Related Factors**

Gender-specific factors, including prevailing gender roles and gender discrimination, influence the migration choices of adolescents and youth, as well as their trajectories, integration and outcomes.50 Many adolescent girls, in particular, migrate to escape sexual abuse, social stigma or pressure to marry.51 Yet migration can also contribute to their emancipation, by challenging gender inequalities and promoting equal access to rights. Gender also affects the age at which adolescents and youth choose to migrate, and whether they do so alone, accompanied by adults or as part of a group.52

Prevailing gender roles and relations impact the experiences of adolescents and youth ‘left behind’, their access to social rights and personal and social development. For example, migration of a parent affects the division of household responsibilities. Additional responsibilities may fall to adolescent girls or boys in left-behind households. If the father has migrated, male adolescents and youth may be expected
to obtain employment to help support the household, while in cases where a mother migrates, girls may be assigned extra child care or other household roles, with a corresponding impact on access to rights and development – in particular, education. Such arrangements often limit opportunities for adolescents and youth and may increase the likelihood that they too will choose to migrate.

In many countries gender-based discrimination leaves adolescent girls and young women with inadequate access to information regarding safe migration, work opportunities and rights in destination countries, thereby increasing their vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, forced labour, trafficking and separation from their family (Box 2.7).

**Box 2.7 Adolescent Girls Vulnerable to Trafficking in the Philippines**

According to a comprehensive analysis of trafficking in the Philippines conducted by UNICEF and ILO in 2007, adolescents subjected to trafficking are generally female, between 14 and 17 years of age, from large households (5 to 10 family members), and with some years of schooling (from primary school to at least the first year of high school). The typical trafficked adolescent is either on the verge of joining the labour force or has already entered the working age population (typically 15 years of age and above), although many start working at a much younger age. The probability of being a victim of trafficking generally increases with age, culminating as the child approaches working age.

At the same time, adolescent boys and young men can be more vulnerable to physical violence and violence involving weapons, including at the hands of smugglers and border guards.

Migration policies often limit regular migration channels for adolescent girls and young women, relegating them to the least safe and stable labour sectors or to dependence on male migrants. Young women often migrate as agricultural workers, domestic workers, carers of the elderly, sex workers, ‘entertainers’ or other under-regulated occupations with poor working conditions; low remuneration, long working hours and few legal protections. In such circumstances, particularly when migration status is dependent on an employer, young women are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and to becoming undocumented if and when they have the strength to exit the situation.
Another main driver for migration by adolescent girls and young women is to join a spouse or parents.\(^5\) However, dependent spousal visas make them vulnerable to losing their status if the relationship ends. This is a particularly significant concern when violence is involved, forcing young women to choose between keeping themselves and their children in violent situations or losing their regular migration status.\(^8\)

However, several countries have imposed gender and age specific bans on the outmigration of girls and adolescent women, and in some cases adult women. Rather than curbing their movement while restricting their freedom of movement rights, these bans seem to have encouraged more reliance on cross border movement by irregular channels and has enhanced their risks of exploitation by human traffickers. The restrictions on rights are also in some cases further compounded by requirements that young women will need the specific protection and accompaniment of a (often male) guardian.

**RIGHTS UNDER THREAT: SPOTLIGHT ON IMMIGRATION DETENTION AND EDUCATION**

This section uses the examples of immigration detention and the right to education to elaborate on some key issues faced by undocumented adolescents and youth. Policies in both areas place restrictions on (or directly violate) their rights, with significant short- and long-term implications for their health, well-being, development and socio-economic integration.

**Immigration Detention**

Many states currently approach migration governance from an ‘enforcement’, ‘criminalisation’, or ‘border control’ perspective, and have developed policies that lead to the likelihood of administrative or criminal detention of migrants at some point in the immigration process.\(^9\)

Thus despite international protocols and commitments, undocumented adolescents and youth find themselves detained in appalling conditions for considerable periods of time, without access to a lawyer or judicial review. Immigration detention that violates human rights standards is systematically used and widely considered a legitimate means of migration control.
Yet no empirical evidence supports the view that detention deters irregular migration.\(^6^0\) The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants recently noted that despite the worldwide introduction of increasingly tough detention policies over the past 20 years, the number of irregular arrivals has not decreased.\(^6^1\) Indeed, the Court of Justice of the European Union has found criminalisation and detention purely due to irregular stay to be contrary to EU law, even when a deportation order has been ignored.\(^6^2\)

Furthermore, despite the additional protections afforded to adolescents by the CRC, in most countries they are treated under the same rules as adult migrants and subjected to detention in adult facilities.

**Protection against detention for adolescent migrants**

In the context of criminal justice, the CRC allows the detention of children exclusively as a measure of last resort, and for the shortest appropriate period of time.\(^6^3\) But this does not apply to immigration-related detention, which is not a criminal offence. The CRC Committee has clearly stated that detention on the sole basis of migration status violates the Convention, affirming that: ‘detention cannot be justified solely on the basis of the child being unaccompanied or separated, or on their migratory or residence status, or lack thereof.’\(^6^4\) The Committee also underlined the right of undocumented young people to appropriate legal assistance, which is essential to empowering young migrants to defend their rights.

Further, the CRC requires that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration in all decisions affecting them. Some state policies justify detention of young migrants as a means to preserve family unity when their parents are detained; such actions are not consonant with the CRC, since “regardless of the situation, detention of children on the sole basis of their migration status or that of their parents, is a violation of children’s rights, is never in their best interest and is not justifiable.”\(^6^5\) A policy that respects child rights would provide alternatives to detention for the entire family – to maintain family unity – rather than detaining children with their parents.\(^6^6\)
**Reality of adolescent detention**

Nevertheless, most countries lack special provisions or policies to address the issue of adolescent migrants in this context. Concern is growing over the number of young people in immigration detention and the conditions under which they are held. As well as the fact of detention being a breach of children's rights, detention conditions can also present numerous rights violations. Adolescents are frequently detained in overcrowded and unsanitary facilities with adults other than their family members, making them highly vulnerable to violence and abuse. The prison authorities or private companies that run detention centres rarely have appropriate training in either child or migrants' human rights.

Access to economic and social rights, including education and health (including psychological and mental health care) – and sometimes even food, drinking water and sanitation – are extremely limited in detention. Additionally, access to due process and legal representation can be highly problematic.

The detention of adolescents, with or without family members, is extremely detrimental to their immediate and long-term health and well-being, and constitutes a clear violation of their rights. Box 2.8 describes one country's effort to develop procedural safeguards and suitable alternatives to protect undocumented adolescents and fulfil their rights in situations of immigration enforcement.

### Box 2.8. Procedural Safeguards for Undocumented Children in New Zealand

In principle children may only be detained in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort, according to the Immigration Department’s operations manual on border entry (INZ 2010b). New Zealand’s Immigration Act 2009 explicitly lays out provisions for alternatives to detention, representation by a ‘responsible adult’, and participation in proceedings (allowing children to express their views on detention and have these views considered at any proceedings affecting them).

These safeguards bring New Zealand’s legislation in closer conformity with international human rights obligations. However, the Immigration Act 2009 does not include an explicit presumption against detention of children, or any reference to CRC obligations and the best interests of the child.

The duration of young migrants’ detention is another major concern. Undocumented adolescents and youth may be detained for prolonged periods; up to years in some cases. For some, this means spending a significant proportion of their adolescence or
youth imprisoned, segregated from society and peers, with negative impacts on their personal and social development, as described in Box 2.9.

**Box 2.9. Impact of Detention**

Morteza Poorvadi arrived on Christmas Island, Australia at age 16 and spent four years in detention. Describing his experience, he reported to the *Sydney Morning Herald*:75

“There was a point of hopelessness, of thinking why am I alive? ... They took away everything I was living for – friends, education, freedom. That time from 16 to 20, it's the time when your personality develops. That one year in Woomera did the most damage to me, there was nothing there, not even a book, a newspaper. The first book I got was a Bible. I slashed my wrists, drank shampoo, did a 12-day hunger strike, sewed my lips. It became a bit of a game for us, ticking the things you have done off a list.”

Finally, serious acts of violence against migrants – including sexual violence, torture and inhumane and degrading treatment – have been increasingly reported in, and during transport to, detention centres and during deportation proceedings.76 Victims of violence suffer serious physical and psychological trauma, which can also affect their children when they are forced to witness the abuse. Adolescents and youth may suffer such traumas more acutely due to their age. Young women and girls who survive sexual violence are often particularly vulnerable to social stigmatisation and exclusion when they re-enter their communities.77 Sexual violence also exposes young migrants to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, for which treatment is unavailable in many detention settings, and which may cause further stigmatisation.

Some countries, such as Argentina and Venezuela, recognise that detention is not a suitable measure of immigration enforcement and have enacted laws to prevent it (Box 2.10). Non-custodial measures with minimal impact on the right to liberty are being developed, for use when necessary in the short-term for deportation proceedings.
Box 2.10. Presumption Against Detention and Alternatives in Venezuela

**Venezuela’s** Migration Law prohibits detention of all migrants. It provides several alternatives for the purpose of ensuring enforcement of deportation or removal actions. The competent authority may impose on a foreigner who is subject to a deportation action the following precautionary measures for a maximum of 30 days:

1) Periodic reporting to the competent authority
2) Prohibition from leaving the location in which s/he resides without corresponding authorisation
3) Provision of adequate monetary bail, for which the economic condition of the foreigner must be taken into account
4) Residence during the administrative procedure in a designated locality
5) Any other measure deemed appropriate to ensure compliance with the competent authority’s decision, provided that the measure does not involve deprivation or restriction of the right to personal liberty. 78

Clearly the detention of young people for infractions of immigration rules violates basic rights of children and adolescents and puts them at risk for long-term physical, emotional and social development problems. Extreme segregation and limited access to rights in detention prevents any positive benefits of migration in the short-term, and can hamper the future social and economic integration of undocumented adolescents and youth. Over the long term, then, the results of policies and practices related to the detention of young people will be felt by countries of origin, transit and destination.

**Undocumented adolescents and education**

Education is one of the most fundamental and well-recognised rights globally, both in itself and as a key to empowerment and development. Education is pivotal to the opportunities offered by migration, both for individuals and societies. The right of all children, regardless of migration status, to receive an education is clearly spelled out in several international conventions. For example, the International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers states in Art. 30 that: “Each child of a migrant worker shall have the basic right of access to education on the basis of equality of treatment with nationals of the State concerned,” while the CRC stipulates that States Parties must “make primary education compulsory and available free to all.”79
Yet migrant adolescents and youth face persistent obstacles to obtaining an education, particularly once beyond primary school. A 2008 UNDP study noted that one-third of developed countries and more than half of developing countries sampled do not provide access to education for undocumented migrant children.80

**Barriers to accessing education**

While some countries directly prohibit irregular migrant children from attending public schools, in others informal, or hidden, obstacles prevent or limit access – even when the undocumented adolescent is legally entitled to education. For example, in Morocco, birth certificates and residence permits are required for school registration.81 In Poland, although education is formally accessible to undocumented adolescents, lack of funding may lead individual schools to exclude this population.82 In South Africa, migrant adolescents are often unable to pay required fees, transport, uniforms and books.83

Another important factor leading to exclusion from education is fear that school registration will lead to exposure of undocumented status. If parents fail to register children for primary school due to such concerns, the child will become increasingly unprepared to face school at any stage.

Xenophobia, discrimination and violence in schools can also deter undocumented adolescents from attending, as well as affecting academic performance, health and well-being. In a study of undocumented children’s access to education undertaken in South Africa – where migrant children report considerable discrimination by teachers and peers – the author found that 88 per cent of children of permanent residents attend school, but only 57 per cent of children of undocumented migrants do so, largely due to ‘gate-keeping’ or individual schools’ refusal to enroll undocumented children.84

Additionally, in some countries education is only compulsory until the age of 16, creating difficulties for older undocumented adolescents to access education. Even when education is compulsory until 18 years, undocumented adolescents may be unable to take part in the training component, common in many countries for this age group. Although internships may be a compulsory part of an educational course, they are considered work in many countries, presenting difficulties for undocumented
adolescents. Undocumented adolescents may also face administrative obstacles for taking official exams and receiving their final school-leaving certificate (Box 2.11). These barriers both limit undocumented adolescents' full enjoyment of their right to education, and make it difficult for them to progress from education to employment.

**Box 2.11. Barriers to Taking Exams in Poland**

An undocumented adolescent boy from Ukraine was prevented from taking the exam to graduate from primary school, because the school required documents. However, his mother requested help from the mayor of the town: "If they don't allow him to finish school, what's next? He can't go to secondary school." As a result, the Mayor intervened, and he was able to continue his studies in lower-secondary school.  

**Proactive measures to promote access**

In light of these challenges, several states have begun to take steps to protect migrant children and promote their rights to access public services, particularly education. For example, Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Italy, Greece, Mexico, the Netherlands, Spain, Thailand and Uruguay have expressly recognised the right of all migrant children to enroll in public schools free of charge. The Thai Government allocates additional funds to the Ministry of Education to defray the costs of providing education services to migrant children.  

Other states have implemented policy and legal measures that state explicitly that undocumented adolescents must enjoy their right to education fully, including protection from immigration enforcement in and around schools and access to exams, certificates, non-compulsory education, financial assistance, vocational courses and internships.
Access to internships for undocumented adolescents has been the subject of a legal battle in the Netherlands, where students were allowed to register for vocational courses, but until recently not permitted to carry out the compulsory internship components, which limited their access to training and prevented them from completing their courses. On 2 May 2012, the District Court of The Hague ruled that a policy preventing undocumented students from taking internships violated the right to education and must be discontinued.

The policy has since been changed to allow undocumented students to carry out an internship when it is a compulsory component of an educational course that the student started before their 18th birthday, it is recognised middle-level vocational training, and it is unpaid.

In Spain legislation clearly permits undocumented adolescents to hold internships through a contract between the educational institution and the internship provider. Since there is no contract between the student and the internship provider, the student is not required to have a valid work permit.

Future implications

It is also important to consider the further implications of restricted access to education for undocumented adolescents. In some countries, such as the United States, many young undocumented migrants do not understand the meaning of their status until the age of 16 or so, when they want to learn to drive or find part-time employment. The period of adolescence and the transition into undocumented adulthood can pose traumatising realisations for undocumented adolescents, who find their access to further education and the labour market to be highly restricted. The extremely limited future prospects for undocumented adolescents to follow their aspirations for further study, professional training and future careers can be demotivating, causing them to leave school early. These limitations can also have significant negative impacts on mental health, identity development and social interaction at a critical time for adolescents.

Policies and practices that violate adolescents’ right to education and enjoyment of adolescence in the short-term have potential long-term implications for their personal and psycho-social development. Whether or not these young people remain in the destination country or migrate elsewhere, the restrictions on access to rights for undocumented adolescents and lack of opportunities for them to regularise their status result in a great waste of potential and can have harmful mental health impacts.
KEY MESSAGES

- All people, regardless of age or migration status, are entitled to protection and enjoyment of their human rights. The special protection granted to children under international law and national law should not automatically disappear when a person turns 18 years old, creating a distinction in treatment between individuals facing common issues. The developmental impact of restricted access to rights remains significant for adolescents and youth over 18 years of age.

- Despite an international framework that protects the human rights of all people, the tendency for migration policies to deny access to certain rights to irregular migrants systematically violates the rights of undocumented adolescents and youth and has negative consequences for those ‘left behind’.

- Current restrictions on human rights and punitive measures that have significant harmful effects on migrants – such as immigration detention – severely curtail the benefits of migration, violate human rights and can expose adolescents and youth to violence, abuse and exploitation as well as longer term implications on their mental health and other negative consequences.

- The particular obstacles to fulfilling their rights faced by undocumented adolescents and youth during their transition between childhood and adulthood can make them more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and pose significant psycho-social challenges. Only by recognising and addressing these vulnerabilities can the full potential of youth migration be realised.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Countries should develop age- and gender-sensitive approaches to migration that protect, respect, promote and fulfil the human rights of all migrants, and provide special protections for adolescents and youth. This should include a clear separation between immigration enforcement and service provision, access to justice systems across all relevant policy areas, the removal of practical obstacles to migrants obtaining social services and enjoying their human rights, and labour rights protection where relevant.
• Migrant adolescents and youth should be further empowered to access their rights and challenge violations, through, for example, the provision of information on rights and redress mechanisms, and appropriate access to legal representation. Support should also be provided to youth-led and migrant-led organisations.

• Immigration detention policy and practice must comply with international law. This includes ensuring that administrative detention is always a measure of last resort for all migrants, including young migrants. In the specific case of adolescents, immigration-related detention should be prohibited in all cases in law and practice. If there are reasonable, necessary and proportionate grounds to limit liberty for immigration purposes, suitable alternatives to detention that fully respect rights should be provided for adolescents and youth, and for their families.

• Greater efforts should be made to promote regular migration channels, including for work and family reunification, and to make accessible permanent mechanisms to access long-term regular migration status on the basis of reasonable conditions (such as years of residence, participation in education and connections to destination society).

• Efforts to combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination towards migrants should be strengthened. Irregular entry or stay should not be criminalised, and states should strive to improve knowledge and to address negative perceptions of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination. Violence and xenophobic speech and actions should be denounced, and subject to legal proceedings where appropriate.

• The provisions of the core international human rights instruments including the Convention on the Rights of the Child should guide all policy-making in relation to children in the context of migration. In addition to guiding reform of law and policy, the CRC Committee has recommended that the CRC periodic reporting mechanisms be used by States and civil society to evaluate more systematically the implementation of the Convention in relation to all children affected by migration.

• Particular attention should be given to assuring protection of human rights, including the right to social security and general welfare for adolescents and youth remaining ‘at home’ when parents migrate abroad.
Undocumented Parents and Their Young Children

The amount of stimulation that parents can provide to or purchase for young children (H. Yoshikawa (2011) child care and fewer financial resources to invest in children. These limitations, plus lower 

that early cognitive development of children can be negatively impacted by parental factors such as less access to stimulatin


of school (Fra

authors note that the high levels of stress, lack of money for academic enrichment activities and pressures to work lead many

children of undocumented migr

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not accurately account for irregular migrants. Data

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migrate, although mainly temporarily (Sabates-Wheeler, R. "The Impact of Irregular Status on Human Development Outcomes for Migrants", Human Development Research Paper 2009/26, July 2009). It is important to note that available data on youth migration do not accurately account for irregular migrants. Data is often available on migrants apprehended and subject to enforcement – e.g. arrests at border control points, numbers in immigration detention, and return figures (through voluntary programmes or enforced) - but is of differing reliability, not comparable and not an indication of the total irregular migrant population. Some undocumented migrants may be counted in population censuses in some countries, but this is very limited. See, for example, K. Koser (2005) Irregular migration, state security and human security; M. Jandl et al. (2008) ‘Report on methodological issues’; Anna Triandafyllidou, ‘CLANDESTINO Project Final Report’, November 2009 [hereafter Clandestino report, 2009]. Furthermore, where statistics are available, they are frequently not disaggregated by gender and/or age. Even when attention is given to the registration of separated children (and then often only those who seek asylum), little or no attention is given to undocumented children with their families, and practice varies regarding whether they are recorded as individuals, as dependents, or at all.

For the purposes of this chapter, an ‘adolescent’ is anyone between 10 and 18 and a ‘youth’ is anyone between 19 and 29 years of age. Therefore adolescents are also children with additional protection in the child rights framework, as a ‘child’ is anyone up to 18 years of age, in line with article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The authors note that the term ‘youth’ can be considered derogatory in some contexts, but is used here to follow UN terminology.

In this chapter the term ‘parents’ is used to refer to parent(s) or other primary caregiver(s).

In countries of origin, many parents have no choice but to leave their children behind when they migrate, and regular channels for children to join parents later are limited. Many parents make the difficult decision to migrate nonetheless, in order to secure a better life for their children. To draw attention to these structural challenges, quotation marks are used around the term ‘left behind’ in this chapter.


In this chapter the terms ‘undocumented’ migrant and ‘irregular’ migrant (or migrant with irregular status) are used interchangeably, although it is important to note that ‘undocumented’ migrants are not always entirely without documentation. For example, they may have had a valid permit which has expired, or have a residence permit but be working without the proper permission.


See UN General Assembly, Resolution A/40/256, 6 May 1985, para. 19. In 1985, the UN celebrated the first International Year of Youth. On its tenth anniversary, the General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth, setting a policy framework and guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth. Since then, all UN statistical services have used as a reference the age cohort of 15-24 years to collect global statistics on youth.


As noted by Jacqueline Bhabha “…in most countries citizen children born to immigrant or non-citizen parents have no rights to bring or keep their parents with them, though similarly situated adults do have those rights to family unity or reunification. And yet, no one disputes that the family is vital to the well-being and upbringing of a child … Why then don’t citizen children have the right to maintain this group so fundamental to their well-being in the country of their birth?” (Bhabha, J. (2007), Un “vide juridique”? – Migrant Children: The Rights and Wrong, in Carol Bellamy and Jean Zermatten, Jean (eds.), Realizing the Rights of the Child, Swiss Human Rights Books, vol. 2, Rüffer & Rub, Zurich). Further, research from the United States finds that there are persistent educational disadvantages for national children of undocumented migrants compared to national children of regular migrants, including fewer average years in education. The authors note that the high levels of stress, lack of money for academic enrichment activities and pressures to work lead many to drop out of school (Frank D. Bean et al. (2010) "Unauthorized Immigrant Parents: Do Their Migration Histories Limit Their Children's Education?", US 2010 Project Research Policy Brief: Discover American in a New Century (Russell Sage Foundation: New York)). Research has also found that early cognitive development of children can be negatively impacted by parental factors such as less access to stimulating professional child care and fewer financial resources to invest in children. These limitations, plus lower-quality jobs, increase parental stress and reduce the amount of stimulation that parents can provide to or purchase for young children (H. Yoshikawa (2011) Immigrants Raising Citizens: Undocumented Parents and Their Young Children (Russell Sage Foundation: New York) pp.135-136. For examples, see UNICEF (2012) "Children in the Context of Migration and the Right to Family Life", Submission to the UN CRC Day of General Discussion on "The rights of all children in the context of international migration", 28 September 2012, [hereafter UNICEF Migration and the Right to Family Life, 2012]

16 The previous Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants has asserted that there is a general absence of an ‘age’ approach in migration policies, creating a serious need for accurate and rights-based statistical information on the number of children and adolescents involved in the international migration process (Report of the former Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, Jorge Bustamante, 14 May 2009 (A/HRC/11/7)). Likewise, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its General Comments on Unaccompanied Children, stated that the establishment of a detailed and integrated system of data collection for unaccompanied and separated children is a prerequisite for the development of effective policies that permit the full implementation of the rights of children (Committee CRC, General Comment No. 6, On Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, CRC/GC/2005/6, 1 September 2005, para. 99).


18 For example, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural rights has stated that Covenant rights apply to everyone, including non-nationals, such as refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, migrant workers and victims of international trafficking, regardless of legal status and documentation. (CESCR, General Comment 20 On non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights (art. 2, para. 2, of the Covenant), E/C.12/GC/20, 2 July 2009, para. 30. Note that the ICCPR contains a few articles that refer specifically to rights of nationals (Article 25) and those lawfully residing in the State (Articles 12.1 and 13).

19 CESCR, Article 2. For an explanation of the concept of progressive realization, see CESCR, General Comment 3 On The Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13, May 24, 2004.

20 As the Inter-American Court on Human Rights ruled unanimously in an advisory opinion: “The Court decides unanimously, that...the migrant quality of a person cannot constitute justification to deprive him of the enjoyment and exercise of his human rights, among them those of labor character. A migrant, by taking up a work relation, acquires a migrant quality of a person cannot constitute justification to deprive him of the enjoyment and exercise of his human rights, that must be recognized and guaranteed, independent of his regular or irregular situation on the State of employment. These rights are a consequence of the labor relationship.” (Inter-American Court on Human Rights: Juridical Condition and Rights of Undocumented Migrants, Consensus Opinion OC-18/03 of September 17, 2003, solicited by the United Mexican States. Full text at: http://www3.umn.edu/humanrts/iachr/series_A_OC-18.html)


22 CRC, Article 4.
23 Article 28.
24 Article 26.
25 Article 7.
26 Article 37(b).
27 Article 9. The right to family life is protected through a number of CRC provisions. For further analysis, see UNICEF Migration and the Right to Family Life, 2012, supra note 11.
28 Article 20.
30 Article 32.
31 Article 19.
32 Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No.6.
In relation to fundamental rights considerations when apprehending irregular migrants, the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union has elaborated common principles to guide immigration enforcement authorities, including non-sharing of personal information between service providers and immigration authorities and lack of enforcement actions near essential services. See Fundamental Rights Agency (2012) “Apprehension of migrants in an irregular situation – fundamental rights considerations”, 9 October 2012.

Migrant adolescents, particularly unaccompanied adolescents, may suffer from psychological distress, behavioural problems and traumatic stress reactions, and be prone to internalising problems they face. They are thus at higher risk for the development of psychopathology (T. Bean, et al., 2007, “Comparing psychological distress, traumatic stress reactions, and experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors with experiences of adolescents accompanied by parents”, The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 195: 288 – 297.

See discussion on discrimination in employment faced by youth migrants in Chapter 6 of this report.

As the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants put it: The Special Rapporteur also notes that the demand within EUMSs for temporary, unskilled labour in several sectors, including agriculture, hospitality, construction and domestic work, remains high, although generally unrecognized. This kind of work is offered by local employers and participates in the informal economy, often at exploitative wages and conditions. The Special Rapporteur notes however that, while programmes do exist to encourage skilled migration to the European Union, the rise of the European Union migration framework has not yet been accompanied by a parallel development of possibilities for unskilled migrants to seek regular channels for temporary unskilled work opportunities in EUMSs. Such unrecognized labour needs create a major pull factor for unskilled migration. In the public debate, irregular migrants are often accused of “stealing jobs” or of contributing to lowering wages for regular workers, but States seem to invest very few resources in trying to reduce the informal sector and sanction “irregular employers”, who profit from the exploitative conditions of work to boost their competitiveness. Regional study: management of the external borders of the European Union and its impact on the human rights of migrants. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, François Crépeau. A/HRC/23/46 Geneva. 2013.

For example, Denmark will only grant family reunification to dependent children over the age of 15 in specific circumstances, such as if the child has no appropriate caregiver in the country of origin. For more information, see http://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-us/coming_to_dk/familyreunification/children/children-between-15-and-18.htm.

At the same time, life-course scholars and adolescent brain development researchers note the difficulties and challenges for young people to adjust through adolescent and adult transitions (Gonzales, 2011; R. Gonzales & L. R. Chavez, Awakening to a Nightmare: Abjectivity and illegality in the Lives of Undocumented 1.5-Generation Latino Immigrants in the United States, Current Anthropology Volume 53, Number 3, June 2012. Gonzales, 2011; R. Gonzales & L. R. Chavez, Awakening to a Nightmare: Abjectivity and illegality in the Lives of Undocumented 1.5-Generation Latino Immigrants in the United States, Current Anthropology Volume 53, Number 3, June 2012.


For example, Human Rights Watch video report “Don’t Call 911” posted May 2014 at http://multimedia.hrw.org/distribute/lkupbato

The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 195: 288 – 297.

At the same time, life-course scholars and adolescent brain development researchers note the difficulties and challenges for young people to adjust through adolescent and adult transitions (Gonzales, 2011; supra note 11: 615; Crane, various, supra note 10). In this context, undocumented young adults may be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse during these transition periods, due to their immigration status and reduced social support networks and safety nets.

No right to dream, 2009, supra note 111, p.33.

See for example, UNHCR/ Asylum Aid (2011) Mapping Statelessness in the United Kingdom, p.23.


For an overview of cases of abuse-related migration, see: S. Jolly, Gender and Migration, Overview Report. BRIDGE, UK c.f. CRC DGD Background paper, 2012, supra note 15, p.7.

Cortés, 2011, supra note 28, p.5


(http://multimedia.hrw.org/distribute/lkupbato


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Cortés, 2011, supra note 28, p.5


ILD-IPEC (2000) Trafficking in Children in Asia: Regional Review.


Cortés, 2011, supra note 28, p.5.

In its recent case law, the Court of Justice of the European Union has clarified that in the EU, undocumented migrants cannot be detained for the sole reason that they are irregularly staying in the country, even if they have not followed an order to leave the country (El Dridi v. Italy, Judgment of the Court (First Chamber), 28 August 2011, in Case C-61/11 PPU). EU law, in the ‘Return Directive’, allows undocumented migrants to be temporarily detained pre-deportation, when certain procedural safeguards and conditions are met, including the measures being necessary and proportionate (Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008) on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (see preamble and chapter IV). Detention in the absence of deportation proceedings was found to be contrary to the aim of the ‘Return Directive’, of returning irregularly staying non-EU migrants. See full version of this chapter for more information.


Committee CRC, General Comment No. 6, On Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, CRC/GC/2005/6, 1 September 2005, para. 6.1


See generally Special Rapporteur Report, 2009, supra note 7. See also the research conducted by the University of Lanús and UNICEF TACRO on detention of child migrants in Latin American and Caribbean countries (UNLa-UNICEF (2009) Estudio sobre los estándares jurídicos básicos aplicables a niños y niñas migrantes en situación migratoria irregular en América Latina y el Caribe, Lanús).


New Zealand Immigration Act 2009, s.351.

New Zealand Immigration Act 2009, s.375.

New Zealand Immigration Act 2009, s.577.


"The other side of the fence", The Sydney Morning Herald, 19 July 2008. Morteza Poorvadi was an asylum seeker, but detained due to the policy of mandatory detention in Australia.


Human Rights Watch, 2012, supra note 107, p.30. Following the visit of the UN special representative on sexual violence in conflict, Margot Wallström, to border areas of Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Angolan government said it would step up efforts to prevent serious abuses during expulsions of migrants, by implementing a zero-tolerance policy among its security forces against sexual abuse, and increase cooperation with UN agencies to monitor expulsions and train relevant security forces. The Angolan government has also started building new detention facilities for migrants, so called “detention centres for illegal migrants” in several parts of the country, which opens a window of opportunity to improve detention conditions and implement effective oversight. However, Human Rights Watch notes the failure by the Angolan government to credibly investigate past abuses and prosecute perpetrators (Human Rights Watch 2012, supra note 107, p.3).


CESCR, General Comment No. 13, para. 34: “The Committee takes note of article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and article 3 (e) of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and confirms that the principle of non-discrimination extends to all persons of school age residing in the territory of a State party, including non-nationals, and irrespective of their legal status.” Art. 3 of the UNESCO convention includes giving foreign nationals the same access to education as given to nationals. Also note guidance of CESCR in relation to non-discrimination under the Covenant (GC No. 20) in relation to irregular migrant children.

87 IOM Thailand (2011), Thailand Migration Report, IOM
88 For examples, see UNICEF Access to Civil, Economic and Social Rights, 2012, supra note 13.
89 The court found that the Aliens Employment Act is in violation of Article 2 of the 1st Protocol of the ECHR. BW4736, Rechtbank ‘s-Gravenhage, 403618 / HA ZA 11-2443. A summary of the judgment from Fischer Advocaten is available online at http://www.fischeradvocaten.nl/index.php?&w=123
91 In Spain, Real Decreto 1147/2011, de 29 de julio, por el que se establece la ordenación general de la formación profesional del sistema educativo.
93 Research on adolescents’ subjective well-being has found significant differences between reported well-being of children aged eight and adolescents aged 15, particularly regarding key factors such as happiness with school, appearance, level of choice and autonomy and the future. Learning and development are identified by adolescents as pivotal to their well-being. See: Children’s Society (2012) The Good Childhood Report 2012: A review of our children’s well-being.
YOUTH AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION: ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL PROTECTION*

Chapter 3
Despite the growing number of young people affected by international migration, adolescent and youth migration has received scant attention in social protection and migration policies and frameworks. Bleak employment trends, exacerbated by a lack of economic and social opportunities in many countries, have increased incentives if not pressures for adolescents and youth to migrate. As noted elsewhere in this Report, youth and adolescents between the ages of 15 and 24 represent about 12 per cent of all migrants residing in destination countries, while young people comprise a large proportion of current migration flows. The prevalence of youth in international migration underscores the need to meet the risks and vulnerabilities they face with legislative, policy and practical measures that expand and extend social protection for young migrants.

Social protection policies play a critical role in realizing the human right to social security for all, reducing poverty and inequality, and supporting inclusive growth – by boosting human capital and productivity, supporting domestic demand and facilitating structural transformation of national economies. National social protection floors as a fundamental element of social security systems, should ensure at a minimum income security and access to essential health care for all. Both social protection floor policies and social security schemes providing higher levels of protection contribute to enhancing productivity and employability and supporting sustainable economic development, thereby contributing to decent living conditions for all, making extension of social security coverage for migrants vital to workers, the economy and the entire society.

Among policy options, social protection is increasingly recognised as a critical tool to address economic and social vulnerabilities related to chronic poverty and social exclusion. Its relevance is further heightened by current trends in demographic transitions, ageing and decline of work forces, and international migration as well as evolving economic and employment crises.

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This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF"
Despite its increasing relevance and universal recognition as an essential component of social and economic development, only some 27 per cent of the world’s people have access to comprehensive social protection. About 5.1 billion people – 73 per cent of the world’s population – still live without adequate income security and/or access to services. Most of the world’s migrant population and especially young migrants find themselves in the latter situation.

This chapter seeks to stimulate discussion on the challenges confronting young migrants in relation to social protection and social security. It seeks to build awareness of the normative standards, policy frameworks and strategic approaches countries of origin and destination and regional communities can utilise to ensure young migrants’ access to social protection.

What is Social Protection?

The concepts of social security and social protection have evolved over time and are used in various ways throughout the world, differing widely across countries and international organizations. In many contexts the two terms social protection and social security may be used interchangeably, encompassing both contributory and non-contributory benefits. Social protection is also seen to include components such as cash and in-kind transfers, social insurance schemes, social assistance programmes and public work programmes.

The ILO uses both social protection and social security and refers to the notion of social security as covers all measures providing benefits, whether in cash or in kind, to secure protection, inter alia, from:

- lack of work-related income (or insufficient income) caused by sickness, disability, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, old age, or death of a family member;
- lack of (affordable) access to health care;
- insufficient family support, particularly for children and adult dependants;
- general poverty and social exclusion.

UNICEF defines social protection as a set of public and private policies and programs aimed at reducing and eliminating economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and
deprivation (UNICEF, 2012). This translates into supporting four social protection components, which are examined in this study:

- Social Transfers
- Programmes to ensure economic and social access to services
- Social support and care services
- Legislation and policies to ensure equity and non-discrimination in children and families’ access to services and employment/livelihoods.

International legal instruments

Social security is enshrined as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), as well as in conventions adopted under UN auspices articulating the rights of specific groups, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW, 1990). In this regard, the Committee on the Rights of the Child dedicated a Day of General Discussion in October 2012 to “the rights of all children in the context of international migration” and adopted a set of recommendations including specifically on ensuring all migrant children’s rights to “effectively accessing services and benefits such as health care, education, long-term social security and social assistance, among others.”

A number of ILO Conventions and Recommendation make provisions for the social security rights of migrant workers and their families thus complementing and giving specific form to the provisions in international human rights instruments. The most prominent of the eight up to date social security instruments are the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202). Convention No. 102 lays down principles and minimum standards for the nine classical social security branches: 1) Medical care, 2) Sickness benefits, 3) Unemployment benefits, 4) Old-Age benefits, 5) Employment injury benefits, 6) Maternity benefits, 7) Family benefits, 8) Invalidity benefits, and 9) Survivors’ benefits. It establishes minimum standards regarding amongst others personal coverage, level of benefits, qualifying period, duration of benefits. Its Article 68 affirmed that “non-national residents shall have the same rights as national
residents” although application was defined as “subject to the existence of a bilateral or multilateral agreement providing for reciprocity.”

The Constitution of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) provides a succinct definition of social security in conformity with ILO Convention 102. It reiterates the nine branches of social security, highlights that social security comprises “any scheme or programme established by legislation, or any other mandatory arrangement, which provides protection, whether in cash or in kind,…” and encompasses, benefits for children and other family members, health care, prevention, rehabilitation, and long-term care.6

The Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), adopted nearly unanimously by the International Labour Conference (constituted of Government, workers’ and employers delegates of the 185 Member States of the ILO) in June 2012 provides useful guidance on building comprehensive social security systems and extending social security coverage by prioritizing the establishment of national floors of protection accessible to all in need. In particular, it assists Member States in providing social protection to the unprotected, the poor and the most vulnerable, including migrants and their families.

Other ILO standards dealing with equality of treatment for migrants include the Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118) and the Migration for Employment Convention, 1949 (No. 97) in article 6. The ILO Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982 (No. 157) provides norms for coordination among different national social security schemes, in order to facilitate international portability of contributions and benefits. In addition the ILO Multilateral Framework on labour Migration (2005) calls for the conclusion of social security agreements to ensure the portability of social security entitlements.

ILO standards also addresses migrant workers in irregular situations and their rights to equality of treatment in respect of rights arising out of past employment as regards remuneration, social security and other benefits. In particular the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) in Article 9(1) of the ILO Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151), paragraph 8(3) as well as Recommendation No. 202 mentioned above.
WHY MIGRANT ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH: **NEED SOCIAL PROTECTION?**

In the context of the global economic downturn affecting many countries, limited economic and social opportunities have increased pressures for adolescents and youth to migrate. The ILO estimates that nearly 40 per cent of the world’s unemployed are between the ages of 15 and 24. Under- and unemployment among adolescents and youth is therefore a rising concern in many countries. In particular, growing populations of young people in a number of countries in Africa and Asia—a so-called *youth bulge*—face high unemployment and absence of social protection and employment prospects for supporting themselves and their families. Among main causes for emigration are insufficient generation of decent jobs, significant losses of jobs in some countries, mismatch between educational policies, curricula or systems and labour market demands, and lack of employable skills among youth. Almost half

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**Box 3.1. The social protection floor**

Social protection floors are nationally-defined sets of basic social security guarantees which secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. An international consensus emerged around a “social protection floor” approach to extending coverage articulated in a two-dimensional strategy at the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference in 2011. This approach aims at the rapid implementation of national social protection floors containing basic social security guarantees that ensure universal access to essential health care and income security at least at a nationally defined minimum level (horizontal dimension), in line with the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), and the progressive achievement of higher levels of protection (vertical dimension) within comprehensive social security systems according to the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102).

The Social Protection Floor Recommendation calls for, at a minimum, access to essential health care and basic income security throughout the life cycle. To this end, national social protection floors should comprise at least the following guarantees, defined at national level: access to essential health care, including maternity care; basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services; basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability; and basic income security for older persons.

These guarantees should be provided to all residents and all children, as defined in national laws and regulations, and subject to existing international obligations.
the world’s adolescents do not attend secondary school. When they do attend, many – particularly those from the poorest and most marginalised households and communities – fail to complete their studies, or finish with insufficient knowledge and skills to be employable in the modern globalized economy.

Despite international economic crises and high unemployment in some countries, demand for migrant labour and skills remains strong and is likely to grow in a number of countries for reasons explored in the chapter on youth migration and employment in this Report. Factors include demographic ageing and decline in work forces, technological evolutions demanding skills not available locally, and transformations in the organization of work.

Youth itself can be said to constitute, at least indirectly, a ‘pull factor’ in migration; young people are attractive for employers and recruiters as they are usually in good health, recently trained, are fast learners, tend to adapt quickly to new working environments, and normally have fewer family responsibilities than older workers. Young migrant workers appeal because they may be perceived to offer higher productivity at lower cost.

The propensity to migrate tends to be highest among young people who are at a pivotal age, during which it is extremely important to sustain and consolidate the investments and gains of early and middle childhood, as well as to ensure an effective transition into adulthood. The ages 15-to-24 are years when young people make the transition from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood. It is also a period during which a number of social, economic, biological and other events occur that set the stage for adult life; such as education, marriage, and entry into the labour market.

Migration provides opportunities to access education and employment. However, it also exposes migrants and their families to risks and vulnerabilities at each stage of the migration process, risks that adolescents and youth have not gained adequate skills and life experience to overcome on their own. In countries of origin, family separation leads to vulnerabilities for children and spouses left behind when parents migrate abroad to work to provide family sustenance. Migrants moving across borders – particularly children, youth, and women – risk abuse and exploitation, especially when they end up in unauthorized migratory or employment situations.
Adolescence represents a transitional period when young people continue to experience multiple vulnerabilities. Adolescents aged 12-to-17 and even younger children may migrate without parents. Rising numbers of unaccompanied minors have been arriving in European and North American destination countries, many in irregular situations. Motivations include seeking employment, but also parents sending children out of homelands marked by widespread violence and/or economic desperation. However, recruitment and admission policies targeting only high-skilled migrants with tertiary education and substantial job experience limit young migrants’ avenues for regular migration. Nor do they provide legal means to access safe haven for children and adolescents fleeing desperate situations. Restrictions imposed by destination countries on work for foreign nationals dictate the legal migration options available for youth. In contexts in which push factors are particularly strong, this barrier can lead youth as well as families of children and adolescents to opt for irregular migration and unauthorized entry to destination countries, increasing their exposure to abuse by smugglers, by corrupt or untrained authorities and by unscrupulous employers.

In countries of destination young migrants may become victims of discrimination and social marginalisation, and face difficulties and restrictions in accessing employment, education, and social protection. In Western industrialized destination countries where data is available, statistics show that migrants, and migrant youth in particular, generally face significantly higher unemployment rates than native citizen peers. This situation extends to ‘second generation’ citizens born of immigrant parents.

Newly arrived migrants, documented or not, are particularly vulnerable as they are away from their home country and the informal social networks that usually help migrants in the transition and integration processes. Unaccompanied minors are especially at risk as they often lose both their social networks – their known world – and are without parents or family members who can provide guidance or care.

Many young migrants face poor working conditions, increasing their vulnerability, often not covered by health insurance schemes because they are not part of the formal labour market. For youth, a lack of, or inability to access, formal social protection in destination countries – combined with unfavourable labour market conditions – increases their chance of exposure to job-related risks. For adolescent migrants
especially, vulnerabilities extend beyond the labour market to include inability to access education and health services. The working and living conditions of young migrants along with public health considerations require that they have access to both comprehensive and emergency health care.

Taking specific measures to ensure that social protection programmes in destination countries cover young migrants would help ensure their access to basic social services including education and healthcare. Young people remaining at home when parents migrate would also benefit from social protection programmes, such as the pilot programme in Moldova referred to in the chapter on mainstreaming migration into development policy. Further, social protection policies and programmes in countries of origin that provide cash transfers to low-income households, for example, can help pay adolescents’ school costs and reduce the pressure to migrate, as was the case with Mexico’s ‘Progresa’ programme.\(^{11}\)

Social protection is, nonetheless, one essential component among several required for effective governance of migration as well as protection of migrant workers and their families. As other chapters in this GMG report describe, effective migration governance also means facilitating labour and skills mobility and access to employment in response to recognizable needs, ensuring legal recognition or regularization of migrant workers, protecting rights, including the right to non-discrimination and equality of treatment, to ensure decent work for national and foreign workers alike, and shoring up social cohesion by preventing xenophobia and facilitating integration.

**MIGRATION-SPECIFIC RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES: FOR YOUTH**

The conditions leading to and characterizing migration to a large extent determine the extent and depth of risks and vulnerabilities experienced by young migrants (Table 3.1). The table below identifies some of the important risks and vulnerabilities affecting social protection of young migrants. For instance some health risks are elevated for adolescent and youth – such as sexually transmitted diseases, adolescent pregnancy, maternal mortality, low birth-weight, emotional distress, tobacco use, and alcohol and substance abuse – which are further heightened by the economic, social and cultural vulnerabilities linked to migration.
Table 3.1. Risks and vulnerabilities faced by young migrants affecting their social protection

**Countries of origin**
- Exposure to generalized violence, civil warfare, violent gang activity (in some places).
- Economic desperation, absence of access to minimum decent living conditions.
- Absence of access to employment and decent work.
- Absence of access to/availability of schooling and training in employable skills.
- Absence of social protection ensuring at least basic income security and access to basic social services including health care.
- Employment recruitment malpractices.

**Countries of destination**
- Social and legal exclusion based on nationality, ethnicity, gender, age and/or irregular status.
- Discrimination in employment, in services and/or in day-to-day civic life based on actual or perceived nationality, ethnicity and/or migration status.
- Increased exposure to health risks, especially in urban informal settlements and at work, notably in industrial, agricultural and/or mining environments.
- Exposure to lack of occupational safety and health (OSH) protections and risky working conditions, particularly in ‘3-D’ jobs (dirty, dangerous, degrading) where migrants tend to be concentrated.
- Risks of abuse and exploitation in employment (non-payment of wages, substandard pay, unpaid overtime, workplace violence).
- Risks of mistreatment and abuse by authorities (arbitrary measures in dis-accord with regulations or due process, corrupt practices, physical violence, etc.)
- Limited or no access to basic social services. Limited or non-existence of service facilities, and/or of information on health, education, children’s, and other services in a language young migrants can understand.
- Restricted access to health and social services for short-term temporary and/or undocumented migrants where entitlements are made dependent on status.
- Limited or no access to social protection schemes, institutions and/or services, notably in less developed countries.
- No access to social security entitlements built up in country of origin due to lack of bilateral or multilateral agreements ensuring the portability of these entitlements.
- Non-portability of contributions and benefits earned in country of employment.
- Legislative barriers: legal requirements/restrictions on access to health, housing, schooling and other social protection, in particular by nationality and territoriality.
- Lack of fluency in official language(s).
- Lack of familiarity with a new environment.
- Isolation in geographic locations (such as rural agricultural, forestry, mining areas) distant from where services may be available. Lack of recognition of schooling, diploma, or training credentials; lack of recognition of equivalent experience.
- Lack of political participation or representation.

**Within families**
- Children, adolescents and youth obliged to drop out of school and work to provide for household welfare, in some cases resulting in child labour situations.
- Separation of families and resulting family instability, and, in some situations, social stigma.
- Obligation for children to migrate unaccompanied by parents to escape desperate situations of violence, economic privation, etc.
- Unaccompanied child and adolescent migration for family reunification, family unity.
Table 3.1 reveals that young migrants face numerous risks and vulnerabilities. At the outset, accentuated risks and vulnerabilities in homelands may be factors compelling displacement and emigration. These risks may compound the impact on youth of risks they face in transit and especially, destination countries. The political-economic situation of host countries, particularly the relative existence or absence of social protection measures and a coherent social security system will also affect the extent to which social protection is meaningfully available for youth and adolescent migrants.

### Social security barriers to young migrants

Although migrant workers of all ages generally contribute to the economies of both destination and origin countries, they are not taken account of in national social security schemes in many countries. Migrants often lose entitlement to social security benefits in their country of origin due to absence and/or lack of bilateral or multilateral agreements ensuring portability. They generally face restrictive conditions or non-access to social security in the country of employment. Even when they can contribute to social security in host countries, their contributions and benefits are often not portable, they cannot be transferred to origin countries. Moreover, where bilateral and
Multilateral social security agreements exist, they may primarily cover workers with formal employment relationships, leaving migrants working in irregular situations and/or the informal economy and their families unprotected.

The analytical literature on social protection regarding international migrants categorises the risks and vulnerabilities into four types:

1. **Temporal** – associated with the different stages in the migration process.
2. **Spatial** – dislocation and remoteness, particularly relevant for transit migration.
3. **Socio-cultural** – perspectives, norms and values with respect to migrants, closely linked with culturally held notions of race, gender and illegality.
4. **Socio-political** – institutional constraints on migrants’ access to services and political participation in a host country.

Adolescents and youth migrants face vulnerabilities that are both spatial (being in a territory that is not their country of citizenship) and socio-political, given that within a ‘foreign’ territory they may not share the same degree of protection and services as nationals or citizens of that state. This is especially the case for unauthorized migrants. The socio-political vulnerabilities are typically exacerbated by restrictions arising from “territoriality” and “nationality”. These restrictions imply that migrant workers may lose coverage under the social security system in their country of origin, as well as risk having limited or no coverage at all in their country of destination.

Young migrants are often more at risk of not being covered or losing benefits due to short durations of their contributions to social security schemes—if indeed they can be enrolled—or because they are in precarious jobs or working in the informal economy thus limiting their access to contributory social security schemes. The non-portability of contributions and benefits can affect the decision to migrate elsewhere or return, which in turn impacts families in countries of origin. The lack of portability or the impossibility to obtain social security benefits despite their contribution to social security schemes might also push migrants to work in the informal economy.

For a majority of young migrant workers, effective access to certain elements of social protection is contingent on their migration and/or work-permit status. The moment their permit and/or regular status expires, migrants often lose their access to basic services, leading a significant number of migrants to join the informal economy reducing their access to contributory social protection schemes. In the case of youth
migrants in the working-age category, it can be argued that this is a loss also for the country of destination, since the sustainability of most national social security schemes relies on integrating as many youths as possible into formal employment so that formal contributions to social protection schemes can be made.

Authorized immigration status is a key determinant in practice of whether, and to what extent, migrant adolescents and youth have access to basic social protection and social security benefits. While bilateral agreements can ensure that some migrants benefit from full access, in other cases, migrants (particularly migrants in an irregular situation or those working in the informal economy) will have limited or no access to social protection in host countries. Undocumented adolescents and children of migrant parents with irregular status may be unable to access education, health care or other social services. Moreover, undocumented adolescents and youth often lack acceptable identification documents, which can block school or labour market registration in destination countries. Bilateral and multilateral agreements that either ensure access to social protection or the portability of social security entitlements represent an important step towards addressing the vulnerabilities of adolescent and youth migrants. As these agreements will mostly cover formal workers, to ensure migrant workers in the informal economy and their families benefit from basic social protection coverage, the Social Protection Floors recommendation, 2012 (no. 202) aims to ensure at least basic income security and access to essential health care for all.

**Legal and administrative barriers for social security for migrants**

Several barriers on the legislative and institutional side underlie the barriers experienced by individuals outlined above. These include, firstly, the inadequacy of legal immigration regimes, notably where authorization for admission, residence and employment of migrant workers does not correspond either to labour market demand or to the actual presence of migrant workers and family members.

Secondly, lack of implementation of existing social security agreements even for regular migrant workers often leaves migrants who are entitled without real access to social security nor maintenance of their rights. Thirdly, few social security systems adequately provide social protection mechanisms for those employed in informal activity and their dependents, where in fact many migrants are working –including in highly industrialized countries in Europe. This lacuna is widespread for migrants in
irregular status. Fourthly, some analytical approaches judge that, despite contributions made by migrant workers, the ‘export’ of their contributions and entitlements under portability regimes represents a loss of resources – of capital – for the national social security system, and is therefore discouraged. Contributions by migrants to social security systems represent an important subsidy to the solvency and continuing viability of national social security accounts, all the more so the un-reimbursable contributions made by unauthorized migrants. The United States Social Security Administration, for example, has acknowledged that mostly un-reimbursable contributions by undocumented workers represented a US$12 billion annual net gain to the US accounts in 2010.15

At the administrative level, barriers to extending social security coverage and portability to migrants include the lack of administrative mechanisms in both employment and origin countries to a) incorporate migrants into social security regimes; b) ensure maintenance of their rights through amongst others portability of contributions and benefits’ regimes; c) manage transfers to migrant home countries; and d) issue benefits and services in origin countries based on contributions made elsewhere and transferred or potentially transferred to the origin/home country.

A basic and generalized issue is the lack of data and information required to operate a social security system, incorporate migrants and manage portability provisions. This lacuna includes lack of data on migrant employment and actual or potential contributions; lack of information by migrants on how to enrol and participate; and lack of compatible and systematized data exchange between or among concerned countries for calculating contributions, transfers, benefits, etc.

These data, information and data sharing lacuna are compounded in the growing number of regional economic communities and common market areas where free circulation regimes are already in place. As has been the case in the European Union, the multi-country mobility regimes require coordinated area-wide social security coverage regimes among participating countries. This is discussed in more detail below.
The need for international cooperation is also laid down in ILO Recommendation No. 202, which encourages countries to share and exchange information, experiences and expertise. This complements Convention No. 118 which requires ratifying Member States to afford each other administrative assistance. Such assistance allows for the necessary administrative arrangements to be put into place to ensure the effective implementation of coordination mechanisms, as well as capacity building through exchange of expertise and good practices. Sharing good practices may also encourage States to enhance the protection of migrants’ social security rights and to improve the implementation of existing coordination agreements and mechanisms.

**Box 3.2. Examples of social protection schemes that extend benefits to migrants**

Canada allows access to tax-financed universal pension and health care benefits and earnings-based pensions to all residents, including most migrants in regular status. Australia also has a dual social security system, including a means-tested national pension and mandatory earnings-based occupational pension.

Two categories of social security systems are in force in some East Asian host countries. Hong Kong (China), Japan and Republic of Korea have multi-tiered schemes, consisting of a basic part covering all residents and an occupational scheme. All migrant workers working in Korea under the Employment Permit Scheme (EPS) are granted the same level of access and the same kinds of social security as national workers. Malaysia and Singapore have provident funds that collect resources not only for retirement, but also for financing health care, education and housing. Social security provisions in these countries allow limited portability of long-term benefits, sometimes in the form of pensions paid abroad.

Middle-income countries – particularly in the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Latin America and North Africa – have relatively well-developed social security systems with good coverage of the labour force, including migrants. Hence to the extent that migrants participate in the formal economy, they can access the contribution-based social security and exportability of acquired rights. In addition, in some countries, such as Argentina and Uruguay, new legal provisions provide for equal access by all to social services and social security, including immigrants and their families, regardless of their status. In low-income countries, however, a large segment of the population works in the informal labour market and thus does not contribute to already weak social security systems, and a significant proportion of migrants are also undocumented.

The “Aide Médicale d’Etat” (AME) scheme in France provides support for essential health care to migrants resident but in irregular situations with little or no income or resources.
Social protection for young migrants

Within the context of international migration, providing social protection can be seen as a way to maximize the opportunities and address the risks and vulnerabilities confronting adolescent and youth migrants. Investing in social protection as a strategy to address economic and social vulnerabilities has become an important part of development discourse. However, discussion has rarely focused on the importance of providing social protection for young migrants.

As noted above, universal social security is enshrined in UN human rights conventions, ILO Conventions and regional human rights agreements. These international instruments affirm the need for implementing a social protection regime to ensure a minimum standard of living for all. The ILO Social Protection Floor Recommendation No. 202 adopted at the International Labour Conference in 2012 calls upon all countries to establish and maintain “nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees which secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion” (see Box 1). These guarantees should ensure, at a minimum, that, over the life cycle, all in need have access to essential health care and to basic income security which together secure effective access to goods and services defined as necessary at the national level. These guarantees should also be provided “at least to all residents and children.”

As social protection measures aim to strengthen resilience, accelerate equity and contribute to human development, social protection can also be seen as a strategy for maximizing the opportunities and addressing the economic and social vulnerabilities associated with adolescent and youth migration. Two key dimensions of social protection should, as a minimum, apply to youth (and other) migrants in destination countries; these along with essential complementary support mechanisms and policies are listed in Box 3.3 and elaborated below. Crucial, complementary dimensions for ensuring social protection for young migrants include informal support networks and policy addressing labour market access and employability, in particular access to employment services and vocational training/skills development, as well as other programmes that enhance employability.
Access to social protection programmes (including access to universal social benefit schemes, social insurance schemes, social assistance schemes, public employment schemes and/or employment support schemes) can directly address some of the risks young migrants face, in addition to enhancing their human development.

Access to social services provides a smoother transition for international youth migrants, facilitating their economic and social integration. Social protection measures may address the economic and social barriers that can prevent access to services. Certain schemes focus on the most vulnerable parts of the population in an effort to achieve a fairer more inclusive distribution of resources and benefits. They thus help level the playing field, supporting both children and adults to realise their full potential. In relation to migrants, these services can help overcome economic or socio-cultural barriers; for example, in schools or labour markets, promoting effective integration.

Portability of social security benefits refers to the ability to “preserve, maintain and transfer vested social security rights or rights independent of nationality and country of residence”. For instance, migrants working in a destination country may be contributing to an old age pension scheme or to another social security scheme that accrues benefits after a certain qualifying period, before which, if they return to their home country, their contributions would be partially or totally lost. Without portability, migrants and their families incur losses that are both financial, in terms of

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**Box 3.3. Two aspects of social protection and two complementary measures particularly relevant for migrants**

1. Access to social protection schemes/programmes, provision of benefits, including to ensure access to health care and other basic social services in host countries;
2. Portability of social security benefits.
3. Informal support networks
4. Policies addressing labour market access and employability

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contributions made, and in terms of social security benefits, particularly retirement income.

However, factors often impeding portability of social security that need to be addressed include: lack of basic data capacity and exchange capability between employment and origin countries, incompatibility between social security systems, the need to bridge different legal regimes, absence of common regional legal frameworks or bilateral accords, lack of adoption and utilization of relevant international standards by concerned countries, non-convertibility of contributions and entitlement values across different currencies and varying exchange rates, and differing administrative capacity and competences between different country administrations, to name but several.

Promoting and establishing bilateral or multilateral social security agreements can expand and extend the social security coverage and portability that migrants have access to. Such agreements – along with ratification of the relevant ILO Conventions including Nos. 102, 118 and 157 reinforce equality of treatment with nationals of the country of employment, as well as maintain social security rights acquired in the host country and allow for periods of contribution completed in different countries to be added for the calculation of the benefit entitlement. Such agreements provide for the export of benefits from the country of employment to the country of origin, and can ensure that young migrants benefit from protection of accumulated benefits acquired in different countries (See Box 3.3). Therefore, it is important for young migrants to be informed of these agreements/schemes that extend benefits to migrants.

Moreover such schemes provide a starting point and basis for countries to afford and extend social protection benefits for a migrants, particularly adolescents and youth.

For a large number of countries, portability can be enhanced by implementing the existing or emerging multilateral social security agreements in the regional economic communities or common markets with established regimes of free circulation of workers or persons generally. Cooperation among social security institutions in these multi-country areas is essential to ensure coverage and portability for migrants.
Informal support networks are formal and informal institutions that act as non-traditional social safety nets providers, either complementing formal social protection schemes or compensating for their absence. They are essential for workers in the informal economy, including migrant workers – whether in authorized or undocumented situations. Such networks include cooperatives, mutual associations, trade unions, religious and charity institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), family networks, and diaspora associations. In the absence of either contributory or non-contributory income support measures organized by the State – i.e. tax- or contribution-financed social benefits, in cash or in kind, and medical care – arrangements developed by NGOs are often the only form of social protection support available to migrants. ‘Reverse remittances’ (flows of goods or money from countries of origin to destination) also constitute an important source of informal social protection that help migrants struggling due to periods of unemployment or other unforeseen situations.25

Coordination and complementarity between social protection/social security measures and policies addressing labour market access are also important for supporting and protecting youth and adolescent migrants. Labour market policies can offer incentives to employers to contribute to facilitating access to social protection for migrant workers. However, absence of deliberate policy as well as policy approaches ignoring social protection leave vacuums that allow employers to avoid providing for social protection and/or to employ young migrants on sub-standard terms and in conditions that may expose young migrants to aggravated health and safety risks.26

Chapter 5 on youth migration and employment touches on policies addressing labour market access and employability for youth migrants, in particular access to employment services and vocational training/skills development, and other policies and programmes that enhance employability.

Enhancing social protection systems to include migrant youth and adolescents

Building on points outlined above, the main impediments for extending social security to migrants can be summed up as: 1) lacuna in national legal/legislative regimes, namely absence of access to, in particular pensions and health protection coverage for migrant workers and their families, non-calculated employment periods, and non-portability of pensions and benefits; 2) Lack of implementation of existing social
security provisions that cover migrants; 3) absence of social protection for workers in informal or unregistered activity, 4) absence of provisions ensuring basic social protection for migrants in irregular, unauthorized or undocumented situations; 5) disincentives to incorporate non-nationals in social security; 6) lack of administrative mechanisms to extend coverage and portability; 7) inadequate data and lack of information exchange in countries and, consequently, among countries; and 8) lack of multilateral or bilateral frameworks for social security cooperation.27

Related contextual policy challenges include: absence of legislation governing labour migration; absence or inefficiency of administrative and regulatory mechanisms; and prevalence of informal employment relations.

For social protection to be extended to youth and adolescent migrants, specific mechanisms are required to recognize migrant workers' social security rights and to overcome restrictive conditions, in particular those based on territoriality and nationality. Although a number of countries recognize equality of treatment between national and non-national workers in social security legislation, some countries discriminate against migrant workers through national legislation that excludes specific categories of migrants or disallows portability, or in more extreme cases excludes all nonnationals from coverage or entitlement to benefits, or applies less favourable treatment to them. Specific measures may be needed to ensure that all migrant youth and adolescents can access social protection regardless of status, including those in informal and/or temporary employment situations.

A number of specific steps can be taken unilaterally to improve social security outreach to and incorporation of migrants, independent of concluding bilateral or international agreements. As a primary step countries should establish and strengthen national social protection floors ensuring at least basic income security and access to essential health care for all residents and children including migrant workers and their families as quickly as possible, especially countries that do not have a minimum level of social security guarantees. Secondly, governments should seek to provide higher and wider levels of protection to as many people as possible, progressively extending and building their national security systems. For those countries, with comprehensive social security systems already in place, it is crucial to strengthen its efficiency, simplify procedures, including to accommodate resident as well as short-term
migrants, and enable migrants to effectively access existing social protection schemes. Social security institutions in member States of regional economic communities (RECs) need to assess their existing coverage and identify actual compatibilities and contrasts between national systems in the RECs. They also need to support generating the political will to obtain inter-country agreements and to extend unilateral measures.

More precise data and information needs to be obtained and applied on migrant employment and economic activity—data essential for determining social security contributions and coverage. Social security agencies need to interface labour market data on migrants with their administration of social security. They also need to encourage obtaining data on the often un-recognized migrant worker populations such as those in informal economic activity, the large numbers in seasonal agricultural labour, and those in irregular situations.

Extending social security to migrants, particularly young migrant workers, requires a deliberate and strategic process. The complex, inter-related nature of the challenges and tasks invokes need for several stages that are mutually reinforcing and progressively built. These involve complementary and mutually supporting efforts by Parliaments, concerned ministries and social security institutions.

Specific action steps may be needed in four areas:

1. Assessment of populations, systems and capacities

Good policy, practice and cooperation depends on good data. Extending social protection coverage requires solid evidence on existing applicable laws, provisions, practices and capacities for coverage of migrants as well as the numbers, age and gender distribution, employment situations and status of migrants.

While a progressive process over time, administrators need to begin expanding coverage for migrants by measuring what areas of coverage can be readily extended and in which sectors, under existing social security programmes and measures. A first step in any country should be mapping “Extending Social Security Country Profiles” (Box 3.4). Mapping would include both an assessment of relevant law, practice and structures, and statistical and qualitative data regarding migrants in the country as well as nationals abroad.
Any such mapping will be dependent on national social security administrations cooperating with relevant ministries in charge of social protection and related services and social security institutions. In some countries agencies in charge of managing and distributing social security benefits can also include private insurance boards and foundations, provident funds, and judicial institutions. The International Social Security Association (ISSA) can offer essential tools and methodologies as well as lessons learned from other countries’ experiences.

2. Implementing national ‘unilateral’ measures

Expanding the contributor base to enhance affordability and efficiency of social security systems argues for promoting full incorporation of migrant workers in national systems. Expert inputs and experience of social security administrators and social partners (worker and employer organizations) highlight an array of measures that can be implemented unilaterally and often rapidly within each country, and usually applying to origin, transit and destination countries, recognizing that today most countries are all three. These include:

- Establishment by the country of employment of equality of treatment between national and non-nationals regarding social security coverage and medical care as well as payment of benefits abroad.

Box 3.4. Mapping Country Profiles for Extending Social Security

Two main areas:

1) Summarize applicable social security law provisions, existing current practices, relevant structures, and mechanisms addressing or potentially able to address social security of migrants:
   - Identify coverage existing for non-nationals including that applicable for undocumented migrants and migrants working in the informal economy.
   - Specify types of coverage: pension, health, accident, disability, other
   - Transferability provisions and mechanisms
   - Systems for obtaining contributions and providing benefits

2) Obtain statistical and qualitative data regarding migrants in the country and nationals abroad – access and availability of data and resources permitting:
   - Numbers of migrants, including their age and gender
   - Employment characteristics, including sectoral distribution
   - Length of stay, and applicable legal status regimes
   - Family dependent data
• Provisions for inclusion in social protection measures of all migrants resident in the country regardless of status.
• Extending social protection coverage, including through establishment and strengthening of national social protection floors ensuring basic social protection guarantees to all residents and children.
• In the absence of formal portability arrangements, reimbursement of social security contributions to the migrant when he/she leaves the country.
• The country of origin provides social security coverage through a national scheme for citizens abroad when they are not covered is the country of employment and/or enables citizens abroad to continue to contribute to social security schemes at home.
• Requiring recruitment agencies to include social security provisions in recruitment/employment contracts.
• Establishing special social security options or voluntary social insurance for migrant workers based on voluntary contributions.
• Providing options for voluntary retroactive payment of contributions into social security or pension schemes for periods abroad.

Much can be done through implementation of administrative measures and practices, particularly in countries of employment (Box 3.5). Specific measures will necessarily be determined according to each national context. For this, the national profiles are especially relevant, by providing decision-making data on applicable legal provisions, existing practices, relevant structures, and mechanisms addressing or potentially able to address social protection of migrants, and young migrants in particular.
3. Adoption of international standards on migrant workers and social security

A complementary basic step to extending social protection for young migrants is incorporating relevant international standards in national law and practice. The core international instruments on migrant workers including ILO Conventions and Recommendations on social security and ILO migrant-specific instruments ensure an internationally compatible legal foundation for realization of the right to social security for migrant workers and their families. Basic rights need to be defined in national law to set the foundation for “social security for all”, including migrants and young migrants and their families. Realizing access and full portability of contributory social security benefits usually requires explicit legal provisions; international cooperation depends on a degree of compatibility among respective national legislations. International standards for social security administration and governance provide the basis for credible, sustainable and effective implementation. The Dynamic Social Security (DSS) concept promoted by ISSA, as

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Box 3.5. Actions that social protection administrators can take:

- Establishing explicit recognition and incorporation of migrant workers and their families as eligible participants in social security systems, in equal conditions with nationals.
- Promulgating dispositions applying social protection measures to all migrants resident in the country regardless of status or employment situation.
- Elaborating administration policy statements on recognition and equality for migrants.
- Awareness raising of rights and access for administrators and engagement in external public relations to ensure that both migrants and host populations are aware of migrants’ rights, equality of treatment, and obligations regarding social security coverage.
- Dialogue with opinion makers, executive officials and legislators to facilitate an environment incorporating migrant participation in social protection systems.
- Enhancing participation by migrant workers with specific oversight measures to obtain enrolment, contribution collection and compliance regarding migrant participation.
- Preventing discrimination in regulations and practices, notably regarding nationality, gender and ethnicity.
- Devising deliberate outreach activities to inform migrant workers about benefits and services and how they can access coverage. This may urge mobile outreach to mining camps, isolated construction sites and/or rural farming and forestry areas; it may mean language accommodation measures such as information, enrolment and advisory services in languages migrants can understand.

well as democratic, tripartite governance, are key strategic components. In addition, national protection floors can be used as a means to palliate the lack of coordination arrangements between countries in respect of any branch of social security. This is often the case where short-term benefits are concerned, as well as for health care and non-contributory benefits.

Social Security Administrations are especially important partners to “making the case” for extending social protection to migrants (Box 3.6). They can work together with advocates, migrant-concerned organizations, faith-based groups, and others concerned with social welfare and social cohesion to promote the ratification and implementation of international standards, the promulgation of legal and administrative measures to extend social security, and to encourage public awareness and understanding.

**Box 3.6. Actions that social protection administrators can take:**

- Establishing explicit recognition and incorporation of migrant workers and their families as eligible participants in social security systems, in equal conditions with nationals.
- Support definition of rights and equality of treatment in national law through legislation – including ratification and implementation of international instruments – by providing data, expert advice, and testimony to legislators.
- Give attention to formulating and implementing operational regulations and language on legal inclusion that acknowledge migrants’ rights and entitlements and ensure their access to social security.
- Establish the regulatory basis and mechanisms for migrant workers’ compulsory participation.
- Devise and implement Dynamic Social Security measures, such as reducing bureaucratic formalities to provide benefits and services in full and quickly, and finding ways of including all migrant workers in basic social security coverage, including those in informal employment and/or irregular situations.
- Review governance structures to ensure representative stakeholder participation and democratic governance of social security. Administrators should enhance regular consultation with social partners and ensure that migrant representatives are included and heard.
- Urge continued State responsibility in financial support and management of comprehensive social security.
- Engage ongoing re-evaluation and innovation to maintain a balance among affordability, equity and efficiency.
- Ensure ongoing capacity building, notably training on the situation of migrant workers.

4. Identifying existing compatibilities and contrasts among national systems in regions

The prerequisite for cooperation on social protection in the growing number of regional economic communities implementing free circulation regimes is identifying existing compatibilities, convergences and divergences among the national social security systems on coverage of migrants. Key elements include recognition of portability and maintenance of rights acquired and in course of acquisition.

Social security administrations have important roles in determining applicability of existing legislation and international agreements, including conventions and bilateral or multilateral agreements that provide means and mechanisms for ensuring portability in fact. Administrators should also identify mechanisms to account for periods of employment/contributions by migrant workers in their country.

The key components of this mapping could be an “Identification and Analysis of Compatibilities” survey to:

- Comparatively review country profile data;
- Determine convergences and potential or existing compatibilities among national systems;
- Analyze bilateral and multilateral accords to identify existing convergences; and
- Identify gaps, divergences, incompatibilities and/or lacuna between countries.

The section below outlines a number of the emerging regional social protection cooperation mechanisms addressing migrants in regional free circulation regimes.

Regional regimes for social protection of migrants

Economic integration through freer circulation of people along with capital, resources, goods, services, and technology is advancing – to greater or lesser degree – today in eleven regional integration processes involving a total of more than 100 countries. The European Union with its consolidated regime of free movement among 28 member countries is best known. In addition, liberalized circulation regimes for labour and skills are being implemented to a greater or lesser degree in nine others involving more than 70 countries. These include the Andean Pact (4 member countries); CARICOM – Caribbean Community (15 members, 5 associates); CEMAC – Communité économique et monétaire de l’Afrique Centrale (6 members); EAC – East African
Community (5 members); **ECCAS** – Economic Community of Central African States (8 members); **ECOWAS** – Economic Community of West African States (15 members); **EEC** – Eurasian Economic Community (6 members); Southern Common Market – **MERCOSUR**, (5 members, 5 associates); and **SICA** – Central American Integration System (8 members; 4 with a joint free circulation/common passport zone). Memberships of CEMAC and ECCAS overlap.

Processes are underway in four other regional economic communities to establish, renegotiate or adopt free circulation regimes: **ASEAN** – Association of Southeast Asian Nations (10 members), **COMESA** – Community of Eastern and Southern Africa (19); **IGAD** – the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (5 members in the Horn of Africa region); and **SADC** – Southern Africa Development Community (15 members).

Regional multilateral social security agreements or frameworks have been established in several of these processes. The regimes outlined below are significant in that they recognize needs for access to and portability of social protection by migrants across the respective regional economic communities (RECs). However, there has generally been little explicit attention to the specific social protection/social security needs of adolescent and youth in these regimes.

**European Union (EU)**

The EU social security coordination regulations, elaborated over 50 years, are generally regarded as the most advanced social security coordination system in the world. The rules apply to 32 countries, the EU member States plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. They apply across nearly all of the nine contingencies identified in ILO Convention No. 102. The system is certainly the most inclusive and complex, both in terms of the number of persons covered and the degree of comprehensiveness. The regulations largely replaced earlier bilateral agreements, filling important gaps, and ensured consistent provisions applicable to all persons lawfully resident in the EU, replacing those that varied according to factors such as nationality.

Young people who are EU nationals and lawfully resident non-EU or third-country nationals moving within the EU to pursue education and/or employment are regarded as residents of their home countries, entitling them to all necessary benefits in kind.
The EU has elaborated an extensive framework for cooperation among national social security administrations to ensure access to and portability of social security coverage among EU nationals and legally residing \textit{third-country nationals}. Other examples of EU social security measures and their application to third countries are the 1990s Euro-Mediterranean agreements between the EU, its Member States and the Maghreb countries of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, as well as an earlier agreement with Turkey, all of which contain provisions on the portability of social security benefits for migrant workers.\textsuperscript{28}

\textbf{Caribbean Community (CARICOM)}

CARICOM’s Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas,\textsuperscript{29} in its Chapter 3, stipulates rights to free movement and calls for removal of restrictions on rights to establishment in a member State by nationals of other member States, expressly to provide services and, for certain skills categories, to seek employment across the region. Article 35 of the Treaty explicitly calls for establishing common standards and measures for accreditation or mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of qualifications, for “mechanisms to determine equivalency or accord accreditation”, and for measures to co-ordinate legislative and administrative requirements for participation of Community nationals in employment and other activities in the Community. The CARICOM Agreement on Social Security (CASS)\textsuperscript{30} provides for portability of pensions and also migrant workers’ access to claim other safety-net allowances, such as workers’ compensation and unemployment benefits (as long as they are lawfully present).

\textbf{Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)}

MERCOSUR has established a comprehensive agreement and operational system recognizing the rights, obligations and contributions to pension systems of workers who work or have worked in one or more of the MERCOSUR countries, and of their families. The system ensures non-discriminatory access to social services and makes benefits portable for intra-regional migrants.\textsuperscript{31} The system is based on the principle of \textit{prorate temporis} (i.e. in proportion to the length of time involved), and transferability of individual capitalization. It operates as a unified system, taking into account the specificities of national administrations. Bilateral agreements by countries party to the accord with non-parties are anticipated, permitting transferring contributions among and elsewhere from MERCOSUR countries. Development of the joint data base for
MERCOSUR social security institutions with its Data Transfer and Validation System (DTVS) was a major advance, systematizing and computerizing pension contribution data across the member countries.

**Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

The 2007 ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers’ requires receiving States to “facilitate access to social welfare services as appropriate and in accordance with the legislation of the receiving state”, as well as appropriate employment protection, payment of wages, and adequate access to decent working and living conditions for migrant workers.  

**East African Community (EAC)**

The East African Community Treaty of 1999 addresses social security and social protection (in Article 120), although defined in terms of social welfare. The Treaty anticipated free movement of persons and their access to labour markets across the now five member countries. The EAC Protocol on the Common Market (2010) recognises the need for Partner States to “coordinate and harmonise their social policies to promote and protect decent work and improve the living conditions of the citizens” and Partner States agree to coordinate and harmonise social policies relating to: good governance, the rule of law and social justice, protection of human and peoples’ rights, and protection of the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups. An expert study for a coordinated approach to social security in the EAC recommended several common principles for implementation of the Common Market Protocol provisions:

a) Social security as a right ought to be recognised in all the constitutions of EAC countries.

b) The contingencies covered should include all nine elements stipulated in ILO Convention No. 102.

c) Benefits must be adequate in amount or duration to ensure an adequate standard of living and healthcare.
d) Accessibility and coverage: All persons should be covered by the social security system especially individuals belonging to the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups. This aspiration must be embedded in laws, although implementation may be gradual taking into account the available resources at any given time.

**Southern African Development Community (SADC)**

Social protection-related instruments within the SADC include the Declaration and Treaty of the SADC, the Charter of Fundamental Social Rights, the Code on Social Security, the Protocol on Gender and Development, Protocols on Health, and Education and Training, and a Draft Protocol on Facilitation of Movement of Persons in the region. While the Treaty and its protocols and the Social Charter are legally binding on SADC member States, the Code on Social Security – which ensures the right to social protection for some particularly vulnerable populations such as children, young people and migrants – merely provides guidelines.34

**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

The Economic Community of West African States has had Protocols on free movement, rights to establishment and access to labour markets for member State nationals across the fifteen member countries since the 1980s. The ECOWAS 2008 ‘Common Approach on Migration’ highlighted provisions to ensure protection of migrant workers and promote regular migration and gender-sensitive policies. Recent adoption of the ECOWAS General Convention on Social Security was a major step towards better coordination of social security schemes in the region. However, while implementation of these instruments has met several obstacles,35 new initiatives are tracing ways to accelerate giving them effect. Although the Social Security Convention has not yet been ratified by many Member States, ECOWAS administrative provisions are being utilized to give immediate effect to key provisions. As in other RECs, national adoption and implementation of the instruments as well as greater coordination and cooperation are needed to effectively extend social security to migrant workers and their families.
Gulf Coordination Council (GCC)\textsuperscript{56}

In January 2006 the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Member States promulgated a unified social security law to cover GCC member citizens working in other GCC member countries against the risks of old age, disability and death. The Unified Law on Insurance Protection Extension for Citizens of Gulf Cooperation Council States Working outside Their Countries in Any of the Council Member States and its full implementation are seen as a significant step towards integration and coordination among GCC countries in all fields, including social security for citizens. Employers are now required to register all GCC member State citizens employed by them according to the procedures of the employee’s home country. The undertaking also aimed at increasing labour mobility by enabling freedom of movement of workers between GCC states. The initiative facilitates transfer of knowledge and expertise among social security institutions and permits greater administrative and legal coordination. By expanding the base of social security contributors, the 2006 law resulted in increased financial revenues for the states’ respective social security agencies. However, non-GCC “third country” nationals, many of whom have little or no social protection coverage yet comprise the vast majority of workers in most GCC countries, are not addressed in this scheme.

Ibero-American Multilateral Convention on Social Security

The Ibero-American Multilateral Convention on Social Security is the newest inter-regional multilateral agreement to come into effect. It has been signed by two European countries and 12 Latin American countries of which 11 have ratified the Convention while three have ratified the Administrative Arrangements. The Convention replaces a network of social security agreements among Latin American Countries. The Convention covers all persons who are or have been subject to social security legislation of any of the signatory states as well as to their family members deriving rights from them. It includes benefits in cash in the event of disability, old age, death of a family member and employment injury (work accidents and occupational diseases). The Convention applies to all schemes either general or special and benefits in kind relating to branches included. While of far-reaching importance by the number of persons potentially covered, implementation remains limited as only three countries have to date ratified the Administrative Arrangement.\textsuperscript{37}
It is important to note that the extent to which a number of these schemes are implemented and enforced has not yet been extensively documented, monitored or evaluated, with exception of the European Union, although even there attention to the specific situations of adolescent and youth migrants has been lacking. Research and documentation is essential for shedding light on their effectiveness, particularly in relation to migrant adolescents and youth.
KEY MESSAGES

The message of this chapter is that equitable access to and coverage of social protection, including access to health care, for adolescent and youth migrants enhances their well-being and their contributions to development.

- Social protection is a critical tool for addressing economic and social risks and vulnerabilities; yet young migrants often face restricted access to, or exclusion from, social protection and social security systems.

- Governments have the primary responsibility for ensuring effective access to social security for all. Effective social dialogue processes play a key role in the formulation and implementation of social security policies.

- It is critical to ensure that adolescent and youth migrants are covered by existing social protection mechanisms, to eliminate territoriality, nationality and legal status barriers to access and restrictions on portability of social security, and to ensure responsiveness to the specific needs of young migrant women and girls.

- International legal instruments including ILO Conventions and Recommendations on social security and migrant-specific instruments referring to social security provide a comprehensive legal and policy framework for extending social protection to young migrants both horizontally and vertically through a two-dimensional approach.

- The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) provides a useful framework for the establishment of national social protection floors as a fundamental elements of national social security systems aimed at achieving universal protection by ensuring at least minimum levels of income security and access to essential health care to all including migrant workers and their families (*horizontal dimension*). It provides additional guidance on the formulation and implementation of extension strategies.

- In line with national priorities, resources and circumstance, strategies to extend
social protection should also progressively ensure higher levels of social security to as many people as possible, taking into account Convention No. 102 and other ILO more advanced social security standards (*vertical dimension*).

- Important steps have been taken in several regions to enhance access to social protection and social security coverage for migrants, including youth migrants, by implementing bilateral and multilateral social security frameworks complementing regimes of free circulation of persons in regional economic communities.

- In the absence of international social security agreements, national Social Protection Floors can palliate the lack of coordination arrangements between countries and can address gaps in the social security coverage of migrant workers and their families. The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (no. 202) provides useful guidance in this regard.

- Significant steps to extend social protection coverage and access to social security entitlements for young migrants and their families can be taken unilaterally by countries, including by their respective social security administrations.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

To extend social protection measures to incorporate young migrants

- Ratify and implement relevant international conventions and implement recommendations which make provisions for the right to social security of migrant workers and their families.

- Ensure that social security policies address the needs of women and men and children during all stages of the life cycle and the specific needs of vulnerable groups including migrant workers.³⁸

- Implement the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) to cover youth migrants and their families in the State where they reside, as well as in their home country, to ensure at a minimum that, over the life cycle, all in need have access to the four social security guarantees comprised of at least: access to essential health care, including maternity care; basic income security for children; basic income security for persons in active age unable to earn sufficient income; and basic income
security for older persons.

- Provide effective access to universal social protection rights, such as to healthcare and education, for all young migrants and their families, without discrimination of any kind, including on the basis of migration status.

- Conclude bilateral, regional and/or multilateral agreements that provide equality of treatment in respect of social security as well as access to, preservation of and portability of social security entitlements for migrant workers, including access, at a minimum, to basic social protection for adolescents and youth, including young female migrants, in countries of origin and destination.

- Implement existing regional frameworks on social security coverage and portability, while ensuring their applicability to adolescent and youth migrants.

- Adopt unilateral measures to extend social protection coverage to all migrants, including citizens living abroad and non-nationals present in national territories, as well as ensuring access to social security entitlements.

- Ensure that social protection measures covering migrants apply to adolescents and children and to temporary and seasonal migration schemes.
NOTES


5 Since its establishment in 1919, the ILO has played a major role developing an internationally defined normative framework guiding the establishment, development and maintenance of social security systems across the world, and has become the world’s leading point of reference for efforts to this end. Elaborated and adopted by the Organization’s tripartite constituents, governments, employers’ and workers’ representatives of all ILO member States, and stemming from the Organization’s mandate, the Conventions and Recommendations that compose this framework are unique: they establish standards that States set for themselves, building on good practices and innovative ways of providing enhanced and extended social protection in countries from all regions of the world. At the same time, they are built on the notion that there is no single perfect model for social security; on the contrary, it is for each society to develop the best means of guaranteeing the protection required. Accordingly, they offer a range of options and flexible routes for their application, which can be achieved through a combination of contributory and non-contributory benefits, general and occupational schemes, compulsory and voluntary insurance, and different methods for the administration of benefits, all directed at ensuring an overall level of protection which best responds to each country’s needs.

6 The definition in the Constitution of ISSA reads, “any scheme or programme established by legislation, or any other mandatory arrangement, which provides protection, whether in cash or in kind, in the event of employment accidents, occupational diseases, unemployment, maternity, sickness, invalidity, old age, retirement, survivorship, or death, and encompasses, among others, benefits for children and other family members, health care benefits, prevention, rehabilitation, and long-term care.” The full text of the ISSA Constitution is available at: http://www.issa.int/details?uuid=da0af86b-b150-4313-938d-185ce2316fb.


9 UNICEF (2012), op. cit.


11 For a description of this programme and its impact, see “Mexico’s Progresa-Oportunidades and the emergence of social assistance in Latin America” by Miguel Niño-Zarazua. Brooks World Poverty Institute, The University of Manchester, Chronic Poverty Research Centre, March 2011. Available in pdf format from Munich Personal RePEc Archive at: http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/29639/


13 Territoriality confines the application of social security legislation to the territory of the country in which it has been enacted. The second restriction is based on nationality where in one country migrant workers may receive differentiated benefits according to their nationality.


Migration and Social Protection for Non-

EuropeAid and International Centre for Migration

recurrent discussion on social protection (social security), para 33 (e).

migrant workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council States.

Communities/ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers, paras 7 and 8; text available at:

http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community/revised_treaty.jsp?menu=community

http://www.caricom.org/jsp/secretariat/legal_instruments/agreement_socialsecurity.jsp?menu=secretariat


A CARICOM user guide “Social Security in CARICOM” explaining how the agreement applies and how to access coverage and benefits is available at:


This listing was identified in a meeting of the of ISSA- IAPSF Working Group on Migrant Workers in Eurasia, 30 November-1 December 2011 in Geneva among a number national social security agencies from the Eurasia region; it is generally consistent with findings in other regions.


This description adapted from the ISSA 2010 good practices profile:


This sub-section on the GCC is an edited summary of the ISSA 2010 good practices profile: Social security coverage for migrant workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council States.

This description adapted from the ILO Social Protection Department webpage "Examples of multilateral social security agreements", available at: http://www.socialsecurityextension.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.action?wiki.wikiId=953

As agreed by the ILO 183 member States at the International Labour Conference in 2011 in the Conclusions on the recurrent discussion on social protection (social security), para 33 (e).
ADOLESCENT AND YOUNG WOMEN MIGRANTS*
Adolescent and young women are an important and too often overlooked part of the migration phenomenon. They represent about half of all migrants in their age group and constitute about five percent of the total global migrant population. They are believed to be a larger segment of those who are trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labour. Adolescent and young women migrate in all of the categories of migration—labour movements, family reunification and formation, and forced migration. They are also a significant part of the families left behind in countries of origin by migrating parents and spouses.

Adolescent and young women migrants often face triple forms of discrimination—as women, young people and migrants. In many cases, gender based discrimination is itself a reason that they migrate—either to escape restrictions on their freedom, gender-based violence or to seek better lives in other countries. These young women face significant challenges and discrimination, at the same time they have opportunities resulting from migration. For many adolescent and young women, migration is a liberating experience. They may be the beneficiaries of increased educational opportunities in countries of origin or destination. As the recipient of remittances or as a breadwinner in a new country, they may be able to define how their own and their household's financial resources will be spent. They may experience greater rights and personal freedom (although this depends largely on where they migrate and under what conditions).

But for others, migration is source of violence and disruption. Migration routes, particularly for those moving in an irregular manner, can be dangerous for adolescent and young women who face the strong potential for sexual attacks. They may be employed in unregulated industries with little regard for their well-being. Whether left behind or migrating on their own, they may face long periods away from parents or spouses; in some cases, the migrating family member may never return. Early marriages and pregnancies can undermine their health and safety.

This chapter examines the lives, needs and accomplishments of adolescent and young women who are affected by migration. Four distinct categories of adolescents and young women are so affected: 1) those who migrate with family members, 2) those...
who migrate on their own, 3) those born in destination countries to migrants, and 4) those living in the country of origin after one or both of their parents migrate.

The chapter takes a gendered perspective in examining the experiences of adolescent and young women. As explained in the 2004 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development:

“… gender is a core organizing principle of social relations, including hierarchical relations, in all societies. It views the migration of women and men as influenced by beliefs and expectations about appropriate behaviours for women and men and between women and men, which are reinforced in economic, political and social institutions. A gender perspective acknowledges the influence of gender inequalities that exist in both origin and destination countries and illustrates how those inequalities can empower women but can also handicap them in the migratory process.”

The next three sections of the chapter focus primarily on adolescent and young women who have migrated and the causes and forms of migration involving this population. The next section examines the impact of migration on gender roles in the context of migration of adolescents and young women. The following one identifies legal frameworks applicable to the migration of adolescents and youth, pointing out gaps in law and policy. Section Five includes the broader categories of interest, examining the needs of adolescent and young women who migrate, those born to migrants (regardless of their own citizenship) and those left behind in origin countries. It focuses on three areas of particular importance in understanding the impact of migration on adolescents and young women: education, health, and decent work. The final section provides policy conclusions and recommendations for empowering young migrant women and ensuring their protection from abuses.

Policies should be developed to offer girls more opportunities to study, while recognising the reality that many of them may also engage in part-time employment, inside or outside their household. Flexibility for school entry or re-entry is critical. To encourage parents to send their children to school, educational curricula in rural schools need to be reviewed and revised to ensure the inclusion of practical skills that will help children and adolescents make the transition to employment. Curricula
should reflect the shifting needs of the local labour market (agriculture, micro-enterprise) and include work-based training.

A best practice in the area of relevant training for transitioning into the workforce is Nigeria’s ‘National Open Apprenticeship Scheme’, targeted mainly to unemployed youth and those who left school, providing vocational training for a period of six-to-36 months. The scheme reports that 90 per cent of those trained found work.²

Apprenticeships can be an excellent way for young people to transition into the labour market, but experience has shown that host governments need to establish monitoring systems to ensure that young people are getting maximum benefit and not being exploited. To safeguard youth rights, policies should define guidelines for the establishment of apprenticeships, vocational training and internships that are applicable in different socio-cultural contexts.

TRENDS IN MIGRATION OF ADOLESCENT AND YOUNG WOMEN

This section focuses on patterns and trends in migration of adolescent and young women. It presents statistics on the number of adolescent and young women; examines the causes of their migration; and describes typical forms of migration that they pursue.

Numbers

Women and girls have been an important component of international migration during the past six decades. As of 2010, about 49 percent of the world’s migrants were female, up from 46.6 percent in 1960.³ Although data have improved significantly in the past decades, sex and age disaggregated information is often missing in migration data sets and analyses. As a result, information about adolescents and youth (that is, those who are 15-24 years of age) disaggregated by sex is difficult to find on many subjects. Yet, this is a critical age for many migrants and citizen-born children of migrants in destination countries as well as young people left behind in countries of origin. The lack of such data is especially critical regarding migrant flows, where the prevalence of young women may be considerably higher than in migrant stock numbers that reflect the cumulative outcome of past migratory movement.
The gender distribution of international migrant stocks varies substantially by region. The proportion of legal immigrants overall who are women is particularly high in the traditional immigration countries (North America and Oceania) and in Europe. It is lowest in North Africa and Southern Asia. Differences can also be seen among different emigration countries. While the Philippines has considerably higher proportion of female migrants living abroad (60 percent, Mexico has far fewer female emigrants (45 percent). Unfortunately, comparable data on age is not available for emigration patterns as is available for immigration.

According to the UN Population Division, adolescents (15-19) and youth (20-24) represent about 5 and 7 percent of all migrant stocks, respectively. There are more than five million 15-19 year olds, representing 48.1 percent of all adolescent migrants. The more than seven million women age 20-24 represent 48.1 percent of young migrants. As shown in Table 4.1, the share of women declines, however, in the 25-49 age group and remains lower until 65 years of age, when women represent 56 percent of migrants of that age. The pattern is somewhat different by region, however. In Africa, women represent a majority of those in the younger age group and a distinct minority in the older years. The lowest proportions of women per working age group are in Asia where less than 40 percent of migrants between 30 and 45 are women.
<table>
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<th>10 to 14</th>
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CAUSES OF MIGRATION

Many different factors influence whether adolescent and young women will migrate internationally. For all women, drivers of migration may be found at the individual, familial and societal levels. The interplay between personal and societal factors is particularly important in explaining cross-border movements of adolescent and young women. As girls enter adolescence, expectations about their future responsibilities are defined not only by the interests of the individual and family but also the broader society. The relative importance of education versus early marriage and child-bearing is one factor that determines not only whether an adolescent or young woman migrates but, if so, if it will be as a foreign student or as bride. Culture also helps determine if marriage is an arranged process and the age at which marriage is acceptable for an adolescent.

Societal factors also determine the level of gender equality, especially in access to public services such as education and health, and to employment outside of the home or the conditions of work and availability of social protection. Gender inequality can be a powerful factor in precipitating migration, particularly when women have increased economic, political and social expectations that actual opportunities at home do not allow them to meet. Globalisation, with its emphasis on communications, mobility, trade and investment, has increased knowledge of options within and outside of home countries, and it has opened up a range of new opportunities for young women.

However, in countries where the effects of globalisation have increased poverty and left women with limited economic, social or political rights, international migration may be the best or only way to better their social and economic situations.6

FORMS OF MIGRATION

Many In an early seminal work on women and migration, Thadani and Todaro described four principal types of female migrants, distinguished by their marital status and their reasons for migrating: 1) married women migrating in search of employment; 2) unmarried women migrating in search of employment; 3) unmarried women migrating for marriage reasons; and 4) married women engaged in associational migration with
no thought of employment. Adolescent and young women can be found among all of these groups. Discussed below are the principal ways that they migrate:

**Family Formation and Reunification**

Family formation and family reunification are significant reasons for moving internationally as it is internally. Upon marriage, one or both spouses generally move from the family home to a new residence.

Governments often permit close family members of those already in the country to enter through legal channels. Eligibility for family reunification is not universal, however. Many contract labour arrangements preclude admission of family members. Admission rules often restrict family reunification for asylum seekers and those granted temporary protection, even in traditional immigration countries.

More open family reunification policies protect adolescent and young women. Splitting families apart deprives each member of the fundamental right to respect of his or her family life. Since the family unit is often the principal support to its members, separating families also undermines other rights. Children and women, in particular, become vulnerable to exploitation when they are separated from their relatives.

Family reunification and formation programs can, however, also invite various abuses affecting adolescent and young women. Young brides in arranged marriages, for example, may not have given informed consent either to the marriage or their migration to a new country. Mail-order marriages also hold the potential for inflicting harm on young brides. While many companies have a legitimate interest in matching spouses, some of these businesses use the lure of immigration as a pretext for trafficking and the adolescent and young women are forced into prostitution. Even in legitimate marriages, the migrating spouse may be at risk of domestic violence but unlikely to report it for fear of being deported.

To offset the negative ramifications of family reunification policies, some countries provide vehicles by which those who are victims of domestic abuse may become permanent residents without the permission of or remaining with the abusive husband/father.
Labour Migration

Migration for work and study is also common among adolescent and young women. Several distinct categories of adolescent and young women migrate for work purposes, differentiated by their skills, the permanence of their residence in the host country and their legal status. In many cases, the type of work that young migrant women are in demand for and enter is gendered, as it is for natives. Morokvasic’s observation based on research in Europe in the 1980s is as timely today as it was then: “[migrant women] have been incorporated into sexually segregated labor markets at the lowest stratum in high technology industries or at the ‘cheapest’ sectors in those industries which are labor intensive and employ the cheapest labor to remain competitive.”

Overseas domestic service is a common occupation for young migrant women as is garment manufacturing, restaurant and hotel services, teaching, and work as health care aides and professionals in private homes, nursing homes and hospitals. They may migrate through official contract labour programs that match workers and employers, or they may obtain such employment after migrating, often through informal networks. Many of these jobs are highly gendered both for the migrants and their employers. In some cases, the adolescent and young women are part of the global care chain, providing child and elder care services to women working outside of the home and employing other young women to take care of their own children.

At the lower end of the skills spectrum, young women migrants manufacture garments and other items, process meat and poultry, work as nursing home and hospital aides, clean restaurants and hotels, and provide myriad other services. At the higher end of the skill spectrum, young women migrate to engage in equally gendered occupations. For example, sizeable numbers of young migrant women enter the health professions, particularly nursing and physical therapy. Others work as teachers. While higher paid than the work performed by lesser skilled young migrant women, these jobs are generally lower paid than those men perform in the same profession (e.g., nurses versus physicians).
Forced Migration of Adolescent and Young Women

About half of all refugees are women along with girls under the age of 18. Adolescent and young women who are forced migrants experience many challenges. Foremost are their special needs for legal and physical protection. Gender is not included in the international definition of a refugee as a person with a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a social group. Yet, adolescent and young women asylum-seekers may be fleeing such gender-based persecution as rape, honour killings, domestic violence, forced marriages and female genital mutilation from which their home country governments are unwilling or unable to protect them.

The protection of adolescent and young women closer to conflict situations is even more problematic. Civilians are increasingly the targets of attacks in civil conflicts, with rape and sexual violence now a recognized war crime. Rape and sexual assault also occurs during flight at the hands of border guards, government and rebel military units, bandits and others. The safety of adolescent and young women may be no more ensured once in refugee and displaced persons camps. For example, they face serious threat of rape when picking firewood, often the only source of heating and cooking fuel. Adolescent and young women have been forced to provide sexual favours in exchange for obtaining food rations for themselves and their families. Such problems do not necessarily stop when the women return home. The conflict may still be continuing and, even if a peace agreement has been signed, political instability, the continued presence of landmines and the destruction of the economy and infrastructure make conditions dangerous for women and their families.

Trafficking in Persons

A particularly troubling trend in recent years has been the emergence of professional trafficking operations. The trafficking of adolescent and young women for prostitution and forced labour has been one of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity.

Traffickers acquire their victims in a number of ways. Sometimes young women are kidnapped outright in one country and taken forcibly to another. In other cases, traffickers entice victims to migrate voluntarily with false promises of good paying
jobs in foreign countries as au pairs, models, dancers, domestic workers, etc. Traffickers advertise these phony jobs as well as marriage opportunities abroad in local newspapers and use marriage agency databases and matchmaking parties to find their victims.

While there is no single victim stereotype, a majority of trafficked women are believed to be under the age of 25, with many in their mid to late teens. The fear among customers of HIV and AIDS infection has driven traffickers to recruit younger women and girls, some as young as seven. Victims of severe forms of trafficking are often subject to cruel mental and physical abuse in order to keep them in servitude, including beating and battering, rape, starvation, forced drug use, confinement, and seclusion. Once victims are brought to their destinations, their passports are often confiscated. Victims are forced to have sex, often unprotected, with large number of partners, and to work unsustainably long hours. Many victims suffer mental breakdowns and are exposed to sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS. They are often denied medical care and those who become ill are sometimes killed.

**MIGRATION AND GENDER RELATIONS**

International migration profoundly affects gender relations, particularly the role of adolescent and young women in households and communities. The impacts are complex. In many respects, migration enhances the autonomy and power of women. When women from traditional societies migrate to advanced industrial societies, they become familiar with new norms regarding women’s rights and opportunities. If they take outside employment, they may have access to financial resources that had never before compensated their labour. Even if their pay is pooled with other family members, this new wage-earning capacity often gives women greater ability to direct household priorities.

Adolescent and young women who are left at home as their fathers or husbands migrate also experience changes in their role. They may now have greater household and economic responsibilities. Although they may be financially dependent on remittances from their overseas relatives, the women may have substantial autonomy over decisions about how the funds will be used. Should their fathers or husbands not return home, or stop sending remittances, the women may have to assume even greater responsibility.
In other respects, migration can serve to reinforce traditional gender roles. Most young women who migrate as principal wage-earners fill highly gendered occupations. These range from domestic work to garment work as seamstresses to professional work as nurses and teachers. In turn, they often hire their sisters and cousins to take care of the children or parents left behind.

For adolescent and young women who migrate from developing to developed countries, adjustment to the new culture can be a difficult process. Barriers to successful adjustment include those within the host society as well as individual or personal ones. Among the former are racial intolerance and sexual and cultural discrimination aimed against foreign women. Many migrants are of a different race from the majority of the population of their new country. As young women, they may face the triple problem of racism, sexism and ageism in seeking employment, training or otherwise participating in the activities of the new country.

Personal barriers to adjustment include family conflicts, traumas suffered en route, illiteracy, lack of language skills, religious constraints. Changes in family roles often accompany migration. Some families have experienced long periods of separation. Male roles may change drastically in the new society. If their skills are not readily transferable to industrialized countries, the men may find themselves unable to support their families. Young women may feel the brunt of their frustrations.

"Men often feel neglected and disappointed, which sometimes brings out patriarchal habits and efforts to re-establish traditional roles -- even by force if necessary. In a situation where men are unsure of themselves, they often become sceptical about their wives. Their own feelings of inferiority can lead to their doubting the love or trustworthiness of their wives. When men mistrust their wives, they may restrict them and try to control them in an effort to boost their egos (quoted in Martin 2004)."

The adjustment may be particularly difficult in forced migration situations. Women in refugee camps generally continue to be productive members of their families, responsible for such domestic activities as food, water and firewood collection, preparation of meals and other household chores. By contrast, men often find that they cannot fulfil their traditional productive role in agricultural or other employment. Adolescent boys may believe they have no economic alternatives other than joining military forces or gangs. Adolescent girls may also be impressed into service as
soldiers, porters, cooks and ‘wives.’ The frustrations experienced by men can result in increased family tensions, domestic violence, depression and/or alcoholism.

International migration can lead to generational tensions, as well, particularly when children, including adolescents, adapt more quickly than their parents to a new language and social system. Seeing their children adopt unfamiliar practices may prompt some immigrants to recommit themselves and their families to more traditional, often patriarchal mores.

Immigration rules can also reinforce traditional roles. Because many adolescents and young women obtain legal residency status through family reunification or formation, their ability to exercise rights may be limited by their spouse’s willingness to support their immigration claims. Migrant women who are victims of spousal abuse, for example, may be unwilling to leave the abuser if he controls access to legal status.

**INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ADOLESCENT AND YOUNG MIGRANT WOMEN**

Not surprisingly given the types of migration discussed above, some young migrant women are especially vulnerable to deprivation, hardship, discrimination and abuse. They face discrimination due to their status as migrants, their status as women and their vulnerability as young people. They have limited access to employment and generally earn less than men and native-born women. Legally, many young migrant women are vulnerable if their residence is dependent upon a relationship with a citizen or “primary migrant”. Young migrant women, particularly forced migrants, face real risks of physical and sexual abuse during travel and in the country of destination. In short, their rights are violated frequently, drastically and all too often with impunity.

The rights of migrant workers have been specifically enumerated in various international instruments. Adolescent and young migrant women’s rights are covered in all of the core human rights instruments. Four apply in particular to this population: the Convention on the Rights of the Child, depending on the age of the adolescent; Convention Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination against Women; Convention relating to the Status of Refugees; and Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
The latter two are migration specific instruments. They do not have provisions that are specific to adolescent and young women but many of the rights articulated in these Conventions are relevant to their situation. The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol offers international protection to those unable or unwilling to return home because of a well-founded fear of persecution. Although gender is not included in the list of reasons that one might fear persecution, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and many governments protect women, girls and adolescents whose fear of gender-based persecution is well-founded. These include cases in which the persecution takes the form of female genital mutilation, domestic violence, honour killings and similar threats that are of particular concern to young women. UNHCR’s guidance also encourages governments to be gender and age sensitive in their adjudication of asylum claims.

Two other international legal instruments apply particularly to adolescent and young women and children. The first pertains to trafficking in persons—the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The trafficking protocol entered into force on 31 December 2003 and currently (as of 28 March 2014), there are 159 State Parties to the protocol (including ratifications, acceptances, approvals and succession). It sets out the responsibilities of states to prosecute trafficking violations and provides recommendations to states with regard to the protection of trafficking victims and the prevention of trafficking.

The ILO Convention on Domestic Workers that entered into force on September 5, 2013 aims to protect domestic workers through specific provisions related to conditions of work. The Convention notes that “domestic work continues to be undervalued and invisible and is mainly carried out by women and girls, many of whom are migrants or members of disadvantaged communities and who are particularly vulnerable to discrimination in respect of conditions of employment and of work, and to other abuses of human rights.” Importantly for adolescents, the Convention requires that State parties take steps to ensure that the work performed by domestic workers who are under the age of 18 “does not deprive them of compulsory education, or interfere with opportunities to participate in further education or vocational training.”
NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES

Adolescent and young migrant women have needs that overlap with those of girls and those of adult women but, because of their age, they have special needs as well. Migration presents both opportunities and challenges in ensuring that these needs are addressed. This section focuses on three particular areas in which adolescents and youth must be treated as distinct category: education, health and mental health, decent work and employment.

Education

One of the most important impacts of migration is on the education of adolescent and young women. The literature is mixed on this issue. Some studies show that remittances have a positive impact on the likelihood that children will stay in school for longer periods but this occurs mostly at lower ages. In an exhaustive review of the literature on the impact of remittances on school attendance, Schapiro found that “positive effects of temporary economic migration on human capital accumulation, with the gains being much greater for girls, yielding a very substantial reduction in gender inequalities in access to education.” She also noted, however, that the reduction in gender inequality in education may be the result in lower educational attainment for boys in migrant families. McKenzie and Rapoport, for example, found that the probability of attending school is 16% lower for 12-15 year old males in migrant households compared to non-migrant ones. The loss is even higher (21%) among 16-18 year old males in migrant households. At this age, girls in migrant households also experience lower educational attainment (20%) than in non-migrant households.

Adolescent boys in migrant households appear to be dropping out of school to work, often becoming migrants themselves. The return on education for these boys is not sufficient to offset the immediate gains from entering the workforce. Research in Mexico demonstrated that teenage boys often had very detailed information about the job opportunities available in Los Angeles or Chicago, generally based on discussions with family members who had already migrated. Younger girls in migrant households, on the other hand, appear to remain in school for longer periods, perhaps because remittances that add to household income allow families to forego their earnings. However, as they get older, and more members of the household depart, they may feel
increased pressure to leave school to contribute to household activities or to marry and start their own households. An exception may arise in situations in which female education—for example, to gain nursing degrees—is known to contribute to significantly higher wages upon migrating in the future (as is the case for many Filipinas).

A study in Bolivia found that migration of parents left adolescent girls vulnerable to potential negative impacts; however, the authors found no evidence that adolescent girls were more vulnerable than were adolescent boys or younger children to these impacts. They noted, as well, that migration proved to be a source of empowerment for some adolescent girls as they took on adult roles, including decisions on the use of remittances, in the absence of their parents.\footnote{17}

There is considerable variation in destination countries in the extent to which young migrants and the citizen children of migrants complete secondary or higher levels of education. Studies document high dropout rates for adolescents in certain populations. For adolescent girls, teen pregnancy may interrupt schooling. Also, they may feel pressures similar to those experienced by adolescent boys to leave school to help support the family. A study of unaccompanied Russian adolescents in Israel showed no significant gender differences in acculturation and homesickness affecting schooling between girls and boys. Both groups experienced modest stress and homesickness. The factors that proved important for the successful adjustment of the adolescents were “psychological resources formed in the pre-migration period, low perceived discrimination, and high perceived social support in the host country.”\footnote{18}

A study of adolescent girls and boys in Spain focused on the outcomes of education. The findings compared the performance in secondary school of first generation migrants with those of the second and third. Neither first generation girls nor boys performed as well as the second and third generation but adolescent girls had a greater gap in achievement, particularly among those from Latin America. The author noted: “Given that most immigrants arrive from countries where females have lower status than males both socially and economically, it is not surprising that first-generation women continue to display this inequality in schooling in their new country of residence.”\footnote{19} More promising, the differences between second and third generation disappeared for both sexes.
One phenomenon seen particularly among migrant adolescents is the ‘failure to drop-in’ to school. Especially among adolescents who migrate on their own, the aim of migration is work, not schooling. Although unaccompanied minors are disproportionately male, girls do travel on their own. Access to education for adolescent and young migrant women is particularly problematic for those who have missed years of education because of poverty, conflict or other disruptive events. Returning to school is difficult because of the loss of wages as well as conflicting responsibilities, including care of children and other family members. In many cases, schools are not equipped to address the educational needs of young women in this situation.

**Health**

Adolescent and young migrant women have unique health needs that require access to appropriate health and mental health services, including reproductive healthcare. Among the issues facing this population are teen pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). Adolescent pregnancy presents multiple health problems. According to the World Health Organization, “Having babies during adolescence has serious consequences for the health of the girl and her infant, especially in areas with weak health systems. In some countries, adolescents are less likely than adults to obtain skilled care before, during and after childbirth. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death among girls aged 15-19 years in many low- and middle-income countries.”

The health problems carry over to the children born of teenage mothers. They are more likely to have low birth weight, which, as WHO notes, can have a long-term impact on their health and development.

Adolescent pregnancies are a product of many factors, including early marriage, lack of information about or access to contraception, or gender-based violence. These factors combine with socio-economic conditions to lead to early child birth. Adolescents and young migrant women are often exposed to multiple contributors to teen pregnancy. A study of adolescent Nicaraguan migrants in Costa Rica, for example, found notably higher rates of pregnancy among migrants than native born. The study notes, “Age, low educational attainment, urban residence, poverty and union were all significant predictors of adolescent pregnancy.” Similarly, a study of Latina
adolescent girls in the United States concluded “socioeconomic instability and policies limiting access to education influenced childbearing for immigrant adolescents.” Another study of immigrants in the United States found that recent arrivals were at greater risk of unplanned pregnancy. Access to reproductive health services also helps to address issues pertaining to STDs and HIV/AIDS among adolescent and young migrant women. Whereas being a migrant is not in and of itself a risk factor, migrants often find themselves in situations that put them at risk of contracting these communicable diseases. According to the 2004 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, “there is a strong link between various kinds of mobility and heightened risk of HIV. However, while there is a widespread prejudice that migrants “bring AIDS with them,” the fact is that many migrants move from low HIV prevalence areas to those with higher prevalence, increasing their risk of being exposed to the virus.”

Individual and social factors create special risk factors for young women. For example, crossing borders clandestinely puts young women at risk of rape by border guards, smugglers, bandits, and other criminals. Transit by small boats is dangerous not only because of the potential for capsizing but also being attacked by pirates. Young women traveling alone may have little choice but to sell sex for survival, or to establish partnerships in transit or at destination simply for protection. The risk of sexual violence also increases in sex-segregated and unregulated sectors of the economy, for example for female traders, domestic workers and sex workers. Trafficked women are at especially high risk—not only those pressed into the sex trades but also those trafficked into domestic service and other types of forced labor. Labor migration, particularly seasonal movements, increases the likelihood of HIV/AIDS, for not only male migrants but also for stay-at-home women partners.

A number of factors, depending on the source and destination country, affect access to and use of reproductive health services. Often, lack of insurance coverage is a major barrier. Many entry-level jobs of the type that migrants are likely to hold pay no health insurance costs. Religious and cultural views of contraception affect choices, as do language barriers. It is very difficult for young women to discuss their medical problems, particularly gynecological ones, through translators—some of whom may be relatives. Use of family members as interpreters also raises ethical concerns of
confidentiality, informed consent and privacy between health professionals and
patients – something lost when family members conduct medical interpretation (and
when this is not the choice of the adolescent and young women).

A further health need pertains to mental well-being. For exactly the same reasons that
adolescent and young migrant women are at risk of STDs and HIV/AIDS, they are often
at risk of emotional and psychological trauma. Moreover, migration itself presents
challenges as newcomers must adapt to new language, working and living conditions,
and cultural norms. For adolescent girls and young women, these challenges come at
a time of physical and emotional changes due to adolescence itself. At the same time,
however, studies show a high level of resilience and self-confidence in this
population.\textsuperscript{27}

Attention is needed for adolescents and young women to gain access to culturally
sensitive and linguistically appropriate programs to address tensions and traumas
arising from migration.

**Decent work and employment**

This section focuses on challenges for adolescent and young women with regard to
employment. It focuses in particular on access to decent work, problems with labour
standards enforcement in the sectors in which adolescent and young women are
employed, especially as pertains to domestic workers, and the particular problems
experienced by those in irregular status without authorization to work.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines decent work as “opportunities for
work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social
protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social
integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in
the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all
women and men.”\textsuperscript{28} ILO’s decent work agenda is premised on the idea that “full and
productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people,
is the most effective route out of poverty.”\textsuperscript{29} As such, it is imperative to ensure that all
young women have access to employment that meets decent work standards, including
adequate earnings, decent hours, stability and security of work, ability to balance work
and family life, equality of opportunity in work, safe working conditions, adequate
social protection, and ability of workers to express themselves on work related matters. Each of these areas has special import for adolescent and young migrant women who often find themselves in difficult work environments because of the gendered nature of their employment as well as their age and their status as foreign nationals.

Many women migrant workers face discrimination, violence and exploitation at all stages of migration. This is especially true for the most marginalized such as domestic workers, many of whom are young women or undocumented women migrants. They are caught in abusive working conditions characterized by forced labour, disproportionately low wages, exclusion from minimum wage coverage, excessively long hours of work, insufficient rest periods and leave and restrictions on movement and association. They are often marginalized from access to basic services, protection and assistance, including in crises. They face gender-based violence by various actors, detention, often in abusive situations, arbitrary deportation and legal and practical barriers to enjoying fundamental human rights and obtaining justice.

At the lower end of the skills spectrum, young women migrants manufacture garments and other

Domestic service, as discussed above, is a common occupation for young migrant women and poses particular problems. Because the young women are employed in private homes, governments are often reluctant to monitor their working conditions. In many cases, domestic service is not regulated at all. An ILO report outlined a number of areas of concern regarding occupational hazards faced by young women employed in domestic work, noting “fatigue resulting from long hours of work, carrying heavy loads, use of toxic cleaners and solvents, high temperatures when and utilization of sharp objects deserve special attention, especially where young domestic workers are concerned."

When these workers are not only young and female but also foreign, they face added problems. Their legal status within the country may be dependent fully on the willingness of a sponsor to continue their employment. Any complaints about wages, hours and working conditions may result not only in being fired from a specific job but also deportation from the country. In some cases, the contract workers cannot leave employment or even the country voluntarily without the sponsor’s approval. This is the case in the Kafala system used in many countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council and elsewhere in the Middle East.
The Domestic Workers Convention seeks greater consistency in outlining state responsibilities, particularly in ensuring that parties to the treaty “take measures to ensure that domestic workers, like workers generally, enjoy fair terms of employment as well as decent working conditions and, if they reside in the household, decent living conditions that respect their privacy.” It also requires that state parties ensure that migrant domestic workers receive a written job offer, or contract of employment that is enforceable in the country in which the work is to be performed. The contract should provide the terms and conditions of employment, including the name and address of the employer and of the worker; the address of the usual workplace or workplaces; the starting date and, where the contract is for a specified period of time, its duration; the type of work to be performed; the remuneration, method of calculation and periodicity of payments; the normal hours of work; paid annual leave, and daily and weekly rest periods; the provision of food and accommodation, if applicable; the period of probation or trial period, if applicable; the terms of repatriation, if applicable; and terms and conditions relating to the termination of employment, including any period of notice by either the domestic worker or the employer.

In general, the jobs open to lesser skilled young women are low-wage ones making it difficult for them to earn adequate income for themselves and their families. As such, young migrant women, particularly those who are supporting children, often find themselves living in poverty. Many have had little access to education in their home countries and are unable to move up the economic ladder into higher paid occupations that require greater skills. Often, the jobs for which they qualify do not include health insurance for the workers or their families. Migrant workers are also often ineligible for social protections that are available to native women and their children. In the United States, for example, only 35 percent of adult migrants are covered by employer sponsored health insurance as compared to 65 percent of adult citizens despite similar rates of employment. Yet, Medicaid, the government health program for low income women and children, is not available to legal immigrants during the first five years after entry; nor are subsidies for purchased health insurance. Migrants who are undocumented or in unauthorized situations in the country are barred from receiving Medicaid except in the case of medical emergencies.33
Often, adolescent and young women migrants are working for family members, with and without compensation. A study of adolescents in the Washington DC area found that undocumented girls were particularly likely to be working at home rather than in the outside labour force. Such an environment was seen as providing greater safety for the young women because they would otherwise be working in the informal economy and without legal authorization. Working within the home or for family members allows them to contribute to household income by providing greater opportunities for other members of the family to engage in wage labour—for example, by taking care of children so the mothers could take employment. Yet, many young migrant women do not have a legal status within their host countries that offers them sufficient protection from abuse when they are working within these family settings. If their legal status is closely tied to their husband’s or father’s, they may be vulnerable to deportation should they protest domestic violence or exploitation of their labour.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To move forward in better protecting adolescent and young migrant women, there must be greater awareness and understanding of the conditions and needs specific to them. Countries need to take steps to ensure that they have equal access to projects and services so that these young women can fully participate in and benefit from their migration experience. In some cases, there is need to design and implement projects and services specifically for adolescent and young migrant women because mainstream programs are inappropriate to the needs of this population. The aim of policies therefore must be to maximize the beneficial aspects of migration for adolescent and young women while minimizing these potential harms. Policies need to take into account the causes of migration as well as the stages of movement, address the needs not only of those who move but also those who stay behind. In order to protect and empower young women migrants, policies should take into account and address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of this group. They must therefore be gender sensitive and based on human rights.

NINE KEY AREAS NEEDING ATTENTION INCLUDE:

1. Collecting sex and age disaggregated data. The ability to analyse the age and gender implications of international migration is severely limited by deficiencies in data. Although the UN Population Division has made strides in generating sex and age disaggregated data, the information collected by governments is not of uniformly
high quality or universally available. The data would allow for a better understanding of the reasons that adolescent and young women migrate and how gender inequality affects migration decisions among those in the 15-25 year old age bracket, so as to better inform public-policy making.

2. Improving the protection of adolescent and young migrant women’s rights and their safety and security. In particular, steps are needed to protect them from labour abuses, sexual exploitation, trafficking, involuntary prostitution and other exploitable situations as well as to avoid detention. Given the triple discrimination faced by many adolescent and young women migrants, ensuring that their rights are protected is challenging as well as essential.

3. Ratifying and implementing applicable international conventions that define the human and labour rights of young migrants, including the International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and the ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers.

4. Enabling adolescent and young women to participate actively in decisions that affect them, including ones on their own migration and, where they will be left in countries of origin, the migration of their parents and spouses. Decisions on migration are often made at the household level. Adolescent and young women are not generally well positioned to participate in decision-making processes that generally favour older, male members. Establishing mechanisms to ensure that decisions to migrate, or remain at home, take into consideration the views of adolescent and young women will help ensure that their migration is fully voluntary.

5. Ensuring access to secondary and tertiary education for adolescent and young women who migrate as well as those who are left behind by migrating parents. Since migration and remittances have been shown to have both positive and negative consequences, greater attention is needed to maximizing the benefits while reducing potential harm to educational outcomes.

6. Improving the economic and employment status of adolescent and young women to enable them to support themselves in dignity and safety without recourse to migration unless such movement is of their own volition. Access to education, language and skills training is an important component of this issue as is adequate
and safe housing. In this regard, special attention should be given to ensuring that adolescent and young migrant women have access to decent work.

7. Increasing the access of adolescent and young women to primary and reproductive health care services, including programs to address gender and sexual based violence, trauma resulting from travel and conflict, and sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. As discussed above, there are many barriers to access, including legal status, language barriers and cultural norms, which must be overcome to ensure that adolescent and young women migrants have the health care services that they need.

8. Preparing adolescent and young women for migration by providing information about their rights, what they might expect on route and in the destination, whom to contact if they are at risk of harm, safe housing alternatives, as well as occupational skills that are transferable to other countries. These programs should also aim to help adolescent and young women better participate in decisions within their households with regard to migration and remittance use.

9. Ensuring that adolescents and young women have access to birth certificates, passports and other documentation and communications devices needed to migrate safely and to prove one’s identity and age.
NOTES


2 See: http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org/inventory/view/453


8 Jirjana Morokvasic, Birds of Passage are also Women..., International Migration Review vol xviii, No 4, 1984.

9 See, for example, Duren Banks and Tracey Kyckelhahn, Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents: 2008-2010, Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, 2011 reporting that almost 80 percent of trafficking victims identified by law enforcement in the United States were under the age of 25.


11 For a complete listing of status of this Protocol and its States Parties, see: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-a&chapter=18&lang=en


13 Ibid


15 Schapiro, op cit


21 Ibid


27 See, for example, Nazilla Khanliu, and Charmaine Crawford, Post-Migratory Experiences of Newcomer Female Youth: Self-Esteem and Identity Development, Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, January 2006, Volume 8, Issue 1, pp. 45-56.


THE REFUGEE DIMENSION: ADOLESCENTS’ AND YOUTHS’ RIGHT TO SEEK AND ACCESS ASYLUM AND PROTECTION *

Chapter 5
Over the last decade, there has been a steady growth in the number of adolescents and youth – including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC)1 – submitting applications for refugee status and thus, seeking asylum. Most of these fall within the adolescent age-group. In 2013, more than 25,300 individual asylum claims were lodged by unaccompanied or separated children and adolescents in 77 countries in 2013, far more than in previous years.2

As on the one hand, mobility becomes more complex and widespread, and on the other, States seek to control and limit the movement of people, it is important to situate the protection of refugees within broader migration strategies. To ensure that these strategies respond to forced displacement and take account of young people, appropriate frameworks for refugees and asylum seekers need to be established that recognize the right of children to seek asylum and the vulnerabilities facing adolescent and youth in need of international protection.

This chapter focuses on the risks and vulnerabilities faced by adolescents seeking international protection, considering adolescents to be persons in the 11 to 17 age group for whom the International Convention on the Rights of the Child is the definitive human rights normative reference. The terms child and children are utilized throughout, recognizing that younger children may also be in refugee-like situations and face similar circumstances. Many of the risks and vulnerabilities outlined herein confront youth refugees and asylum seekers over age 18 in contemporary «mixed movements» and therefore need to be taken account of in migration policy-making and implementation.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has long recognized both the right of children to seek asylum in their own right and their inherent vulnerability – especially those who are unaccompanied or who have been separated from their families – as well as the fact that there are certain child-specific forms of persecution that may give rise to a claim for refugee protection.3 As the studies mentioned below show, young people are especially vulnerable and susceptible to persecution.

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The term “persecution”, though not explicitly defined in the 1951 Refugee Convention, involves serious human rights violations, including a threat to life or freedom, as well as other kinds of serious harm or intolerable situations as assessed with regard to the age, opinions, feelings and psychological make-up of the applicant.\(^4\)

As children and adolescents may experience child-specific forms and manifestations of persecution, a child-sensitive application of the refugee definition is crucial. This would be consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the principle of the best interest of the child. The principle of the best interests of the child requires that the harm be assessed from the child’s perspective. This may include an analysis as to how the child’s rights or interests are - or will be - affected by the harm. In consequence, ill-treatment which may not rise to the level of persecution in the case of an adult may do so in the case of a child.\(^5\) Examples of child-specific forms of persecution include under-age recruitment into armed forces, child trafficking, female genital mutilation\(^6\) as well as forced or underage marriage, bonded, forced or hazardous labour, forced prostitution and child pornography.\(^7\)

As noted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the refugee definition “must be interpreted in an age and gender-sensitive manner, taking into account the particular motives for, and forms and manifestations of, persecution experienced by children. Persecution of kin; under-age recruitment; trafficking of children for prostitution; and sexual exploitation or subjection to female genital mutilation, are some of the child-specific forms and manifestations of persecution which may justify the granting of refugee status if such acts are related to one of the 1951 Refugee Convention grounds. States should, therefore, give utmost attention to such child-specific forms and manifestations of persecution as well as gender-based violence in national refugee status-determination procedures.”\(^8\)

Alongside age, factors such as rights specific to children, a child’s stage of development, knowledge and/or memory of conditions in the country of origin, and vulnerability, also need to be considered to ensure an appropriate application of the eligibility criteria for refugee status.\(^9\) Additionally, although the burden of proof usually is shared between the examiner and the applicant in adult claims, it may be necessary for an examiner to assume a greater burden of proof in children’s claims, especially if the child concerned is unaccompanied.
Box 5.1: UNHCR Study, 2014

Children on the Run – Unaccompanied Children Leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection

A Study Conducted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Regional Office for the United States and the Caribbean, Washington D.C.

UNHCR found that many of the unaccompanied and separated children from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico interviewed in the USA provided information that indicates they may well be in need of international protection due to violence by organized armed criminal actors and violence/abuse at home (Central America and Mexico) as well as due to recruitment into and exploitation by the criminal industry of human smuggling (Mexico). Protection-related reasons were very prominent given that no less than 58% of the 404 adolescents (aged between 12-17 years) interviewed were forcibly displaced because they suffered or faced harms that indicate a potential or actual need for international protection. **The central conclusion of this study is that given the high rate of adolescents who expressed actual or potential needs for protection, all UASC from these four countries must be screened for international protection needs.** In addition to the harms in the home country that led to their decision to leave, the children presented a significant number of protection-related concerns that occurred during their journeys northward.

UNHCR found that these types of serious harm raised by the unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) are indicators of the need to conduct a full review of international protection needs consistent with the obligations to ensure that UASC are not returned to situations of harm or danger. The study demonstrates unequivocally that many of these displaced children faced grave danger and hardship in their countries of origin. It also shows that there are gaps in the existing protection mechanisms currently in place for these displaced children. The extent of these gaps is not fully known because much of what happens to these children is not recorded or reported anywhere. Thus, there is a critical need for enhanced mechanisms to ensure that these displaced adolescents are identified, screened and where needed provided access to international protection.

**CHALLENGES OF MIXED MIGRATION**

Many children and youth today arrive in the context of “mixed migration” movements, where refugees and asylum-seekers arrive in a State as part of a broader “mixed movement” of persons including both individuals in need of international protection and migrants without international protection needs. In addition to this, there also seems to be a perceived or real misuse of asylum systems by some of those who submit claims for refugee status but are in fact moving for non-refugee related reasons. Other challenges, related to this, are the lack of protection and assistance for youth and adolescents who do not submit asylum claims – though they might qualify for protection – as well as those whose protection needs are not correctly assessed. This
is also linked to the difficulties involved in determining the age and best interests of these adolescents and finding a solution to their situation.\textsuperscript{12}

A proliferation of people-trafficking and smuggling networks has become a very real threat to children and youth fleeing persecution, who are often targeted as a result of their vulnerability. The growing numbers of Afghan children and youths who are making the difficult and dangerous overland journey to Europe without their parents, for instance, are exposed to serious protection risks (see UNHCR study in Box 5.2).\textsuperscript{13} The same applies to the thousands of children moving through Central America in search of safety and a secure future (see UNHCR study in Box 5.2).\textsuperscript{14} Unaccompanied and separated children particularly at risk of exploitation by criminal networks (see details of UNCHR’s Regional Initiative in the Horn of Africa in Box 5.4).\textsuperscript{15}

In such circumstances, the identification of individuals in need of international protection, particularly children who might have difficulty in fully articulating their claim, requires high quality and age-appropriate refugee status determination procedures. There is also an urgent need to find appropriate accommodation for children and adolescents, equipped with persons with expertise in child and adolescent protection who can identify and address their most urgent needs, and assess their best interests. Family tracing and assistance for restoration of family links are also important interventions for adolescents and young persons traveling on their own. Tracing of a separated child’s parents and family should be initiated at an early stage, but care must also be taken that the tracing will not endanger the child, or members of the child’s family.
Box 5.2: Trees only Move in the Wind – A Study of Unaccompanied Afghan Children in Europe,16 a UNHCR Study, June 2010

The study indicates that unaccompanied Afghan children (most predominantly adolescents) who make the long trip to Europe are deeply and negatively affected by their experience. As well as the hardships and abuses during the journey, they are confronted upon arrival with the prospect of forced return to Afghanistan, coupled with continuing pressure from family members to send remittances home, so that the debts incurred to pay for the journey can be paid off. The study concludes that there is an urgent need to:

Develop a Comprehensive Plan of Action on unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) involving countries of origin, as well as countries of transit and destination in order to achieve a consistent approach to assessing the international protection needs of UASC. The plan would:
- Allow those who have already reached the country of destination to stay if they are in need of international protection;
- Speedily return those who are not in need of international protection and for whom return has been decided upon after taking into account all options in a best interests procedure;
- Focus additional efforts and resources on the longer-term task of prevention (education, work opportunities etc.), and
- Tackle the criminal aspects of human smuggling without compromising the right to seek asylum in another state and without weakening the protection of unaccompanied and separated children who are on the move. At the same time, special consideration should be given to the situation of children who are not in need of international protection, but who, on the basis of a BID procedure, cannot be returned.

- Encourage data sharing by affected receiving states.
- Develop a comprehensive information/sensitization campaign in countries of origin, transit and destination to inform parents, young people, community leaders and other relevant stakeholders of the dangers of being involved in irregular movement.
- Develop effective legislation and law enforcement capacities to provide more effective deterrence against smuggling.
- Standard setting, monitoring and assistance in the task of family tracing, assessment of the capacity of families to receive children, assessment of alternative care provision, and short and medium-term reintegration support.
- Enhance cooperation with governments, IOs and NGOs.
- Develop targeted training programs in receiving countries for guardians, social workers and immigration officials working with UASC.
- Advocacy regarding alternatives to the detention of UASC for illegal entry (revision of national law, provision of alternative care arrangements).
- Procedural safeguards for age assessment and establishment of standard methodology that uses the least invasive methods, applying an agreed wide margin of error coupled with the application of the benefit of the doubt.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PROTECTION SENSITIVE ENTRY SYSTEMS

In view of the complexities of refugee movements in mixed migratory flows, UNHCR developed the Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration 10-Point Plan of Action, “
which is a tool to assist Governments and other stakeholders to incorporate refugee protection considerations into migration policies.”. The 10-Point Plan recognizes that the number of refugees and asylum-seekers is a relatively small portion of the global movement of people and that such movement often involves human smugglers and traffickers, and it stresses that “steps must be taken to establish entry systems that are able to identify new arrivals with international protection needs and which provide appropriate and differentiated solutions for them.” Significantly, the 10-Point Plan contains a section on “child protection systems,” one on identifying women and girls at risk, and another on protecting victims of trafficking.

The 10-Point Action Plan recommends the establishment of differentiated procedures and processes for various categories of persons travelling as part of mixed migration movements, which allows tailored and appropriate responses according to the specific profiles and needs of the persons concerned. “Protection sensitive entry systems” are measures to ensure refugees and asylum-seekers are identified, protected against *refoulement* and given access to asylum procedures. This is at the center of the 10-Point Plan. The concern is to avoid that measures to prevent and deter irregular migration are applied indiscriminately. The attention given by UNHCR within the 10-Point Plan framework to early “profiling and referral mechanisms”, as well as to training and capacity building of “first contact” entry officials such as border and coast guards, reflect this concern.
Another focus of the 10-Point Plan is the development of “differentiated processes and procedures”, with a view to alleviate pressures on asylum systems caused when persons without international protection needs apply for asylum for temporarily regularizing stay in the host country (usually due to lack of other legal migration options/appropriate mechanisms to respond to their needs – for example, for victims of trafficking or for assisted voluntary return of those not in need of international protection).

The aim is to mitigate the negative effects that State migration control measures may have on protection space and asylum systems for persons arriving as part of broader irregular mixed flows. Establishing alternative procedures, in addition to asylum procedures or return, can assist authorities to manage mixed migration movements fairly, address any immediate needs or arrivals and facilitate longer-term solutions. From a protection perspective, the capacity to identify specific needs and to direct individuals who are not seeking international protection to alternative mechanisms can contribute to more efficient and effective asylum procedures.

The categorization of different groups of people is a useful tool; however, it is not an end in itself. The establishment of well-functioning referral systems between different processes and coordination mechanisms between all relevant actors (i.e. government, international organizations, NGOs, legal advisors, social workers, health care providers etc.) increase the chance that more appropriate outcomes are provided for each adolescent and youth.

The 10-Point Plan has been broadly accepted by States and the international community and has so far strengthened cooperation among key partners, created and built upon political momentum for action across regions, provided stakeholders with a range of practical tools to address the challenges of mixed movements in a protection-sensitive manner and enhanced data analysis and information-sharing on mixed movements.

As an example, the 10-Point Plan forms the basis of the UNHCR Strategy and Regional Plan of Action to address the smuggling and trafficking activities on refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons who are moving alongside other migrants along the East and Horn of Africa to the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. Those directly affected are Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali and Sudanese asylum-seekers and refugees as well as
migrants. Smuggling, trafficking, kidnapping and associated crimes of torture and rape are reported by those affected in Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt, Djibouti and Yemen.²⁹ (See Box 5.4 below for further details on the UNHCR Regional Initiative in the Horn of Africa.)

Box 5.4. UNHCR’s “Live, Learn and Play” Regional Initiative in the Horn of Africa, 2014-2015

Some of the most active and brutal smuggling and trafficking networks operate in the Horn of Africa. UNHCR has witnessed a sharp increase in the trafficking and smuggling of Eritrean refugee children, adolescents and youth. Many of these who arrive in Ethiopia and Sudan do not remain in refugee camps for long. Instead, they head for urban centers such as Khartoum, or move on to Egypt or Libya with the objective of reaching Europe. Many children and adolescents from Ethiopia and Somalia entrust their lives to smugglers and traffickers to make the dangerous crossing of the Red Sea or Gulf of Aden to reach Yemen.³⁰

The protection of UASC at risk of being caught up in dangerous secondary movements requires specially tailored interventions in the areas of child protection, education and skills development. In 2014-2015, UNHCR rolled out its Live, Learn and Play Safe initiative to reduce protection risks for children in Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen. This initiative aims to reduce secondary movements and the attendant protection risks for children by fulfilling their basic subsistence needs, promoting a safe environment, enhancing access to education and livelihoods, providing psychosocial support, and identifying appropriate care arrangements. UNHCR believes that educational and vocational training opportunities, in particular, are a key protection tool.

The initiative aims to establish and improve mechanisms to address their needs in countries of asylum, including family tracing and family reunion in line with international standards, establishes and strengthens child protection monitoring mechanisms, expanding education opportunities, especially for adolescents, including formal primary and secondary education, Accelerated Learning Programs and post-secondary opportunities, ensuring quality and protection.³¹

ESTABLISHMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

Establishment of national Child Protection systems in countries of origin, transit and destination - is key for the protection of children and adolescents in migratory flows. Central to this idea is the premise that States, under the CRC, are responsible for the protection of all children – within the jurisdiction of a State – and should promote the establishment and implementation of child protection systems. ³² A comprehensive “child protection system” includes policies, laws and procedures that are designed to respond to the specific needs of children and to prevent abuse, exploitation, violence
and neglect. An effective child protection system considers all the risks faced by children in a comprehensive and holistic manner. It is complementary and coordinated across all sectors.

National child protection systems are most effective when they provide non-discriminatory access to all children within the jurisdiction of a State – including victims of trafficking, refugee and stateless children. Child protection systems are particularly important for UASC and/or children seeking international protection. Relevant processes and procedures to assist children travelling as part of mixed movements can include mechanisms to address the young person’s immediate needs, the appointment of a legal representative and/or guardian, age assessments, family tracing and identification of a solution based on a “best interests determination” (see above part 1 of this chapter).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has clearly established that the best interests principle is not just a substantive right and a legal principle but also a rule of procedure. As a rule of procedure, whenever a decision is made that will affect a child, the decision making process must include an evaluation of the possible impact on the child/children concerned in a process. UNHCR has developed a formal procedure to assess and determine a child’s best interests for particularly important decisions affecting the child. The procedure is used for instance for unaccompanied and separated children in relation to determining durable solutions in their best interests.

The best interests tools are also used for other vulnerable children in specific situations. The Best Interests Assessments and Determinations (BIA/BID) enable a review of the child’s situation in a comprehensive manner with specific safeguards in place. It allows the child’s opinion to be heard and ensures that his or her views are given due weight to his or her age, maturity and evolving capacities. This procedure developed for refugee situations can also serve as an example for the establishment of similar procedures by national authorities and partners when dealing with children and adolescents in mixed migratory flows.
DETENTION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Every person has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution, serious human rights violations and other serious harm. Seeking asylum is not, therefore, an unlawful act.\textsuperscript{35} Detaining asylum-seekers for the sole reason of having entered without prior authorisation runs counter to international law. In exercising the right to seek asylum, asylum-seekers are often forced to arrive at, or enter, a territory without prior authorisation. The position of asylum-seekers may thus differ fundamentally from that of ordinary legal migrants in that they may not be in a position to comply with the legal formalities for entry. They may, for example, be unable to obtain the necessary documentation in advance of their flight because of their fear of persecution and/or the urgency of their departure. These factors need to be taken into account in determining any restrictions on freedom of movement based on irregular entry or presence.

When dealing with children and adolescents there are further considerations that are at play. Overall an ethic of care – and not enforcement – needs to govern interactions with asylum-seeking children, including children in families, with the best interests of the child a primary consideration. The extreme vulnerability of a child takes precedence over the status of an “illegal alien”.\textsuperscript{36} Detention of children should always be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

As a general rule, unaccompanied or separated children should not be detained. Detention cannot be justified based solely on the fact that the child is unaccompanied or separated, or on the basis of his or her migration or residence status. Where possible they should be released into the care of family members who already have residency within the asylum country. Where this is not possible, alternative care arrangements, such as foster placement or residential homes, should be made by the competent child care authorities, ensuring that the child receives appropriate supervision. Residential homes or foster care placements need to cater for the child’s proper development (both physical and mental) while longer term solutions are being considered. A primary objective must be the best interests of the child.\textsuperscript{37} There is a need for the implementation of alternatives to such detention for children, including the revision of national law and the provision of alternative care arrangements, given the continued harm caused and its detrimental long term impact, particularly on unaccompanied and separated children. Detention also impedes access to asylum and
other forms of international protection, and deters young people from seeking international protection.

In 2014, UNHCR launched a multi-year strategy to end immigration detention. One of the goals is to “End the detention of children”. The strategy calls for the immediate release of children from detention and their placement in other forms of appropriate accommodation.

**Box 5.5. Action steps to «End the detention of children»**

The UNHCR strategy for ending the detention of child asylum seekers and refugees urges the following actions:

- Map the situation of child detention.
- Identify the reasons for this practice, and identify what would work instead.
- Identify the most relevant stakeholders to engage with.
- Ensure access to detained children.
- Ensure access to legal assistance.
- Monitor the conditions of detention.
- Identify existing legal frameworks, initiatives or strategies supporting child rights.
- Develop a set of advocacy interventions.
- Raise awareness on the detrimental consequences of detention for their well-being and health.
- Raise awareness, develop media campaign and overall communications strategy - ensure consistent corporate communications messages.
- Provide/support training and capacity-building activities.
- Identify and promote alternative reception and care arrangements. The identification of family-based care arrangements should be prioritised.
- Promote and disseminate research, studies and reports on alternatives to detention for children.

**REGULARIZED MIGRATION ALTERNATIVES**

States have established various channels for legal migration in order to fulfil different purposes, such as meeting labour market needs, enabling family reunification, or pursuing study. Some migration schemes provide possibilities for permanent settlement upon arrival or after a certain period of stay. On occasions, such immigration schemes have provided a de-facto protection by providing immigration admission or adjustment of status for persons in refugee like circumstances, including for young persons, whether or not that was an intended purpose. States may also give
preferential access to admission, stay and residence to nationals of certain States based on bilateral agreements or cultural ties.38

While temporary migration schemes for employment purposes are again becoming more commonplace, these generally are of limited value at best for youth in need of refugee protection as they are generally for limited and fixed periods of time, and often require departure at the conclusion of stipulated employment period or contract with few or no options for extension, change of employment or adjustment of status.

The widening implementation of free circulation regimes for citizens of member countries across formal regional economic communities or common markets also provides options for adolescents and young people to depart situations of conflict or persecution, legally cross borders, and obtain some degree of de facto protection – with possibilities to seek work-- in other countries. More than 100 countries are members of one of eleven regional intergovernmental communities which have in place free circulation/free movement regimes.

In many circumstances, young people seeking protection can and do enter destination countries legally, whether with a tourist, visitors or student visa or under visa free regimes. However, the terms of stay are usually temporary with few or no possibilities to change to longer term status, meaning falling into irregular situations upon expiry of visa or terms for no-visa visits. Access to most legal immigration channels or adjustment of status is generally not possible for persons in an irregular situation in the host country. Rather, migration channels tend to become available following return to countries of origin rather than as an alternative to return. In order to reduce the number of young people ending up in irregular migration situations and to reduce their risks of being trafficked, it is important to develop regularized migration alternatives that include effective family reunification procedures and that ensure access of refugee youth to regular labour migration schemes.
KEY MESSAGES

- There has been steady growth over the last decade in the number of adolescents and youth – including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) – seeking asylum.

- Children and adolescents have the right to seek asylum. Children may experience child-specific forms and manifestations of persecution which make a child-sensitive refugee status determination crucial.

- There is a critical need for enhanced mechanisms to ensure that adolescents and youth in mixed migratory flows provided with age appropriate information on asylum procedures.

- Establishment of national Child Protection systems in countries of origin, transit and destination - is key for the protection of children and adolescents in migratory flows.

- Immigration detention of asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons is inherently undesirable, especially for young people and unaccompanied or separated children. Given harm caused and detrimental long term impact of detention, there is need for implementation of alternatives to detention.

- Development of regularized migration alternatives that include effective family reunification and that ensure access of refugee youth to employment opportunities, including through regular labour migration schemes is essential to reduce irregular migration of young people and to reduce the risks of trafficking.

- Regional approaches in seeking solutions are advised in mixed migration contexts, especially to address the drivers and challenges faced by youth and adolescent refugees and asylum-seekers

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure protection-sensitive border control systems that facilitate the identification of asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons in mixed migration contexts and ensure the best interests of adolescents through the implementation of child-friendly procedures.
Implement differentiated processes and procedures for persons seeking international protection and special protection mechanisms for trafficked persons to allow tailored and appropriate responses to be provided according to respective needs of and profiles of the persons involved. Ensure access to accelerated asylum claim processing for adolescents that includes a best interests assessment.39

Ensure that alternatives to detention are included in national legal framework and implemented in practice, taking into consideration the needs of persons with special needs or vulnerabilities, and provide for alternative care arrangements for unaccompanied and separated children and adolescents.

Provide essential services and ensure non-discriminatory access to national Child Protection systems by creating, strengthening and promoting comprehensive child protection mechanisms, including young people's access to justice, on the national and local levels that meet their general protection needs. Support family tracing mechanisms for those separated and unaccompanied and ensure access to legal documentation related to nationality, status, education or other civil matters.

Develop effective legislation and law enforcement capacities to provide more effective deterrence against trafficking in human beings and ensure the prosecution of perpetrators. Ensure witness protection schemes also include adolescents and youth.

Develop targeted capacity building and training programs in transit and receiving countries for guardians, social workers, border guards and other officials working with adolescents and youth.

Ensure safe and voluntary return while safeguarding the principle of non-refoulement, verifying that all expressions of interest to return amongst adolescent refugees and asylum-seekers are voluntary, and family tracing efforts have been undertaken including individual assessment of the best interests of adolescents.

Implement regularized migration alternatives, including speedy and effective family unification procedures. Ensure access of refugee youth to regular labour migration schemes.
similar routes and using similar means of travel, but for different reasons. They may affect several countries along parti-
14 See UNHCR, Children on the Run, Unaccompanied Children Leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection, March 2014.
17 UNHCR Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: The 10-Point Plan in Action, Feb. 2011, p. 10, available at http://www.refworld.org/docid/4d9430ea2.html. This edition contains the original 2007 10-Point Plan of Action (also available at http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/45b0c09b2.pdf) and identifies and discusses best practices around the globe relating to each of the 10 points in the plan. It includes nearly 200 practical examples.
18 Ibid., p. 2.
19 Ibid., pp. 152-168.
25 This includes improved cooperation with and among governments on refugee protection and international migration, strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders including outreach to civil society organizations with specialized expertise, and institutionalized partnership with IOM.
26 This includes placing refugee protection and international migration on regional and national agendas, cooperation on mixed movements institutionalized through various follow-up mechanisms, and concrete follow-up projects implemented in different regions.
27 This includes the above-mentioned 10-Point Plan in Action, a comprehensive compilation with nearly 200 practical examples, which has been widely distributed, and the Joint Profiling Questionnaire developed jointly with IOM.
28 This includes comprehensive analyses of magnitude, trends and protection challenges undertaken for all conference regions and points in the plan. It includes nearly 200 practical examples.
29 Ibid., p. 38.
30 Ibid., p. 35.
31 Ibid., p. 38.
33 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), General comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration (art. 3, para. 1), 29 May 2013, CRC /C/GC/14, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/51a84b5e4.html [accessed 1 July 2014]
36 Ibid. p. 35.
37 Ibid. p. 38.
38 UNHCR: Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: the 10-Point Plan in Action, 2011, Section 9.2.2
The employment dimensions of youth and adolescent migration are ever more urgent challenges for governance and for development. Migration presents many young people with opportunities for personal growth and development, for education, for starting jobs and careers, and for building their own family life. Young migrants are motors of growth and productivity for destination countries. They provide economic sustenance for families and home communities and they are vectors for social progress at home and abroad. Today, issues of youth integration, their productive participation in employment, and their legal and social protection are vital challenges for governance: locally, nationally and globally.

The intersections between youth, migration, employment and development are ever more pressing as international mobility increases and as foreign-origin portions of work-forces grow in many countries. Migration flows today are largely comprised of young people, and they will continue to be in the future. This chapter, as the overall report, focuses on international migration, fully recognizing that cross-border mobility represents only a small part of migratory flows worldwide, a large portion of which remain internal within countries.

Intersecting technological, structural and demographic transitions are rapidly expanding demand for foreign skills and labour worldwide and appear likely to drive significantly increased youth migration in coming years. However, youth migration is also driven by the lack of decent work available for young people in their homelands, and by the income differentials between origin and destination countries.

Employment is key for young people to find their place in the world, to earn their living and support families. However, migrant youth face many constraints affecting both youth employment and migration. Large portions of youthful populations around the world face high unemployment rates, little access to skills and vocational training, social marginalization, and absence of viable life opportunities to sustain remaining where they are.

*Prepared by Patrick Taran, President, Global Migration Policy Associates, with contributions from Gianni Rosas and Valeri Corbanese of the Youth Employment Programme at the International Labour Office (ILO) and Min Ji Kim, formerly at the ILO International Migration Branch. Helpful comments were also provided by UNICEF.*

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These in turn can be correlated with structural factors, notably jobless growth in many developed and developing countries and systemic factors that defer choices between labour intensive or capital intensive investment to private, market determinants without public interest considerations.

Migrant youth – particularly those in lower skilled, unskilled and/or irregular situations – face risks of abuse, exploitation, discrimination, exclusion and unemployment in many countries. Young foreign workers commonly face non-recognition of training credentials resulting in “de-skilling” where they only obtain jobs beneath their qualifications. Young women migrant workers confront high risks of sexual and gender based violence as well as abuse and exploitation at work and elsewhere in their migration experience.

These factors and broader trends of youth unemployment and mobility implicate the post-2015 UN development agenda. The importance of young migrants in sustaining development across the North and South and the large numbers of people concerned urge deliberate attention to youth migration in the new UN development framework, with specific measurable goals and targets including on productive employment and decent work for all.

Addressing youth migration and employment in a world of economic, employment and social crises requires deliberate action and policy by governments, social partners and international institutions. Not acting means facing ever higher costs from abuse and exploitation of youth and adolescents, increasing social disruption, and losses of economic productivity and growth. Getting it right requires comprehensive youth migration data for evidence-based governance, national legislation on legal, labour and social protection applying to youth and adolescents, and specific measures to integrate young migrants in conditions of equality, as well as supporting re-integration for returnees, enhancing access to vocational and technical training, and ensuring protection and equality for women and girl migrants.

WHAT WE KNOW

Youth make up large portions of contemporary migratory flows and an important portion of ‘migrant stocks.’ Current international migration data shows that youth and adolescents between ages of 15 and 24 make up about 12 per cent of global migrant
stocks, some 28 million in number.¹ In estimating international migrant stock, international migrants have generally been equated with the foreign-born. Migrant stocks may include persons who have acquired citizenship in the destination country, persons classified as immigrants, resettled refugees, persons granted asylum, family members admitted for family reunification, and other categories as well as those residing for shorter term purposes.

These figures do not capture additional numbers of short-term or temporary international migrants not counted as residents in destination countries, such as international or exchange students.

Reliable age-specific data on migration flows, distinct from stocks, is less adequate. Data from a number of European countries shows that the largest segment of arriving migrants are between the ages of 23 and 27, comprising – to – per cent of total arrivals. From 19 per cent to 34 per cent are adolescents and youth between ages 15-24. A recent UN Population Division study concluded, “there is a considerable body of additional indirect evidence to suggest that both regionally and globally, the age range 18 to 29 accounts for a very large proportion of the persons changing country of residence in a given year, proportions that can be 50 per cent or even higher for some countries.”²

While there is some data on migrant numbers, knowledge about the range of push and pull factors for labour migration, and the complex interplay between these, is far from satisfactory. Current data and consequent discussion on migration, demographics and development often miss the essential role of migration in economic growth and development. The demographic data available largely fails to show the actual and future impact of demographic transitions on labour force composition and age profiles. However, meeting labour market demand for skills and labour is essential to sustaining viable, productive economies in the North and the South. As a consequence, labour migration – essentially international labour and skills mobility – is not being addressed as the engine it is for obtaining and sustaining development.

ILO calculated that 105 million of the 214 million people living outside their countries of birth or citizenship in 2010 were economically active.³ That is to say: employed, self-employed or otherwise engaged in remunerative activity. (Economically active also includes the unemployed available for work.) That is about half of the total
number and a very high proportion of those of working age. Given an estimate of one accompanying dependent for each active adult, over 90 per cent of migration today is bound up in labour and employment. While employment data disaggregated by age and migration status is non-existent in many cases, anecdotal data shows that young and adolescent migrants are generally engaged in or available for work.

Evidence-based governance requires specific information on the conditions of youth and adolescent migrants, including on their treatment, employment, conditions of work, health, education and social protection. The predominantly available information is essentially ‘movement’ data regarding stocks and flows of migrants, in some cases showing age profiles. But that data provides almost no information to describe and analyse conditions facing youth and adolescent migrants, their educational attainment, their employment situations, their health needs, their social inclusion or exclusion, and their human development considerations.

Few source countries have youth-specific and gender-disaggregated data in their migration statistics. Only a small number of Asian countries collect information on prior employment and age of male and female migrants. Destination countries, especially reliant on temporary migration schemes, rarely report on the age-related profiles of migrant workers in their countries. This makes the analysis of the role of youth in migration processes difficult.

Migration offers potentially tremendous opportunities for youth in transitioning to adult life, in facilitating their productive participation in society, and in attaining personal career and family aspirations. Employment is widely recognized as the key for nearly everyone to find their place and integrate in the adult world, to earn their own living and support families, and to fully participate in society.

However, acknowledging this potential underlines that it is frustrated for many young migrants by the conditions they face. Many constraints to realizing aspirations in the migratory experience result from structural factors, such as jobless growth, and systemic factors that often privilege capital intensive over labour intensive investment, with consequences affecting both youth employment and migration.

Large portions of youthful populations around the world face high unemployment rates, little access to skills and vocational training, social marginalization, and absence of viable life opportunities to sustain remaining where they are.
The chapter on rural youth and migration in this publication discusses the lack of opportunities and support for rural youth to remain ‘at home’ in their places of origin. Many of these factors also apply to youth in urban areas in developing countries, where few opportunities exist for formal employment and decent work.

Currently, exceedingly high youth unemployment in a number of industrialized countries is also prompting significant emigration of young women and men. Large numbers of young people, who are mostly educated and highly skilled, are reported leaving or desiring to leave several countries in Europe, including Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain and Portugal, that are experiencing youth unemployment rates ranging up to more than forty per cent. Ironically, these and other developed countries are experiencing “brain drain” losses of educated youth similar to those often associated with developing countries.

Meanwhile, the «pull» demand for labour at all skills levels is permanent and growing. This demand is structural, driven by technological changes, evolving labour market and employer needs, and spreading demographic transitions\(^6\). The highly competitive globalized economy privileges obtaining productive, mobile and flexible workers at lower costs, both skilled and less skilled, in order to sustain development across the industrialized and post-industrial world.

Young workers and professionals are preferred, and attracted across borders because they are generally perceived to be mobile, adaptable and flexible, more so than older cohorts. They usually have lower salary requirements given lower levels of experience and seniority, and they imply lower social costs and benefits than older cohorts. In the context of ageing and declining work forces, young migrants provide needed skills innovative ideas and initiative, and workforce otherwise disappearing in destination countries.

While labour migration is the focus of this chapter, youth migrate internationally also to re-unite with their family and to study --especially at tertiary level. A significant number of young people are forcibly displaced or flee as refugees or asylum seekers to escape situations of armed conflict and/or widespread violations of human rights. Other chapters in this report provide some data on these situations. Nonetheless, regardless of motivations, most adolescent and young migrants will end up in the
employment world, for example when children or adolescents migrating to join family reach working age, or when refugees are recognized or resettled in a host country.

There is significant and growing knowledge on other factors related to youth migration and employment. Most migrants send an important portion of their earnings home as remittances – when they have remunerative activity. The important of remittances in supporting basic needs 'at home', in poverty alleviation and in development of origin countries is discussed in the chapter on Remittances, Development and Youth of this report.

There is also increasing awareness of the fiscal -- as well as skills and labour -- contributions young migrant workers make to their destination countries. In short, the younger the migrant is upon arrival and starting work, the longer s/he will contribute to the fiscal revenue of the country of destination.

Youth and adolescent migrants who end up in irregular or unauthorized situations remain a serious concern, although there is far less data informing about their conditions, needs, and protection issues particularly regarding their situation in the world of work. The approximate data on migrants in irregular situations indicates that their numbers vary across destination countries and regions. However, this data is not age disaggregated, meaning we know little about the numbers of youth and adolescent migrant workers in irregular situations and even less about their situations.

The ILO is publishing in mid-2014 a comprehensive report “Trends in youth labour migration” that will provide far more detail on where young migrants are from and why they migrate, key determinants of youth labour migration, labour market outcomes of young migrants, costs and benefits of youth labour migration, and policy implications. Once published, the report can be accessed at: http://www.ilo.org/yep

YOUTH MIGRATION DRIVEN BY DEMAND AND PUSH FACTORS

Youth migration driven by demand and push factors

The relationship between pull and push factors for youth migration is complex and inter-twined. Neither pull nor push factors operate in isolation, in reality they interact with one another and they can be at the same time both push and pull drivers. In many destination countries there is a high demand for skilled labour that attracts
young migrants; concurrently numerous countries have substantially improved educational attainment of their populations. However, the skills premium that young people may receive in their home country is not as attractive as that of destination countries, or there are simply not jobs available at home for their skills. Demographic factors – combined with limited job opportunities -- similarly, push young people living in countries with large youth cohorts to migrate abroad, while declining labour force numbers in destination countries pull migrants towards these countries.

Immigration policies can also be a significant determinant, particularly on the responsiveness of migration to demand and push factors, and on the extent of regular or irregular migration. There is a substantial body of research that demonstrate how a change of immigration policy (more/less restrictive) affects immigration flows.

**Demand for skills and labour mobility**

The evolution of ever more complex technology, demographics and social-political factors has given rise to increasingly internationalized interdependence and mobility of capital, goods, services, technology, knowledge, and people.

The evolution and diversification of technology along with transformations and relocations of industrial processes and changes in the organization of work itself are constant characteristics of the world of work today. This constant evolution requires accelerating complexity of work activity, of diversity of skills, and of specialization in the competences of work forces in every country.

Technological development continues to mechanize, automate and computerize many jobs. While eliminating some jobs, it nonetheless expands demand for skills in information and computer technology. Where possible, labour intensive processes not replaced by technological innovation are offshored, usually from countries with higher wage and conditions levels to those with lower wages and less workplace protection. Yet small and medium enterprises and family businesses have fewer possibilities to relocate, while most activity in sectors such as construction, health care, hotel and restaurants, cleaning and maintenance generally cannot be relocated. To remain competitive and survive, enterprises in these sectors are obliged to both innovate and depend at least in part on cheap, compliant and flexible labour.
No country today can form or train the entire range and number of ever-evolving skills and competencies needed to perform the ever more complex, inter-related work done on its territory. The result is demand for specialized skills not available locally and that cannot be met locally: skills needs evolve more quickly than training systems while displaced and older workers cannot in many cases be retrained for new technologies and skills sets. Furthermore, while disposition may exist to train, the technological basis, the facilities, and available specializations are not necessarily adequate. In some countries, the institutions, the resources and the technological basis for training are just not there.

For an expanding number of countries, these factors are compounded by demographics, where the size, composition and age profile of the entire ‘native’ work force is declining in number, increasing in age, constricting in breadth of skills and diminishing relative to increasing numbers of retired people. This phenomenon of population ageing and work force decline also poses huge challenges to provision of social security as the number of retirees increases while the economically active and contributing population declines in proportion as well as number.

Economic contributions and the employment characteristics of migrants are central to labour markets and labour force composition, in more than 100 countries today. Foreign born workers now comprise about 10 per cent, in some cases more (30 per cent in Switzerland), of labour forces in Western European countries and 15-18 per cent in the ‘immigration countries’ of Australia, Canada and the USA. Taking account of the first and second generation offspring of immigrants arrived since the 1960s shows that around 20 per cent of work forces in a number of Western European countries derive from contemporary immigration.

For a majority of countries around the world, migration –international labour and skills mobility-- has become a key factor to sustaining and renovating essential processes of development; development understood broadly referring to building and maintaining means of production and distribution of goods, services and knowledge; construction of infrastructure; and provision of housing, education, healthcare, transportation, communications and other goods and services for the population.

International mobility provides skilled labour and new technological competencies as well as labour force to sustain otherwise non-viable economic sectors or enterprises.
Today, it provides for health care, for domestic work, and it sustains large shares of labour for agriculture, construction, hotel and restaurant, cleaning and maintenance, and tourism sectors in many countries.

In sum, migration serves as an instrument to adjust the skills, age and sectoral composition of national and regional labour markets to meet evolving demand. Migration provides responses to fast-changing needs for skills and personnel resulting from technological advances, changes in market conditions and industrial transformations. In countries of ageing populations, migration replenishes declining work forces and injects younger workers, in turn contributing to dynamism, innovation and domestic mobility in those work forces.

On the other side of the equation, migration often reflects “negative adjustment” to labour markets characterized by high unemployment, dearth of decent jobs and/or lack of opportunities for youth with education and skills. Youth emigration can thus be characterized as a normal response to structural deficiencies in their home markets.

**Skills and training gaps**

However, the acknowledged serious global shortage of skilled workers worsens. Today, employers in Europe and elsewhere around the world complain that they cannot fill one in three jobs on offer with the needed level of skills. A forecasting study by the McKenzie Global Institute reported that the global shortage of high skilled and trained technical skills is projected to reach 85 million by 2020. Some 40 million with tertiary level education will be lacking in developed countries. 45 million more with needed technical and vocational skills will be missing, particularly in developing countries.

At the same time, educational, vocational and technical training systems are simply not accessible to many youth seeking relevant, employable skills and qualifications. Many national educational systems are not training the scientific, vocational and technical skills needed today or anticipated in the near term future. This extraordinary, globalized mismatch between the numbers of people and the skills they are trained for versus what are needed threatens to undermine the viability and competitiveness of enterprises worldwide. It also leaves many youth unable to find employment either at home or abroad.
Demographic trends foretell increased youth migration

Recent evidence based on more accurate forecasting indicates greater international labour and skills mobility in coming decades. Within 15 years, the majority of world’s countries –and populations-- will experience work force decline and significant population ageing. Germany will lose 5 million members of its work force in the next ten years\textsuperscript{10}. The Russian Federation government anticipates that the working-age population will decline by eight percent to nine percent –about 8 million people – by 2020\textsuperscript{11} while experts estimate a shortage of 14 million appropriately skilled workers by 2020.\textsuperscript{12} By 2050, the Japanese labour force will be 40\% less than what it was in 1995, about 52 million from a peak of 87 million.\textsuperscript{13} Employer and union federations predict that Switzerland will need 400,000 additional workers by 2030.\textsuperscript{14}\textsuperscript{15} Qatar authorities project bringing in 1 million more migrant workers before 2020, in addition to the approximately 1.5 million comprising 90\% of the current work force.\textsuperscript{16} China’s working-age population decreased for the first time in 2012, by 3.45 million.\textsuperscript{17} Recent forecasting indicates that China’s work force will decline significantly in coming decades, with business press reports indicating that the “total real labor force is expected to contract by more than 20\% by 2050.”\textsuperscript{18} The United States’ workforce is also declining; the labor force participation rate is projected to be three percent lower by 2020 than 2012, with “Roughly two-thirds of the decline (is) due to the aging of the labor force.”\textsuperscript{19}

As of 2013, 126 of the 224 countries or political territories worldwide are at or below zero population growth fertility rates,\textsuperscript{20} fertility rate referring to the number of children born to women over their lifetimes.\textsuperscript{21} A significant number of ‘middle income’ as well as developed countries, such as Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Iran, both North and South Korea,\textsuperscript{22} Lebanon, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, Vietnam, UAE, Ukraine--among others are joining many of the industrialized high-income countries at or well below population replacement fertility rates. Over the next 15 years, these countries all face increasing departures from their work forces that will be ever less compensated for by decreasing numbers of youth entrants.

This results in increased demand --and competition-- on a global scale for what is one of the most crucial economic resources: skills and labour power. As noted above, global shortages of high-skilled professionals are forecast to become more acute in
the next several years. Demands for other skills levels, such as health care workers, and for cheap, flexible, unprotected labour will also increase.

Migration is the single response able to provide a large portion of workers and skills required to maintain sustainable economic activity in many countries – and across regional integration spaces. Other options usually applied to adjust for labour force constraints - raising retirement age, increasing female participation in labour markets, increasing productivity, increased economic growth - are proving inadequate to compensate for the scale and rapidity of labour force ageing and decline in many countries concerned.

As two chapters in this publication discuss, climate change and other kinds of environmental degradation have the potential to uproot large numbers of people. In many cases, these movements will represent for the persons concerned a positive adaptation strategy for families seeking improved livelihoods and habitat. In other cases it will take the form of displacement resulting from acute natural hazards or conflict related to competition over access to natural resources, while in still others people will be relocated from areas that are no longer able to sustain human life.

Often the most willing to take risks, youth are likely to be at the vanguard of those migrating in anticipation of further environmental decline in their communities. While much of this migration is likely to be internal, from rural to urban areas, an unknown – but likely significant – portion of displaced young people will migrate internationally.

**RISKS FACING YOUNG MIGRANT WORKERS**

Despite the opportunities of migration, migrant youth – particularly those in lower skilled, unskilled and/or irregular situations – face risks of abuse, exploitation, discrimination, exclusion and unemployment in many countries, including in the most developed. Main areas, each of which represents violations of recognized human and labour rights of migrant workers, are substandard conditions and abusive treatment at work, rising discrimination and xenophobia, lack of access to health rights and social security, and gender specific discrimination and exploitation of young women migrants. Other areas of concern are poor labour market outcomes for migrants and
related issues of de-skilling and ‘brain waste’ that also undermine migrants’ realization of decent working and living conditions.

As a set of detailed national studies conducted by ILO concluded,

Labour market outcomes for youth in general trail those of their adult counterparts, and the countries and regions profiled in this study are no exception. Higher unemployment rates and lower labour force participation rates for youth are widespread. Employment status alone, however, fails to capture the full labour market situation of young people, as youth are more likely to be involved in the informal economy, part-time work, and “hiding” in education.

Substandard conditions and abusive treatment

Young foreign workers are commonly subject to substandard conditions and abusive treatment in employment. Even in developed countries with more rigorous standards, data shows higher workplace accident and death rates for migrant workers than for national cohorts. For example, in Western Europe the rates for foreign workers are double those for nationals. Common risk situations that particularly affect young migrant workers include the following:

Firstly, the perceived vulnerability of migrant workers – particularly those in irregular status— is often associated with their employment in substandard conditions and in activity, locations or workplaces where standards and their enforcement are weak or non-existent.

Secondly, because they are foreign, immigrant and sometimes in short term, temporary situations, migrants often have little knowledge of legal labour standards, do not adequately understand the host country language(s), and may have little formal training or education.

Thirdly, migrant workers are often poorly or not at all organized into representative trade union organizations that would provide collective support for their protection and defend them in cases of abuse.

Fourthly, a predominance of informal, irregular and/or undocumented employment agreements leaves many migrant workers with little or no basis for upholding claims to wages or payment. This is often compounded by significant differences in conditions
and pay rates promised at recruitment and those imposed upon arrival at employment sites in destination countries. Sometimes bogus employment contracts are issued at the stage of recruitment and then substituted for contracts with less favourable conditions at the final employment stage. Related issues include unpaid overtime, excessive working time, lack of breaks and/or rest days, and others.

Fifthly, as labour inspectors report, difficulties are rife to ensure compliance with labour law along sub-contracting chains. In economic sectors in which sub-contracting is common, such as construction or cleaning, small enterprises close down frequently only to open up elsewhere. Several European countries have enacted laws on joint liability but these need to be enforced effectively.

Sixthly, a not uncommon abuse is outright non-payment of earnings. Migrants in irregular status are particularly vulnerable. Reports suggest relatively widespread practices of unscrupulous employers hiring migrants and then discretely denouncing these workers to immigration enforcement authorities—often just before pay-day to prompt arrest and deportation before workers can collect their earnings.

In some cases, non-payment of wages or illegal wage deductions are combined with other coercive measures, such as threats of violence, psychological abuse, restriction of the freedom of movement or retention of identity documents. Migrants, in particular irregular migrants, can thus end up in a situation of forced labour from which they find it difficult to escape.

**Rising discrimination and xenophobia**

A burning concern is the generalized rise in both discriminatory practices and of racist, xenophobic behaviour against migrant workers, with youth and adolescents frequently among the victims. Hostility towards migrants is manifested worldwide. The concern is aggravated by the absence, with few exceptions, of vigorous responses by governments to anticipate, discourage, and prevent discrimination and manifestations of racist and xenophobic hostility against foreigners, and to prosecute perpetrators.

Particularly virulent expressions of violence have been manifested around workplaces in all regions. Reported incidents include shootings of migrant workers who demanded unpaid wages, violent mob attacks on migrant agricultural workers, and
mass round-ups followed by detention of migrant workers in facilities reminiscent of concentration camps.

Discrimination denies equality of treatment and opportunity to many migrant youth and youth of immigrant parents. Situation testing in more than a dozen countries in Europe and North America revealed that equally qualified young immigrant workers or young applicants of immigrant parents had generally to make five times as many tries to obtain a positive result in the job application process as applicants with 'native' appearances; all other factors being the same. While similarly rigorous testing studies have not yet been carried out in other regions, anecdotal evidence suggests that similar experiences of discrimination are likely widespread in most countries of immigration.

**Young Women migrant workers**

Half of all migrants today are women and girls, 49 per cent according to current UN figures. In some countries and regions, women predominate among migrants, with well over 50 per cent. The feminization of migration is not so much about the proportion, as it has been above 45 per cent for decades. The difference today, compared to two or three decades ago is that now most if not nearly all women migrants are economically active. They are independent actors rather than dependent spouses, and they often are migrating on their own. As highlighted in the chapter on gender and migration in this publication, women and girl migrants in particular face high risks of sexual and gender based violence and exploitation, both in the migration process and in destination countries.

In a context of stratification of employment and segmentation of labour markets, women migrants are generally tracked into and recruited for 'women's work' that, not coincidentally, is usually low paid and lacking workplace protection. Such work includes domestic work, healthcare, agriculture, hotel and restaurant, and semi-skilled manufacturing in export processing zones. Common across many of these sectors is that workplaces are inaccessible to union organizers and freedom of association is suppressed, sometimes expressly for migrants, meaning no associations or unions for mutual defense and solidarity, nor any collective bargaining power to press for decent work conditions.
The expansion of international chain care work is a notable feature of gender-defined migrant labour that women are recruited for and tracked into. The term refers to women migrating to provide care services for children as well as elderly people in destination countries while employing relatives or other women to care for their own children. International global care chains entail significant costs on migrant mothers and their children and lacuna in care for the latter, as well as transfer of emotional and physical care labour from those situated lower down the global care chain to those on the upper side. Many migrant care givers are young women, while their children remaining at home are at higher risk of inadequate care and socialization.

Welcome attention has been focused on domestic work in the last four years, culminating in adoption of the ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. Although addressing more broadly a sector of activity that is almost entirely comprised of women workers, this Convention is also an important symbolic step in advancing protection at work for migrant women. In the youth dominated profile of contemporary migration flows, ratification of this convention will extend protection to the many young migrant women engaged in domestic work.

Attention to the risks faced by migrant domestic women workers should be a springboard to highlight the generalized lack of effective protection faced by women migrant workers in agriculture, in textile sweatshops and elsewhere. Testimony abounds of women working in these sectors subject to exploitative working conditions, sexual harassment, unprotected exposure to dangerous pesticides or chemicals and other risks.

**Health and Social Security**

Young migrant workers face specific general health problems as well as occupational safety and health (OSH) issues. Migration poses special risks to migrant youth in view of their higher propensity for risk-taking behaviour, lack of experience, and lack of resources to seek proper medical care. Migration status (whether in regular or irregular status) and gender also have different implications for health and effective access to medical care.

A number of administrative, financing, cultural, information and linguistic barriers are in place, which impede access of young migrants to effective health care. Migrant
workers in irregular status may not avail of available health services due to fear of detection and possible deportation by the authorities. Trafficked young women rarely have access to health services.

Similarly, young migrant workers often have little or no access to social security coverage. In particular, they often face barriers to participation in social security in countries of employment, they often cannot establish or retain coverage in countries of origin, and when they do obtain entitlements, often the coverage and benefits are not portable to other countries including that of citizenship.

Migrants may also be unwitting players in a global redefinition of social protection. In some situations, social protection for migrants is being posed as a question of finding a median between what are characterised as two extremes: full coverage or none at all. A large portion of migrants today remain with little or no social security coverage. However, efforts are underway in several regional economic communities around the world, such as MERCOSUR and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) to extend and provide for portability of social security for migrants through formal regional legal instruments and administrative regimes.

Issues of healthcare and social protection for young migrant workers are detailed in the respective chapters on these subjects in this publication.

**De-skilling and brain waste**

A major issue discussed elsewhere in this publication is the bind that many adolescents and youth lack access to education or training to obtain marketable skills for employment, whether at home or abroad. Yet despite the worsening global shortage of skilled workers, young migrants with acquired skills and training commonly face non-recognition of training credentials and experience. The frequent result is ‘deskilling’ where they are only able to obtain jobs at far below their level of qualifications. Not infrequently, this means relegation to precarious and poorly paid work. At a time in which appropriately skilled people are lacking, these phenomena represent an appalling ‘brain waste’

Another avenue of brain waste and de-skilling occurs when migrant youth cannot get jobs commensurate to their training or education due to legal or professional restrictions on employment of foreigners. This occurs as a consequence of legislation
restricting certain fields and professions to citizens or to ‘national preference’ rules, sometimes adopted for certain trades and occupations at the behest of unions or professional associations to “protect” local workers and control market competition.

A further bind affecting migrant youth is the Catch-22 situation that many young people find themselves in when, having obtained the necessary qualification or skills, employers do not hire them on the basis that they lack requisite employment experience. This issue is raised extensively in the youth employment literature, but it appears to be a ‘universal’ experience applying to youth whether at home or abroad as migrants. For migrant and migrant origin youth, this bind is often seriously aggravated by discrimination, discussed below.

**Structural factors**

Exploitative conditions facing young migrant workers are structurally driven. This is particularly the case for women. For many enterprises in many countries, and for entire economic sectors, low cost foreign labour is seen as the ticket to survival. Agriculture and forestry in Europe, North America, and some African and Asian countries depend on cheap foreign labour to remain viable. Health, home care, schooling for children, and care for ageing people depend on migrants. As do hotel, restaurant and tourist sectors in many countries. Global competition, free trade, and race-to-the-bottom phenomena push against costs of labour and provision of social services.

Keeping some migrants cheap, submissive, flexible with low social costs has become crucial to keep jobs at home and economies afloat. It can be said that significant numbers of undocumented workers across the EU, in Gulf countries, in the USA, in Russia, in South Africa, in Thailand and elsewhere is not accidental. Despite rhetoric and measures on controlling migration, migrant workers persistently remain tolerated in irregular situations because they provide that cheap, compliant, flexible labour needed to sustain enterprises and employment.

An excerpt from the executive summary of a recent report on the UK sums up features consistent with data from other EU countries. Similar features are commonly found in other countries worldwide:

“Migrants, especially those from outside the EU15 who have limited access to social security provisions, face the paradoxical position of being welcomed by businesses..."
and the state due to their high flexibility and minimal utilisation of the welfare state on the one hand, whilst facing increasing unease and hostility from anti-immigrant groups, the same state that welcomes them, and large numbers of the general public on the other.

The highly unregulated and flexible economy has allowed many migrants to easily find work and businesses to remain competitive whilst simultaneously creating the conditions for widespread exploitation and producing divisions amongst workers, both between (native) born/migrant and between different groupings of labour migrants.

Exploitation is linked to a hierarchy of vulnerability with the rights and entitlements guaranteed or not by a migrant’s legal status, the legal provisions between the UK and a migrant’s ‘home’ country, unionisation, racism, contract type and flexibility all affecting this vulnerability hierarchy.”

Migration represents a zone of contention between labour and capital today. Issues of whether migrants are subject to differential rights and remuneration regimes represent conflict over the division of wealth --how much of what is generated is returned to capital versus how much goes to working people as remuneration. Migrants are also vectors of contention over conditions of work and investment in safety and health protections versus lowering costs to maintain returns on capital.

Migration also poses questions of whether – and to what extent-- working people remain organized to collectively defend their interests. Migrant workers are key to whether and how unions maintain their role to freely associate and organize workers to collectively bargain for fair remuneration and decent work conditions.

THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The process of capitalist industrialization clearly required normative regulation to provide protection and decent conditions for persons engaged in work. Regulation was also essential to support employment, to ensure social protection, and to invoke social dialogue to resolve contentions between the main economic actors: employers and workers.

International concern for protection of workers outside their own countries was explicitly established in the Treaty of Versailles of 1919. The first international
conference on migration took place in 1923 in Italy under ILO auspices to press destination countries of the day to reduce abuse of migrant workers.

The first international treaties with provisions on legal and social protection for migrant workers were drawn up in the 1930s. Subsequently, a comprehensive framework of legal norms for governance of migration was established in instruments in several areas of international law, namely Human Rights Conventions; International Labour Standards; the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees; the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations; and two Protocols on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants to the Convention against transnational organized crime.

Specific regional instruments on human rights, migrant workers and refugees established by the African Union, the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Organization of American States provide further normative guidance in their respective regions. Legal norms addressing labour circulation, intra-community legal status and social protection of migrants have been or are being established by a growing number of Regional Economic Communities, such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East Africa Community, and MERCOSUR among others.

At the core of the legal regime for migration governance are three complementary, sequential instruments specifically on migrant workers and migration for employment: ILO Convention No. 97 97 on migration for employment (revised) (1949), ILO Convention No. 143 on migrant workers (supplementary provisions) (1975), and the subsequent 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW) built on the ILO conventions. All three contain norms for governance and administration of labour migration and provisions for international dialogue and cooperation, as well as specific standards recognizing and protecting the rights of migrant workers and their families. Needless to emphasize, they have particular relevance for ensuring decent treatment of migrants youth and adolescents.

87 countries have ratified at least one of these three instruments as of November 2013. Counting not yet ratified signatories of the ICRMW, 98 countries have committed to uphold international standards regarding migrants rights on their territories,
representing some two-thirds of all countries for which migration is a significant economic, social and political governance concern. That includes 10 of the 'EU 15' and 22 of the 47 member States of the Council of Europe, all but four countries in South and Central America, and more than half of the member States of the African Union. While full implementation of these standards is often a long road, adoption of these instruments has instigated improved legal protection and domestic "good governance" measures that concretely improve the situations of migrant youth in most of the countries concerned.

**Free circulation in Regional Economic Communities**

A significant advance in labour mobility and its governance has been the expansion of free circulation regimes in regional economic communities (RECs) among groups of countries in virtually all regions of the world, there are today more than a dozen regional associations of States that have established or are establishing regimes facilitating visa free travel and access to labour markets in member countries for nationals of any other member country. These significantly facilitate youth mobility within the respective regional communities, where demand and opportunity are encouraging mobility of young workers to other countries in their region.

However, challenges remain to implementing these regimes in nearly all RECs concerned. Issues include lack of recognition, protection and equality of treatment for community migrants, inadequate or non-existant social security access and portability, and discriminatory labour market treatment, all of which affect young people migrating under these regional arrangements.

**Shifting governance from labour institutions**

The governance structure for migration –and the ideology as well as practice of governance of migration-- is changing in both old and new immigration countries. The lead responsibility for migration governance in immigration or migrant receiving States over previous decades was generally in labour and employment-concerned ministries. This designation reflected the primacy of needs to regulate labour markets and protect workers as well as oversee employment relations and social dialogue in the context of immigration. Those ministries retained the vitally important competences not only in labour market administration, but also in supporting and
mediating as needed dialogue and negotiation between social partners, the employers and the unions representing the collective voice of workers—including migrants. This reflected the reality that then and now, regardless of migrant motivations whether seeking employment, refugee flight, family reunion, or pursuing studies, some 90% of migration results in employment outcomes or directly dependent on those who are economically active. However, in an increasing number of countries, lead responsibility for migration is assigned to Interior or Home Affairs ministries.

Another trend that especially concerns young migrant workers is promotion of explicitly short term, temporary, and/or seasonal migration regimes, often under the generic term of “circular migration.” Advocates of expanded circular migration characterize it as the solution to both employment needs and to protection of ‘national cohesion’ and ‘cultural integrity’ of nation states. However, circular, temporary, short term migration regimes tend to offer explicitly restricted application of rights such as freedom of association, while subjecting migrants and their employers to reduced- or non-application of labour standards and prevailing domestic levels of remuneration. A justificatory discourse generally invoked in promoting temporary regimes posits that the level of rights protections applying to migrants is negotiable. Terminology of rights versus numbers is used to show the advantages of trade-offs where wider access by migrant workers to higher wage labour markets would be obtained by accepting reductions in application of labour rights. The argument that lowering wages will instigate creation of more jobs is not infrequently invoked in this discourse. However, evidence does not support a causal correlation between lowering wages and conditions and increasing employment.

These regime changes have specific consequences for young migrant workers. Under a control-based approach, the conditions for expression of freedom of association and organizing for collective bargaining regarding conditions of work, remuneration and social protection may be intimidated and are objectively reduced. A consequence is diminished labour market incentives to ensure decent work conditions or to provide for equality of treatment and opportunity, neither on nationality nor on gender grounds. Explicitly rights-restricted temporary migration regimes constrain or simply prevent both full protection and participation of young migrants where they live, work and contribute to the economic and social welfare of community and society.
THE POLICY AGENDA

Inter-governmentally agreed lines for national policy on labour migration have been progressively elaborated over the last two decades at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994; the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001; in the General Discussion on Migrant Workers at the International Labour Conference in 2004 and in the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration adopted in 2006.30

In line with the normative framework and evolving international policy attention over the last two decades, several key areas require policy attention, with particular reference to young migrant workers.

Effective policy depends on good data. As emphasized in Chapter 1 of this report, obtaining collection and analysis of relevant labour migration and labour market data is essential. This includes defining and utilizing age-disaggregated indicators, measures and methodologies regarding employment distribution and characteristics, working conditions, discrimination, educational attainment, skills, health, living conditions, and social inclusion/exclusion regarding young migrants. The analysis of youth migration data, determinants of migration flows for youth, and working conditions in destination countries is the absolutely essential basis for determining in detail the policy options countries consider and adopt to make migration work for individuals, countries of origin and destination countries.

Employers and the organizations that represent them, along with trade unions that represent workers –increasingly migrants as well as nationals-- are the key actors in employment. Engaging social partners –employers and worker organizations—as well as concerned civil society and migrant youth organizations is a must to establish and implement workable migration policy and administration.

Viable and accountable governance of migration that effectively protects young migrant workers can only be achieved by strengthening the standards-based approach to migration in national law and practice. This means ratification of relevant international human rights conventions and international labour standards, and incorporating these standards in national law on legal, labour and social protection applying to youth and adolescents.
"Good practice" in a number of countries (Nepal, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Zimbabwe, etc.) shows that elaborating an explicit national policy framework on migration, for a whole of government approach is a most effective means of developing coherent and coordinated national governance of migration. Consultation and cooperation with social partners and concerned civil society organizations is essential, as is incorporating a specific youth-migration-development component.

Key issues for the policy agenda include taking deliberate employment measures to create decent jobs for youth, to promote youth integration in labour markets, and to match youth skills to available jobs at home or abroad. As well, enforcing minimum decent work standards in all sectors of activity is required. This means strengthening labour inspection, ensuring its ability to reach workplaces where young migrant workers are concentrated and separating labour inspection from immigration enforcement so that its protection function is not compromised.

Today’s generalized climate of rising hostility to and rejection of migrants, of foreigners, makes imperative. Elaborating and implementing an explicit national plan of action against discrimination and xenophobia. Such a plan should include measures to facilitate inclusion and integration of young migrants in conditions of equality in host societies and labour markets.

A high priority topic on the migration policy agenda, especially now in most Regional Economic Communities, is extending progressively social protection, specifically social security coverage and portability to all migrant workers—with particular attention to incorporating youth in social security schemes. This is discussed in the chapter on social protection.

As the chapter on adolescent and young women migrants elaborates, migration policy needs to ensure gender specific policy and administration taking specific measures to ensure equality of rights, opportunities and protection for women and girls while recognizing specific gender-based risks and ensuring equality in outcomes as well as intent.

The increasingly acute interlinkages between migration and global skills shortages make imperative retooling vocational education and training to meet current and foreseeable future national needs and international demand. This includes enhancing
adolescent and youth access to vocational, technical and scientific training apt for employment at home or abroad. In parallel, migrant youth access to employment urges obtaining national **recognition of internationally acquired educational, technical and vocational qualifications and job experience**. This entails harmonizing job and training qualifications regionally and internationally to improve youth access to employment as well as employer access to qualified candidates. Some aspects of these policy challenges are discussed in the chapter on Offspring of Immigrants in OECD Education Systems and Labour Markets and the chapter on migration and tertiary education.

Other policy challenges described elsewhere in this report also belong on the migration agenda, such as supporting **youth migrant freedom of association and participation**, particularly in unions and in employer/business organizations, as discussed in the chapter on youth participation.

**National Policy Frameworks**

However, the existing legal protection and cooperation framework remains inadequately applied for ensuring the protection of youth and adolescent migrants. Some countries have explicit policies and in some cases, governance institutions addressing youth and youth development, while a growing number of countries have policy frameworks on migration. However, if there are any explicit national policy frameworks on ‘youth and migration’ or more comprehensive youth, migration, and development policies, they remain to be identified internationally. As research for this publication has indicated, there are still few relevant and appropriate measures addressing youth and adolescent migrants in existing migration and development policies. In an extensive research report on youth employment and migration in Asia, Piyasiri Wickramasekara drew the following conclusions:51

*Mainstreaming youth employment into national development plans, poverty reduction exercises and Decent Work Country Programmes is desirable to place it in the context of the overall employment situation of the countries concerned. The evaluation of ILO’s youth employment strategies called for improving the coherence between national development frameworks, youth employment and youth development policy-making. For instance, Nepal has integrated youth employment into the national development plans and PRSPs, but in countries like Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, youth policy has been separately developed and not adequately implemented.*
There have been arguments for mainstreaming labour migration into development frameworks in the same manner; it should best be seen as part of the overall employment challenge. Several recent handbooks for policy makers and practitioners have hardly anything to say on integrating youth concerns. The bottom line is that labour migration cannot offer the bulk of Asian youth opportunities for decent work which have to be generated in their own countries. Local alternatives to migration need to be explored and promoted.

**Labour inspection: key to protecting young migrants at work**

A current policy issue that merits attention is labour inspection. Beyond enactment of international labour standards in national law, labour inspection is the key and main guarantor of respect for and enforcement of occupational safety and health protections as well as decent working conditions and employment contracts. However, upholding labour standards for migrant workers, notably young migrants, presents distinct challenges that require particular attention and specific approaches.

Labour inspection is, unfortunately, minimal in many countries and often non-existent in sectors, geographic areas and or specific workplaces where migrant workers may be concentrated. Labour inspectors need clear guidelines and specialized training to assess compliance with labour standards regarding migrants in view of language barriers, migrant unfamiliarity with equipment and procedures, and sometimes subtly discriminatory practices that may only affect migrant workers. When non-compliance with standards is identified, labour inspectors have a key role to play to facilitate access to assistance and justice for those workers and to collaborate with labour law authorities and where relevant, criminal justice authorities to prosecute egregious violations.

Labour inspection agencies in several countries have developed exemplary specialized approaches to reach migrant workers. For example, following employment discrimination situation testing in Belgium, the national labour inspectorate incorporated review of equality of treatment standards in inspection activity, and included discrimination issues in training of labour inspectors. In Mauritius, the Ministry of Labour and Industry set up a “Special Expatriate Squad” to oversee all aspects of employment of foreign workers; specialized labour inspectors with ILO
training along with interpreters and legal officers, maintain direct contact with migrant workers and employers. The team vets all contracts to ensure that workers have decent working and living conditions and it coordinates between relevant ministries.

A rising challenge to effective labour inspection is widespread imposition of measures that compel labour inspectors to undertake immigration enforcement control as part of their workplace inspection agenda, or to involve immigration control agents in combined enforcement activity. This undermines effective enforcement of labour standards as it inevitably intimidates migrant workers – especially those most vulnerable to abuse because of precarious legal status – from exposing or resisting abusive conditions. Such collaboration undermines necessary distinctions between universal enforcement of labour standards and targeted policing functions for non-labour law matters. It is not consistent with the general principles of ILO Convention 81 on labour inspection, nor with rulings of the ILO supervisory Committee of Experts on Application of Conventions and Recommendations. The practice imposes law enforcement responsibilities for which labour inspectors are neither competent nor trained, and it ultimately drives an important portion of immigrant labour further into non-regulated and clandestine employment situations where any protection is all but impossible.

**Concerted action against discrimination and xenophobia**

Non-discrimination and social cohesion can only be achieved by deliberate legal, institutional and practical measures. The inclusion of migrants and combat against any form of discrimination against them requires a comprehensive set of legal, institutional and practical measures, ranging from outlawing discrimination to awareness raising on the economic and social benefit of immigration.

Successful practice in this regard has been demonstrated by several countries such as Ireland, where there have been almost no racist killings of migrants nor burnings of businesses, homes or places of worship of foreigners. There, while discrimination against foreigners may still be manifested, it has expressly been made legally, politically and socially unacceptable.
The atmosphere of inclusion in Ireland is the consequence of a deliberate combination of measures. These include anti-discriminatory political discourse by national leaders, passage of strong legislation – incorporating nationality as a prohibited grounds of discrimination, national opinion-shaping and awareness raising campaigns such as annual Anti-Racism Workplace Weeks undertaken over a decade jointly instigated by government, social partners and civil society, and by awareness-raising and advocacy in workplaces, communities and churches across the country. An exemplary Irish National Plan of Action Against Racism elaborated in dialogue across Irish society reinforced social cohesion. Where it counts most for upholding decent treatment for young migrant workers, non-discrimination and integration of migrants have been prominent elements in Irish national Social Partner agreements since the late 1990s and have been incorporated in labour contracts, in trade union priorities and in training of business leaders and employers.

KEY MESSAGES

- Labour migration push-pull factors are intensifying. High unemployment and absence of decent work opportunities -- among other factors -- push youth to migrate.

- The pull of demand for labour and skills mobility is permanent, structural and growing, driven by technological changes, evolving markets and spreading demographic transitions.

- Up to 50 percent of today's migration flows comprise youth between ages 18 and 29; most migrating youth and most migrant youth established in destination countries are or seek to be economically active.

- However, many migrant youths and adolescents remain highly subject to abuse, exploitation, absence of labour protection and discrimination in employment. Many face unemployment, denial of access to social security, and social exclusion.

- Key challenges for governance are obtaining full rights protection and decent work, including through effective labour inspection, and social inclusion for all young migrants.
• A challenge for some young migrants is non-respect of free circulation regimes in regional economic communities, resulting in restrictions on their rights and lack of protection against exploitation as well as abuses by authorities.

• The absence of data on employment characteristics, work force participation, working conditions and social protection of young migrant workers is a major impediment to effective policy and protection.

**STEPS FORWARD: ESTABLISH DECENT WORK PROVISIONS AND CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL YOUNG MIGRANTS**

However the future evolves, labour migration will be ever more important across the entire world. Countries worldwide need to reformulate migration regimes to ensure the future viability of their work forces and to ensure that all participants in the work force –including young migrants-- are entitled to decent work. Coherent legislation and policy are essential. Key recommendations include:

• Ensuring national adoption and application to all migrants of labour standards and decent work conditions in line with International Labour Standards.

• Establishing or strengthening national labour migration policy frameworks based on international standards and good practices, integrating migration with labour and other policy in a whole of government approach.

• Enhancing implementation of legal and policy frameworks for free circulation of persons in regional economic communities.

• Ensuring application of non-discrimination and equality of treatment and opportunity in employment and training for all young migrants.

• Providing for labour inspection in the sectors and workplaces where migrants, including particularly youth and adolescents, are employed

• Obtaining specific data on migrant youth employment, including employment distribution and characteristics, working conditions, and educational attainment.
• Mainstreaming youth employment, with attention to migrants, into national development plans, poverty-reduction initiatives and Decent Work Country Programmes.

IN CONCLUSION

History tells us that migration has been an essential ingredient of growth and development of many countries, and entire regions, worldwide. And it will be essential to economic survival for a growing number of countries in the years to come. However, unless regulated by appropriate laws and policies, migration will entail high costs in violations of rights of persons, in social disruption, in reduced productivity, and in lost opportunities for development. Migration must be governed under the rule of law, with the involvement of key stakeholders, notably employers and worker unions as well as civil society. It must uphold equality of treatment and the full application of rights and protection for all workers present in the country.
NOTES

4 Ibid. Page 2
6 Demographic transitions refers to the generalized changes in population structure of a growing number of countries worldwide where declining fertility rates (the average number of children born to women) combined with increasing life expectancy, result in simultaneously declining and ageing populations. An early consequence of these demographic transitions is the simultaneous decline and constriction in workforce numbers and increasing age dependency rates as the population of retired people increases significantly in relation to the economically active population.
7 Trends in youth labour migration, ILO, Geneva, 2014. This report presents the global trends on youth labour migration and includes the outputs of four years research activity on youth migration and employment in ten pilot countries in all regions led by the ILO and supported by the Achievement Fund of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG-F) thematic window on youth employment and migration.
8 Recent figures for most EU countries and “immigration countries” mentioned are found in the OECD *International Migration Outlook: SOPEMI 2011* Statistical Annex.
16 Figures provided to author by an official of Qatar Foundation in an interview in Doha on 30 March, 2012.
20 This figure and following identification of countries are drawn from the on-line CIA World Factbook, Country Comparison: Total Fertility Rate(s) at [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2127rank.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2127rank.html)
22 Respectively, the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.
24 The ILO situation testing methodology has proven an enduring and adaptable tool for measurement of discrimination in labour markets. It has been applied under ILO supervision or by other actors in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA, and elsewhere, while reference has been made to it in many other testing studies since the mid-1990s. Access to employment is one of the few employment processes that can empirically be tested for discrimination. The basic approach is that pairs of testers who appear alike in all respects relevant to employment differing only in the one aspect relevant for discrimination apply simultaneously for job openings. The test result is the share of cases in which the ‘majority’ (native profile) tester was preferred somewhere.
in the process minus the share of cases in which the ‘minority’ (immigrant marker) tester was preferred. The difference in a statistically significant number of tests is the net discrimination rate. The results in Europe showed across the board that equally qualified immigrant candidates—or citizen descendants of immigrants—had to make 4 to 5 times more tries to land a positive outcome versus ‘national profile’ candidates despite identical credentials, schooling, language ability, experience and residential neighbourhoods.


27 Ian M. Cook, Hierarchies of Vulnerability: Country report United Kingdom; Labour migration and the systems of social protection, Multikulturní Centrum Praha, Czech Republic, 2011, page 4


29 Regional associations of states with established free movement protocols or similar regimes include the Andean Pact (4 member countries); CEMAC – Communauté économique et monétaire de l’Afrique centrale, (6 members); SICA – Sistema de Integración de Centroamérica/ Central America Integration System (8 members; 4 in the common borders Central America Four Union (CA4)); EAC – East African Community (5 members); ECCAS – Economic Community of Central African States (10 members); ECOVAS – Economic Community of West African States (15 members); EEC – Eurasian Economic Community (6 members); EU – European Union (28 members); MERCOSUR – South American Common Market (5 members & 7 Associated States); and SADC – South African Development Community (15 members). However, several of these regimes are not widely implemented due to lack of adherence by some community member States. ASEAN – Association of South East Asian Nations (10 full members); COMESA – Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (19 members); and IGAD – Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (8 members in the Horn of Africa and East Africa regions) are currently negotiating legal regimes for free or freer circulation of people among member countries.


31 Ibid, page 9

32 This sub-section drawn from contributions by the author to a monogram Labour inspection in Europe: undeclared work, migration, trafficking published by the International Labour Organization – Geneva, January 2010
MIGRATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND YOUTH: PERSPECTIVE FROM WEST AFRICA*

Chapter 7
The importance of a focus on youth has been increasingly acknowledged in major global, regional and national policy documents over the past decade, including a 2011 African Union Commission report and Millennium Development Goal No. 8, target 16, which calls on governments to: “develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth”. Nevertheless, research and policy design and implementation have lagged behind, especially in relation to migration, employment and job creation.

West Africa is one of the regions in the world experiencing greatest poverty, despite immense human and natural resources, with low subsistence earnings and subject to conflicts, instability and disease outbreaks. The region hosts some of the most disadvantaged, marginalised – and yet highly mobile – youth in the world. The declining standard of living is further constrained by a lack of available education, health care and other social services. In this context, developing productive human capital represents a major challenge.

A region as vast as West Africa cannot be considered economically or politically homogeneous, nor should West Africa’s youth population be seen as an undifferentiated mass. Thus steps to improve the integration of youth into labour markets cannot take a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach; rather, employment programmes “should specify which types of youth are being targeted, and youth themselves must be genuinely engaged as partners in all efforts to address the problem”.

This contribution highlights how by addressing local realities, policies can empower youth to stay at home, make existing practices safer for those on the move and empower youth to maximize their potential when seeking employment in local, regional or global markets.

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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND MIGRATION IN WEST AFRICA

Africa’s share of adolescents and youth aged 15-to-24 is about 205 million, and is projected to more than double by 2100, making it the region with the highest youth population. Already unemployment is higher among youth than other population groups; as this cohort ages and expands it will place greater pressure on the labour markets of struggling economies.

In West Africa young people tend to enter the labour market very early, bringing short-term revenue increases to poor families but creating long-term difficulties for their human capital, personal development formation and labour market integration. In addition, youth often face more difficult working conditions: they are more likely than adults to be in the informal, low-pay, low-productivity sector. They usually work longer hours, under insecure contracts and for lower incomes. Agriculture has historically been the largest employer of African youth; young people accounted for 65 per cent of agricultural employment in sub-Saharan Africa in 2005. Moreover, about 70 per cent of young people in Africa still live in rural areas where under-employment is the norm. Small-scale agriculture and traditional unpaid farm work dominate the rural employment scene, offering very little useful work experience for young people.

REGULATING MIGRATION, COORDINATING EFFORTS

Migration is seen by many young people as a way out of poverty; West African youth are not the exception and are amongst the most mobile people in Africa and the world. However, most migration originating in West African countries is to other countries in ECOWAS, the 15 member state Economic Community of West African States. In the context of international migration, West African countries have become countries of origin, transit and destination for migrants, including large number of adolescents and youth. The creation of ECOWAS in 1975 – with its goal of facilitating the free movement of people, capital and goods in the region – served to fuel existing trends. But this has taken place in the absence of national implementation of comprehensive migration governance schemes elaborated at the regional level, and with little consideration to integrating migrants into host countries.

Numerous initiatives and policy frameworks have emerged to address youth employment and migration – through ECOWAS, the African Union, individual countries
and UN-led efforts. This multiplicity of efforts requires more effective coordination among different actors within governments, as well as among major regional and international actors. The realisation of existing, quite comprehensive legal and policy frameworks requires first and foremost political will to enact and implement at national level in member States. As well, further development of effective policies depends heavily on better data-gathering, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives at all levels.

**INTRA-REGIONAL MIGRATION IS THE MOST COMMON FORM OF MIGRATION AMONG YOUTH**

The majority (88.4 per cent) of West Africans migrate within the region, mainly in search of educational or work opportunities. There is also significant trade and commercial migration across the region, often on a “circular” basis. The outcome is often disappointing. Lacking skills and networks, many young migrants remain unemployed; moreover, their presence in cities places pressure on already glutted labour markets, allowing employers to keep wages and benefits low. Female adolescents and young women have fared especially badly in this respect. “They are more likely to be underemployed or out of the labour force, to work more hours than males and to engage in non-market activities…. Young women have lower levels of school attainment and school enrolment... and [are] more likely to be stuck in low-productivity jobs.”

This situation points to the need for a more integrated and coherent approach by all government, international and civil society actors that focuses on education and training for rural youth, especially girls and young women. The aim should be to enable those who migrate, within or outside West Africa to achieve positive outcomes, as well as to create viable options for those who remain in rural areas.
Box 7.1. Overview: Migration and regional integration in Africa

Since the early years of independence in the 1960s, regional integration has been a stated priority for African governments, championed as a means to enhance competitiveness in global trading, prevent conflicts and consolidate economic and political reforms. From the 1960s to the 1980s, several regional economic community initiatives were established to promote technical and economic cooperation. These regional agreements generally sought to expand the growth of trade within the region by removing tariffs and non-tariff barriers, promoting trade and economic sectors, developing regional infrastructures and establishing large-scale manufacturing projects for strengthening regional development; promoting monetary cooperation, and removing barriers to the free movement of people and factors of production.

Migration in Africa is generally intra-regional due to several factors: As much as 80 per cent of migration originating in some regions goes to other countries in those regions. Each of the five geographical sub-regions (Western Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and Northern Africa) is a distinct entity in terms of culture, language, ethnic and tribal composition, economy, and environment and, most important, geographical proximity of countries to each other as well as greater or lesser proximity to Europe and the Middle East. These common characteristics are also distinctly related to the structure and composition of the region’s Economic Communities, such as ECOWAS in West Africa. These common characteristics define, to a large extent, the interregional patterns of migration. In West Africa for example, migration patterns are mostly from the Sahel countries towards the Atlantic coast. In southern Africa most of the migration flows are from neighboring countries (Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, etc.) towards the Republic of South Africa as well as to Angola, Botswana and Namibia.

Northern Africa contributes by far the highest percentage of emigrants from the continent, due primarily to its proximity to Europe, via four primary migration streams. The most dominant stream is towards Europe, beginning since the 1960s as labour migration from Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco to France, Spain and Belgium. Over time it has transitioned to family migration. The second stream is migration to countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council; the third from Sub-Saharan countries to Northern Africa. While formerly mostly in the form of transit to Europe, increasing proportions of Sub-Saharan migrants remain for longer periods of time, some relatively permanently, in Maghreb countries. Many of these migrants remain in undocumented situations. The fourth stream has been within the sub-region, mainly of Egyptians and Tunisians towards Libya, where recent crises have led to displacement of hundreds of thousands of people of various nationalities and large-scale return migration to Egypt and Tunisia as well as Sub-Saharan Africa and Asian and European countries.

Migration streams in Eastern and Central Africa are often depicted as a result of poor economic conditions, poverty, conflict and instability. They are also responses to skills and labour demand and supply factors among countries respectively in the East Africa Community and the Central African Economic and Monetary Communities, both of which have established legal regimes for free circulation of persons. International migration in these two sub-regions consists of mixed flows of labour and skilled migrants, undocumented migrants, refugees, internationally displaced persons, and victims of human trafficking. Migration externally from these two sub-regions is primarily to southern Africa, GCC countries, Europe and the U.S.

Continues on next page
Trade and commercial mobility – often circular by persons engaged in long term occupational activity – among different countries within sub-regions is also an important feature of migratory movement in Africa. In several sub-regions, West and Southern Africa in particular, significant numbers of people engage in permanent cross-border mobility buying, selling and trading goods and services among countries. Seasonal cross-border migration also occurs among some African countries.

Undocumented migration is an important feature of international migration in Africa. This reflects first and foremost data and administrative deficiencies, the predominant informality of work and labour markets, and, in many cases, the fact that ethnic lands, communities and families straddle colonially defined borders that divided ethnic territories. It has been observed that a considerable portion of migration and mobility between African countries within areas of free movement is undocumented, as a ‘natural’ consequence of freedom of movement. Regarding extra-regional movement, main routes for both regular and unauthorised migration are through Northern Africa to Europe and through the Red Sea to Yemen and the GCC countries. Apart from physical abuse, the land and sea trips are fraught with danger; many migrants have perished while crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Northern Africa and the Gulf of Eden from Eastern Africa. Also, it is often organised by smugglers who demand payment of between $500 and $1000 from each person. Usually, the unauthorised migrants are males between 15 and 40 years old. But increasingly women are participating, in desperate efforts to escape poverty and destitution. Within the continent undocumented migration is often linked to violation of human rights and xenophobia.

Source: Adapted from Economic Commission for Africa, submission to Thematic Report.

EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

While West Africa has a well-defined legal and policy formulation for free circulation and access to labour markets, no specific policies or measures address the important youth dimensions of mobility in the region. One-size-fits-all policies are unlikely to be effective due to the diversity of backgrounds, ethnicity, language, education levels, etc. of young migrants from different West African countries. Thus given the importance of education as a foundation for positive outcomes in the labour market, policies to increase employment must take into consideration differing attitudes or beliefs about education. In West Africa, children begin working early not only to bolster family income, but also because working as a child for one’s family is linked to West Africans’ understanding of responsibility, a way of ‘giving back’ to one’s parents, and is considered part of a child’s socialisation process. In poor families, children are
expected to contribute to payment of their school fees. However, “while boys tend to combine education with work, for girls work is often at the expense of schooling”. In this context, policies should aim to address poor families’ inability to pay school costs, especially for girls and, given continued gender gaps in education, devise more effective ways to close those gaps.

Policies should be developed to offer girls more opportunities to study, while recognising the reality that many of them may also engage in part-time employment, inside or outside their household. Flexibility for school entry or re-entry is critical. To encourage parents to send their children to school, educational curricula in rural schools need to be reviewed and revised to ensure the inclusion of practical skills that will help children and adolescents make the transition to employment. Curricula should reflect the shifting needs of the local labour market (agriculture, micro-enterprise) and include work-based training.

A best practice in the area of relevant training for transitioning into the workforce is Nigeria’s ‘National Open Apprenticeship Scheme’, targeted mainly to unemployed youth and those who left school, providing vocational training for a period of six-to-36 months. The scheme reports that 90 per cent of those trained found work. Apprenticeships can be an excellent way for young people to transition into the labour market, but experience has shown that host governments need to establish monitoring systems to ensure that young people are getting maximum benefit and not being exploited. To safeguard youth rights, policies should define guidelines for the

Box 7.2. Push factors and constraints for rural girls in Africa

Among the push factors motivating migration by female adolescents and young women are gender-related issues they confront, particularly in rural areas:
- Gender determines the type of work performed by girls
- Absence of formal or regulated employment options for girls and women
- 92 per cent of girl child labourers also perform household chores
- Girls’ work is often invisible and undervalued
- Girls are often not allowed to attend school, or face a dangerous commute
- Among girls’ chores are lengthy and dangerous walks to collect water and firewood.*

establishment of apprenticeships, vocational training and internships that are applicable in different socio-cultural contexts.

**MIGRATION AS OPPORTUNITY FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH**

Research over the past decade has shown that if the right conditions are in place, the migratory process can bring positive outcomes for communities of origin and destination as well as for migrants themselves. Migration is therefore not necessarily a negative trend to be prevented, since it can have a transformative effect on individuals and societies and significant impacts in terms of poverty reduction and economic development. Young migrants are an integral part of this process and have an important role to play in this regard.

Migration is not only a coping mechanism to escape unemployment and poverty, but can also represent an opportunity for young people to improve their status, learn new skills, increase their social and financial capital and thus better integrate and contribute to the economies of their communities of destination and origin. In addition, migration can bring a sense of pride and self-respect, helping adolescents make the transition to adulthood. Therefore, along with policies and programmes to ensure that young people are not compelled to migrate, steps are also needed to allow young migrants to truly benefit from their migration experience. This involves ensuring that they have access to education, training and decent work; that the full spectrum of migrants’ rights (including access to health care) are respected; and that migration management frameworks are in place.

**Education:** Adolescents and youth need education to obtain jobs, whether they remain at home or migrate. Education is an important motivation for both internal and international migration, but in West Africa neither ECOWAS nor its member States have yet fully addressed this side of facilitating mobility.

Regional bodies such as ECOWAS could help to promote student mobility and regional student exchange programmes as well as subsequent employment of graduates by facilitating harmonization and mutual recognition of academic and vocational training qualifications, better cross-country validation of diplomas and encouraging young professional exchange agreements to strengthen young migrants’ linguistic and professional knowledge and help them acquire salaried work experience in another
country. Such efforts will evidently require the commitment of member states educational and training institutions and accreditation bodies.

**Decent Work:** Governments, regional authorities and employers should explicitly promote decent work for older adolescents and youth. Doing so may entail strengthening national labour legislation in conformity with International Labour Standards, enhancing the function and reach of labour inspection, encouraging formalisation of employment and/or forms of regulation of informal work – always taking into account the context, conditions and constraints faced by countries concerned. At a minimum, national labour codes and social protection provisions need to explicitly cover non-nationals as well as citizens, and need to specify protection based on employment relationship rather than immigration status. In West Africa, the pursuit of recent initiatives towards harmonisation of labour codes and cooperation among social protection administrations would be highly desirable.

**Safe mobility:** West Africa’s Protocol on Free Movement guarantees citizens of ECOWAS member countries visa-free entry into Member States for 90 days, facilitating labour mobility within the region. An initial step to achieve such mobility in safe and decent conditions is to provide young people with better information about available employment and other opportunities, before and after departure. Such information is often lacking or difficult to access in West Africa. Legal recruiting systems should be made accessible and cheap for young migrants so that they do not resort to illegal or unsafe recruitment scams. Young migrants should also be informed of their rights and prepared ahead of their migration experience, for example through orientation and support for potential migrants, in accordance with employment opportunities. Similar services could also help returning migrants to reintegrate. Mechanisms are also needed, especially to protect women and children during migration flows and to combat human trafficking. Young migrants also need enhanced rights to residence and establishment. Particularly important for adolescents and youth would be the establishment of mechanisms by which they can maintain ties to family and friends in their country of origin. This can help to avoid social isolation and the disintegration of family structures, as well as to facilitate return migration.

**Labour-intensive investment:** Creation of jobs for a growing youthful population is fundamental to providing options for youth to remain at home, as well as for
employment in destination countries. Currently, job creation in most West African countries is little more than replacement rate for jobs lost, while the working age population continues to increase with entry of more young people every year. Governments, international development agencies, public and private investors and individual corporations and employers need to give priority to ‘job-intensive’ investments, development assistance, infrastructure and other development projects, and business initiatives.

**Entrepreneurship:** Much could be done to support or stimulate youth entrepreneurship in the context of migration. Young migrants or returnees can play an important role in job creation, whether in communities of origin or destination. Young people who have gained education or critical skills during migration could benefit from government or civil society assistance and support for plans to return home and start a business, providing jobs for others. Closer linkages between and among stakeholders can harness the potential of young people as human capital and agents of technology and skills transfer. However, entrepreneurship is not a panacea, and willingness to become self-employed is often linked to disappointments with wage labour. Policies are also needed to improve labour market conditions and the economic environment.

**Health services:** The ability of young African migrants to contribute to economic development also critically depends on their access to health services. All people have a right to needed health care, as recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Youth Charter. In Africa today, young people are vulnerable to malnutrition and debilitating illnesses and health problems including HIV and AIDS. Young migrants are amongst the most vulnerable. Poor health status can reduce labour supply and productivity and thus have a negative impact on economic growth. Moreover, individual earning capacity can be diminished, while medical expenses mount, pushing migrants further into poverty. Whatever their country of destination, young migrants should have access to health care and medical treatment.

**Social protection:** Mechanisms are also needed to provide all migrants, including especially women and children, with access to essential social protection and social security coverage, as detailed in the chapter on Social Protection. While ECOWAS recently adopted a regional Convention on Social Security that includes measures to extend and expand social security coverage of ECOWAS member nationals across the
region, it has yet to be enacted by member States. It can also be said that ECOWAS has not yet taken the lead to make integration a priority.\textsuperscript{16} Emphasis on national security approaches to migration, internal and cross border conflicts, and international pressures to strengthen borders may contribute to member State reluctance on migrant integration. Research is required to fill the knowledge gap on integration and social protection of migrants in West Africa and across the continent. More data and information would assist in monitoring compliance with national and regional requirements vis-à-vis young and other migrants.\textsuperscript{17}

Finally, it cannot be over-emphasised that the majority of youth employment initiatives, regardless of their source of support, fail to take young migrants into consideration. One important exception is the MDG Achievement Fund’s ‘Youth, Employment and Migration Programme’ (YEM), with the goal of contributing to achievement of MDG Target 16 (See Box 7.3). Along with measures to minimise the negative impact of migration on adolescents and youth, YEM focuses on migrant origin countries with a key objective of promoting measures to enhance the positive impact of migration (for example, by increasing the potential impact of migrant remittances through greater reliance on formal channels, reducing transfer costs, and identifying investment opportunities that can benefit whole communities, while creating jobs for youth). YEM also seeks to promote policies that encourage the voluntary return of young migrants, to bring financial and social capital, skills and know-how back to their countries of origin.\textsuperscript{18} As yet, no YEM programmes have been launched in West Africa. However, an important ILO project has supported the extension of social security to migrant workers in West Africa, with specific concern for youth.
Box 7.3. MDG Fund “Youth, Employment and Migration” Thematic Window

Launched in 2007, the MDG Achievement Fund’s 'Youth, Employment and Migration' (YEM) thematic window was conceived to work with governments to improve the policy coherence of interventions targeting at-risk population groups. Working through 15 Joint Programmes (in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Southeast Europe), 13 UN agencies collaborate to increase the prominence of youth employment and related social issues in national policy-making, and to support interventions that promote sustainable, productive employment and decent work for young people at the national or local levels through improved governance and management of youth migration flows.

- **Data to support policy:** Research, qualitative surveys, stakeholder consultations and advocacy all play an important part, along with working with national and local actors to strengthen their capacities to conceive, analyse and monitor the most relevant youth, labour market, social protection and migration indicators. In Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippines and Turkey, the availability of reliable data on the location and situation of young people and their movements within labour markets, has contributed to a more sharply targeted and responsive evidence-based policy environment.

- **Youth Participation:** In South Sudan, a youth consultation in November 2011 convened out-of-school youth and youth leaders from universities, secondary and vocational schools across South Sudan to learn what they consider to be the main barriers to education, training and employment, and to solicit their suggestions for viable solutions. The findings were forwarded to the technical team drafting the South Sudan Education Sector Strategic Plan. Similar efforts took place in Costa Rica.

- **Improved governance:** Practical information and life skills to prepare young people before going overseas is being institutionalized through National Employment Services and their local branches, One-Stop Shops, through information portals and the creation/dissemination of leaflets and manuals.

- **Reducing Risks:** Joint Programmes have collaborated to facilitate work placements and internship opportunities overseas, to reduce the risks involved in irregular migration. Through National Employment Services, local service providers and authorities and overseas missions, young people with relevant skills profiles and/or qualifications are provided with opportunities for employment and internships or apprenticeship in selected countries. Some countries are also assisting with the reintegration of young returnees into labour markets – through referral services, job placements, internships, entrepreneurship training or assistance with setting up small businesses.

- **Protecting Rights:** In China and Paraguay Joint Programmes addressed the rights of young workers, especially female workers, through new Codes of Conduct for employers, outreach and training to inform females of their labour rights (particularly domestic workers), as well as legal and psychological support programmes.

- **Vocational Training:** The need for a better match between vocational and technical training and job opportunities was identified in several participating countries. Surveys were a useful tool for improving this match-up and fine-tuning vocational courses. In the Philippines the results of assessments of the entrepreneurship potential and technical vocational skills of disadvantaged youth in four pilot provinces contributed to the improved technical vocational and entrepreneurship training.

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**KEY MESSAGES**

- The right policy environment can support alternative options to migration for youth, potentially allowing a choice of whether to migrate or not and making existing practices safer and more beneficial for those on the move.

- Specific legal, policy and practical measures need to focus specifically on the conditions and needs of youth and adolescents to improve their integration into labour markets. Tailored approaches rather than ‘one-size-fits-all’ are required because local realities and regional socio-cultural, geographic and economic factors are essential drivers of youth migration.

- Migration can also represent an opportunity for young people to improve their status, learn new skills, increase their social and financial capital and thus better integrate and contribute to the economies of their communities of destination and origin. In addition, migration can bring a sense of pride, self-respect, and help young people transition into adulthood.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Enhance the political will to implement existing international and ECOWAS legal frameworks and protection rules in West African countries

- Improve data-gathering, monitoring and evaluation, and increase coordination among initiatives to address youth employment and migration at the global, regional national and local levels.

- Focus policies on education and training for rural youth, especially girls and young women, and aim to create viable options for those who remain.

- Ensure that young people have better information about available employment and other opportunities, at home as well as before and after departure. Young people should have access to legal recruiting systems, health services and social protection, and their human and workers’ rights should be respected.
• Incorporate migration into national economic and social development policies and strategies, in particular those related to or targeting youth employment.

• Mainstream migration into international initiatives and programmes; programmes such as YEM should be rolled out in West Africa and other areas of intense youth migration, taking into account specific regional socio-cultural, geographic and economic factors.
NOTES

1 UN Office for West Africa (2005), "Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa", p. 11.
7 World Bank, op. cit.
11 See: http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org/inventory/view/453
18 http://www.mdgfund.org/content/youthemploymentandmigration
LABOUR, RURAL YOUTH AND MIGRATION*

Chapter 8
Migration from rural areas to cities and from one country to another can create opportunities for adolescents and youth (15-24 years of age), such as enhanced educational opportunities and skills development. But the reasons that motivate migration must be addressed, to ensure that migration is an option, not a necessity for youth, particularly young rural women and men, who often face particular disadvantages in relation to access to quality education and decent work opportunities. When rural adolescents and youth migrate due to a scarcity of decent livelihood opportunities, they frequently lack the education, networks and skills to compete for decent jobs in already saturated urban job markets. Policies that successfully improve learning and employment opportunities in rural areas are needed, along with efforts to ensure that those who choose to migrate are equipped with adequate skills and information to find work, whether in urban areas or abroad.

Migration is widely understood as a livelihood strategy allowing households to diversify their income sources, facilitate access to goods and services or invest in income-generating activities. However, migration is not always the preferred choice, since it involves a great deal of personal risk, sacrifice and uncertainty. If policy outcomes for labour, social protection, education and health were more favourable, many young women and men from rural areas might prefer to remain in place. Returning migrants might be more inclined to invest their human or financial capital in rural development. This, in turn, could contribute to a virtuous rural development cycle that, over time, could help reduce some of the push and pull factors that motivate adolescent and youth migration.

This chapter describes some of the challenges faced by youth that frequently constrain their ability to find decent jobs in rural areas, and ultimately influence their decisions about migration. It also points to opportunities, offering examples of good practices and pointing to policies and strategies that could promote decent work opportunities for rural youth and harness migration as a means to promote rural development. Although this chapter focuses mainly on solutions for rural youth, it should be noted that these same young people, lacking information and skills, are found not only in larger towns and cities, but in other countries to which they migrate in search of opportunities.


This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF*
Given that much international migration results in outcomes of working abroad, another important consideration is the age at which young people are allowed to work. The ILO Minimum Age Convention of 1973, ratified by 158 Member States, establishes that each State Party to the Convention must set a minimum age for admission to employment or work within its territory, and that the minimum age must not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling or less than 15 years of age. For Member States whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed, the Convention allows the minimum age for admission to employment or work to be initially set at 14 years. The Convention also establishes that the minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work that, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons, must not be less than 18 years.

CHALLENGES FACING RURAL ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

Some studies argue that unemployment is the principal driver of youth migration. Others stress the importance of both push factors at home – scarce employment and educational opportunities, the need to support family members, etc. – and pull factors in destination countries that include growing demand for foreign labour and skills and recruitment to attract migrant workers. These capture young peoples’ aspirations for well-being and access to remunerative employment. Studies in Bolivia, Cambodia, Central America and Nepal found that deprived adolescent girls and boys view migration as the most viable survival strategy.

Among the key problems facing young people and influencing their decision to migrate are:

- **Lack of decent rural employment opportunities**: Today, more than 75 million youth are without employment, up by 4 million since 2007. In the rural context, underemployment, poor working conditions and the prevalence of working poverty among young people represent disincentives for rural youth to continue to live and work in their local communities.

- **Limited access to credit, resources and markets**: Young people frequently lack the skills, experience, access to assets, social networks and decision-making processes needed to create decent livelihood opportunities for themselves. The situation is often worse
for young women migrants, who are often concentrated in low-paying, unregulated “female” occupations (such as domestic service and nursing) and face additional gender-related barriers, such as heavy unpaid work burdens and discriminatory attitudes and practices. Many rural areas lack the viable road connections and processing and storage facilities needed to collect, process and transport rural produce –particularly perishable foodstuffs, to markets. Credit facilities are also often inadequate or absent in rural areas.

- **Lack of appeal of traditional agricultural work:** Although agriculture is still the main source of employment in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (see Table 1), anecdotal evidence suggests that young people see agricultural work as an option of last resort⁴. It is thus not surprising that many youth leave to seek work elsewhere, even when they lack relevant skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tr>
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Source: ILO, “Key indicators of the labour market” Geneva, September 2009

- **Lack of information and skills to adapt to urban areas:** Deficiencies in rural education are well documented⁵. Irrelevant curricula, scarcity of qualified teachers in rural areas, gender gaps in participation, gender-biased curricula and learning environments⁶, prohibitive costs and lack of appropriate facilities and learning
materials all undermine the opportunities of rural youth to gain the education they need to compete in the labour market. In addition, when they migrate young people usually lack support networks, and are unprepared to overcome the risks to personal health and safety that exist in large cities or foreign countries; this is especially true for female adolescents and young women.

**Box 8.1. Reflections of a young migrant from Mexico**

As Marisela grew up in a small town outside of Mexico City, she became convinced of three things: there was no future for her in her small village, she needed to help sustain her family, and the sacrifice of leaving her family behind would allow her to resolve these challenges.

“I believed that going north would allow me to develop personally by taking advantage of the vast availability of jobs which would help me to assist my family. The first rude awakening was the assault and robbery on our group as we crossed the border. My fright moved me into a reality where I continued to discover that migration to another country was not going to be the easy path that I had thought.”

One of Marisela’s first barriers was language; as a girl she had limited schooling. She had the advantage of living with her sister and brother-in-law after arriving in New York, but each attempt to get a job, travel to work, or obtain social services – especially health services – was stymied by communication issues. In addition, she was young, she was a woman, and she did not have papers. The struggle was constant and at times, overwhelming. Five years later Marisela was trying to supplement her husband’s income by cleaning houses.


- **Lack of representation in decision-making processes:** Social structures in rural areas tend to be hierarchical. Youth lack economic independence and personal autonomy, are generally marginalised from decision-making processes and have less access to information. Barriers for young women, both in relation to participation and to obtaining land, good-paying jobs and advancement constitute important ‘push factors’ for female migration.

- **Re-integration into rural areas after migration:** While some young migrants return to their country of origin due to their inability to earn a living elsewhere, others return with new skills or financial capital, both of which could be valuable assets in support of rural development. Yet few initiatives (financial services, training programmes, networking opportunities) are in place to help these young people put their assets to work.
CHALLENGES FOR POLICY MAKERS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNERS

The overall challenge is to make migration an option that can be weighed against the pursuit of viable agricultural and rural livelihood possibilities. The continued scarcity of high-quality data on both the impact of migration on young people and rural youth employment, disaggregated by gender, locality and age, makes it difficult to incorporate these issues into development policies and programmes. Moreover, limited data on rural youth employment do not adequately reflect labour market conditions. Without access to such data, development planning will continue to be gender and youth “blind” and will not reflect the local challenges that young people face. This information gap must be bridged if well-informed policy measures are to be designed to respond to the issue of rural youth migration. The focus should be on crafting policies that:

- Protect young people from abuse and exploitation during the migration process
- Facilitate their integration into host countries
- Create better opportunities in rural areas, so that migration is not the only option for a better life.

OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE MIGRATION AN INFORMED CHOICE

**Education and training:** Enhanced education and training could create new livelihood opportunities for rural youth, reducing the need for them to migrate and enabling better management of the flow. Equipping them with practical skills, such as business and marketing know-how, as well as specific knowledge about rural activities – such as modern, climate-smart agriculture – could boost their opportunities to find employment or launch a micro-enterprise.

Extensive investment in training of young women and men and the creation of linkages between training programmes and rural farm and non-farm businesses could expand the range of options available to young rural people and ensure that their choices are not limited to migration.
Rural education and training programmes need to be gender-sensitive at all levels, ensuring the inclusion of young women, developing course curricula that take into account the different needs of women and men and systematically including gender-related issues in the training. Young migrant women are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation. Giving them adequate training and making them aware of the risks involved can reduce their vulnerability.

**Social rights:** Employment generation and training alone do not fulfil all conditions of the decent work agenda, which also includes labour rights, social security and social dialogue. Targeted initiatives to improve the quality of rural employment – such as monitoring and regulation of working conditions, implementation of innovative social protection mechanisms and facilitating the organisation of young rural workers to enable their participation in decision-making processes – are all important aspects of this process.

**Participation:** Farmers’ organisations and cooperatives should promote and facilitate the participation of young people in governance structures, giving them space to make their issues and concerns heard and become actively involved in defending their social, political and economic rights. Rural and farmers’ organisations could establish minimum quotas for youth participation on their directing boards and in their statutes, to actively and meaningfully involve young people in decision-making processes.

**ATTRACTING YOUTH TO RURAL AREAS: THE DECENT WORK APPROACH**

Decent rural employment is a key aspect of expanding opportunities for rural adolescents and youth. It enables potential young migrants to remain in their rural communities, and also provide those who have migrated with the option of returning. The approach calls for collaboration among national governments, development partners and the private sector to build capacities of rural youth and provide them with the resources, skills and technologies they need. Rural infrastructure, financial institutions, market information and linkages are essential ingredients for rural transformation.
‘Decent work’ is defined as productive work undertaken in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The decent work approach is based on four pillars:

1. Employment creation and enterprise development
2. Working conditions and social protection
3. Rights at work
4. Workers’ and employers’ organisation and social dialogue.

A decent work approach to rural youth employment promotes integrated interventions to increase productivity in agriculture through investments in economic and social infrastructure, as well as boosting the number of employment opportunities in on-farm and off-farm activities while improving occupational safety and health, social security and working conditions in general.

Promoting decent work prospects for rural adolescents and youth is becoming a priority in many countries, incorporated in national development frameworks. Several countries are developing and implementing programmes that target youth employment, or a particular group of disadvantaged young people, while others make young workers the beneficiaries of overall employment programmes. This approach has the potential to help manage youth migration and move toward a situation in which the decision to migrate is a choice made between viable alternatives, rather than one borne of necessity. Unfortunately, however, to date there has still been insufficient attention to the need to promote decent work for youth rural people in the context of these approaches.
Similar opportunities for decent employment can be created through investment in training of young women and men, and building local support networks comprised of local entrepreneurs to serve as mentors to young workers. These entrepreneurs would need training on how to integrate Decent Work approaches in their enterprises. IFAD supported the PROSPERER programme (Box 3), which offers an instructive example.

**Box 8.2. IFAD-ILO Decent work programme**

In 2011 a study undertaken by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the ILO reviewed 18 rural employment-generation programmes worldwide and studied in-depth five IFAD co-financed projects (Egypt, Madagascar, Nepal, Nicaragua and Senegal) in terms of the four pillars of decent work. The study demonstrated the relevance of the decent work approach for supporting improvements in young peoples’ living conditions in rural areas.

Where the Decent Work approach was adopted, some 45 per cent of respondents reported improved employment situations in rural areas. Producers and entrepreneurs also had positive views on mainstreaming of Decent Work approaches, claiming an increase in productivity as a consequence of better working conditions for employees. Approximately 43 per cent of youth believed that training opportunities had improved. One of the most important findings was that 44 per cent of youth considered that they would be more capable of finding better rural employment opportunities.

This was especially true in the cases of Madagascar, Nicaragua and Senegal. In Senegal and Madagascar the success was mainly due to extensive investment in training of young women and men, and the build-up of local support networks of micro- and small-scale entrepreneurs who could offer mentorship and guidance to young workers. The entrepreneurs in Senegal were themselves trained on how to integrate Decent Work approaches in their enterprises, and most agreed that this had led to increased productivity. In Nicaragua and Madagascar an enabling policy environment complemented efforts to promote decent work opportunities for rural young women and men. Nicaragua’s producers’ cooperatives were involved in promoting decent work for rural youth, a strategy that produced successful results.

However, the study also indicated that employment generation and training alone do not fulfil other conditions of the Decent Work agenda, such as labour rights, social security and social dialogue. On these fronts the results were not as encouraging; rural employment policy frameworks in the five countries demonstrated little attention towards promotion of social security, labour rights or social dialogue, except for Nicaragua, where employment generation programmes for youth included social security provisions and social dialogue components.
Important motivations compelling rural outmigration are: lack of decent rural employment opportunities, limited or non-existant access to credit, resources and markets, and lack of appeal and viability of traditional agricultural work.

Young people who migrate from rural areas are often disadvantaged by the poor quality of their education and lack of training in skills applicable in non-farm labour markets. If rural schools provided young people with life skills and the tools to make informed decisions about their future, they would be better prepared both to migrate and to work in rural or urban settings, at home or abroad.

Decent rural employment is a key aspect of enabling potential young migrants to remain in their rural communities, and providing those who migrated with an option of returning.

Innovative, forward-looking rural development policies with a decent work approach can result in incentives for young people to remain in place or return to their country of origin, contributing to national agricultural and other development goals.

**Box 8.3. Facilitating micro-enterprise development for rural youth in Madagascar**

A successful example is the IFAD-funded project in Madagascar, known as PROSPERER, which helps young farmers to develop micro-enterprises to improve their income through training and apprenticeships, in conjunction with increased access to technology and financial services. As many as 50,000 new jobs are to be created under this programme. With increased investments, education and training, young people will have better potential for earning a decent living in their communities, in urban areas or when migrating abroad.
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Gather gender- and age-disaggregated data and information about rural youth migration and employment, including data on education, credit, and rural infrastructure conditions and needs, and use the resulting evidence to systematically include youth migration issues into broader development plans and policies.

- Agricultural and rural development initiatives should contain components targeting rural youth and promoting youth-sensitive employment generation.

- Mainstream gender-sensitive ‘decent rural work’ into rural development policies and programmes.

- Improve the relevance and quality of rural education, particularly for skills employable locally and abroad as well as appropriate technology and productivity enhancement, and create linkages between rural education and training programmes and rural businesses.

- Establish or expand monitoring and regulation of working conditions, implementation of innovative social protection mechanisms and facilitating organising of young rural workers and of rural cooperatives.

- Ensure that financial institutions target and provide windows of credit accessible to rural youth, particularly returning migrants, and foster partnerships among governments and NGOs to promote financial literacy and access.

- Enhance rural development policies, planning and investment to improve infrastructure and access to viable markets for rural produce, upgrade agricultural productivity, apply appropriate technology, and extend rural education and vocational training.
NOTES

5 See, for example, P.S. Bennell (1999), “Learning to change: skills development among the economically vulnerable and socially excluded in developing countries,” Rural Poverty report 2011, Geneva; ILO and IFAD.
6 Specific problems that affect the schooling of girls and young women include: the lack of adequate sanitary services (private toilets and sanitary products) in rural schools, the road to school may be long and dangerous, traditional culture may favour boys’ education and in many rural areas early marriage forces girls to drop out of school.
7 FAO (2010), Rural Youth Employment in Developing Countries: A Global View.
8 World Bank (2009), Africa Development Indicators: Youth and employment in Africa, the potential, the problem, the promise, Washington D.C.
9 See, for example, C. Coenjaerts, et. al. (2009), Youth Employment: Promoting Pro-Poor Growth, OECD. Available at: http://www.oecd.org/development/povertyreduction/43280359.pdf.
REMITTANCES, DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH *

Chapter 9
Many of today’s migrant youth regularly send remittances home to relatives and friends. Remittances generally represent a portion of migrants’ private earnings or income sent to support family in origin communities. If the right public policies are implemented, remittances can play an important role in poverty-reduction and be used to build productive capacities for longer-term impacts. The central question is how to best harness remittances for inclusive, sustainable development and create opportunities for youth?

REMITTANCES FACTS

World Bank data indicate that global remittance flows reached US$501 billion in 2011 and are expected to increase to US$615 billion by 2014. Remittances to developing countries were US$372 billion in 2011, an increase of 12 per cent over 2010, and are expected to reach US$467 billion by 2014. China and India topped the list of largest remittance receiving countries, followed by Mexico and the Philippines.

Table 9.1. Remittances to Developing Countries, 2008-2014

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Growth rate (%)

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*Prepared by Mina Mashayekhi and Sophia Twarog at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); it summarizes submissions by UNCTAD on the basis of the publication Maximizing the development impact of remittances (UNCTAD/DITC/TNCD/2011/8) and by P. Deshingkar, A. Castaldo and F. Jena, of the University of Sussex.

This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF"
Remittances are a small part of migrants' incomes, and migrants continue to send remittances when hit by income shocks. Survey data suggests that young migrants normally send back less money than older migrants, in part because of their limited incorporation into the labour market due to language barriers, lack of work permits and discrimination, and in part because they often obtain only precarious jobs with low pay. Migrant youth comprise a higher percentage of the undocumented, 'unbanked' and poor. In addition, a higher percentage of youth migrate for non-economic reasons, such as education, marriage, family reunification or refuge. Yet all studies confirm that young migrants do remit money and their remittances do make a difference to their source families in small but significant ways.

Female migrants are more likely to send a higher percentage of their earnings as remittances, with the aim of meeting basic family needs at home, such as food, health care and education for children and youth. Two studies in Thailand, for example, found that although both sons and daughters from poor villages migrated, daughters were more likely to remit wages. Thus measures targeted to support young female migrants will generally have a greater poverty-reduction and higher multi-generational impact.

**IMPACT OF REMITTANCES**

The direct poverty-reduction impact of remittances is undisputed, however, remittances are not a panacea for countries' development problems. Sound public policies promoting private-public partnerships to maximize remittances' positive development and poverty-reduction impacts are a necessary condition. In many rural areas, remittances may be the sole source of income sustaining whole branches of a family tree. For the very poor, remittances are used first to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, health and, funds permitting, education. Remittances have a positive impact on Millennium Development Goals in these communities. A study of 77 developing countries estimated that a 10 per cent rise in remittances led to a 3.1 per cent reduction in the percentage of the population living on less than $1.25 a day.

Data gathered by the World Bank's 'Africa Migration Surveys' confirm that young migrants are more likely to migrate internally than those over 25, and that while younger migrants remitted smaller amounts, these remittances play an important role in financing food in most African countries surveyed, and education in a few. Thus
these remittances are likely to improve family members’ long-term development prospects.

In rural areas remittances boost consumption by the poor, allowing them to purchase food, generally from local farmers, which in turn gives a boost to the local agriculture sector, enhancing employment and creating a virtuous circle. Remittances can boost local sustainable development, particularly when a portion is invested in building sustainable productive capacities based on the five types of capital: human, social, physical, financial and natural. Remittances should be integrated into overall development strategies, channelling funds into productive sectors with greatest economic, social and environmental pay off, including organic agriculture and renewable energy. Food, education and health – the main uses of youth remittances – build human capital.

While migration and remittances are not a substitute for domestic-driven development, if thoughtfully utilised they can play an important supportive role, particularly for impoverished families and communities.

**Transaction Costs: A Major Obstacle**

Transaction costs associated with sending remittances from one country to another are often high, and proportionately more costly for those sending less money, such as youth, women, undocumented migrants and nationals of less-developed countries (LDCs) with less-sophisticated financial sectors. Figure 1 provides an idea of comparative costs in different regions. UNCTAD has long pointed to high remittance costs as an unnecessary constraint to maximizing remittances’ contribution to sustainable development. In some countries, particularly LDCs, very high transaction costs divert up to 20-to-30 per cent of the amount paid in by the sender away from direct poverty reduction and potential investment in social, human, natural, financial and infrastructural capital. These high costs significantly reduce the pay-out to recipient households and limit the amount left for investing in productive capacities and other activities to improve the quality of life.⁴
The figure reveals that the Middle East and North Africa region has the highest remittance costs (19%), with sub-Saharan Africa close behind at 16.6 per cent. Intra-African transfers are particularly expensive. Transferring $200 from South Africa to Zambia, Malawi and Botswana or from Tanzania to Rwanda are among the costliest (in percentage terms) in the world (over USD42 for $200, 21%). However better conditions for sending remittances are emerging elsewhere, such as the Gulf countries, which have particularly large migrant populations; the emerging financial hub of Singapore; Australia and the Philippines. From Australia a remittance can be received in the Philippines within one hour for as little as 4 per cent. These countries have incentives for an orderly flow of workers; Singapore, for example, has an economic cooperation agreement with India that attracts many young Indian migrants.

**Mobile Money**

Young people tend to be at a disadvantage in relation to financial services and systems. Globally, about half of all adults (55 per cent of males; 46 per cent of females) have accounts at formal financial institutions. The percentage is sharply lower for youth aged 15-24: just 38 per cent. More than three-quarters of the world’s poor are
“unbanked,” and again, young people are over-represented among those lacking financial services.\(^6\)

However, youth hold the advantage when it comes to familiarity with new technology tools that, combined with recent information and communication technology (ICT) advancements, offer a new way to improve adolescents and migrant youth’s access to financial services. Increasing use of mobile phones for financial services can reach never-before adequately served populations, particularly in rural areas.

Developing countries are more likely to have higher percentages of households with mobile phones than landlines. The decade 2000-2010 witnessed an explosion in mobile telephone signal coverage. In LDCs, coverage rose from less than 20 per cent to nearly 70 per cent of the population.\(^7\) Youth are particularly keen on having mobile phones and Internet access, and more likely than their elders to be tech savvy. Thus facilitating mobile banking systems could be of particular benefit to young migrants.

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**Box 9.1. Mobile Money in East Africa**

Mobile banking through mobile phones is opening affordable access to financial services to millions.\(^1\) East Africa leads the way with its M-PESA system, functioning through the mobile carrier Safaricom, which reaches 67 per cent of Kenyans, as well as 25 per cent of Ugandans and 20 per cent of Tanzanians – compared to a global rate of 3 per cent for similar services. M-PESA has a rapidly growing customer base transferring some 700 million USD per month, linked with 700 ATMs and 25 banks, and supported by over 37,000 agents.

Currently the most developed mobile payment\(^1\) system in the developing world, M-PESA (Swahili for money) allows users with a national ID card or passport canto deposit, withdraw and transfer money easily with a mobile device. The Central Bank of Kenya attributes a 50 per cent jump in remittances in 2011 to reduced costs for remittance payments via M-PESA. M-PESA is now connecting internationally and signed a partnership agreement with Western Union in October 2011 allowing international migrants to send money from Western Union offices worldwide to M-PESA users, in combination with a 2011 agreement with Western Union.

Kenya’s good telecommunications infrastructure and higher-than-the-African-norm financial sector development have helped M-PESA to flourish.

*Source: UNCTAD 2012*
Financial Inclusion

Data on remittance channels used by different age groups in Africa reveal that, with the exception of Kenya, most young migrants send remittances through informal channels (couriers, personal delivery or friends or relatives). Informal channels can be more risky and expensive than formal channels but they may be the only option for young, poor and poorly educated migrants who cannot access formal banking systems (due to illiteracy, undocumented status, etc.). There is a need to create more youth-friendly remittance mechanisms.

Box 9.2. Ghana’s Head Porters

A case in point is young female migrants in Accra and other large cities in Ghana who become kayayei, or head porters. Their daily earnings tend to be quite low (US$2 on a good day), but many are able to send small amounts home, for family use and to save for their wedding contribution. Many kayayei participate in collective, informal saving and credit schemes as their earnings are too meagre and erratic to deposit in a bank, and they lack the documents and connections required to access the formal banking system. However, the girls report frequent robberies, diminishing their ability to remit and save.

Clearly there is a need to provide safer saving facilities for these young girls and other youth unable to participate in formal financial systems. Young migrants and households receiving remittances need access to a full range of financial services—advice, remittance transfers, savings, credit and investment—before, during and after migration. They also need easy-to-access, reliable information about those services. Comparison-shopping should be facilitated, for example though websites with price comparisons for different destination countries and remittance sums. This is already being successfully done in some countries. Mexico’s Consumer Protection Bureau (PROFECO) offers a detailed who-is-who analysis of 28 remittance companies analyzing prices and costs of sending money from nine cities in the United States to Mexico, helping consumers pick the cheapest and most convenient service. The World Bank also maintains a Remittance Prices Worldwide database/website.

It makes good business sense for financial intermediaries such as banks to offer loans on favourable terms to young migrants (perhaps upon verification of an employment offer) and to sign a contract stipulating that a certain percentage of the income will be used for monthly repayment installments into a bank account in the migrant’s name.
One or more additional accounts for remittance recipients can be registered or set up at the bank at the same time. The migrant could thus send one large payment a month to his/her own savings account. From her/his account, funds can be transferred for loan repayment, assistance to relatives, local costs, investments in real estate or businesses and savings for the future.

**Promoting Regular Youth Migration**

Sending and receiving countries can cooperate to facilitate orderly, regular youth migration, including temporary and circular migration, to help meet labour supply needs in receiving countries and build capacity in sending countries, especially among youth migrants.

UNCTAD research finds that *temporary and circular migration carries the greatest development benefits*. The young migrant goes for a specific period of time, with reasonable paperwork requirements. The returning migrant brings back new knowledge, skills, networks, purchases and savings. Post-migration support programmes in the home country help the returnee to make best use of these. Giving returnees priority consideration for future opportunities and for return to the country of temporary employment can increased their incentive to return home at the end of the agreed upon period of time. An effective, smoothly functioning formal circular migration channel yields long term sustainable development benefits for host and home countries and also discourages informal migration. The more accessible and functional the formal channel, the lower the incentive to use informal channels for both migration and remittances. Public policies must be in place to complement return migrant’s potential investments upon their return. Access to credit markets, training and technology transfer applications are just some of the policies in which governments and the private sector can play a role in maximizing migrants' human and financial capital.\(^{10}\)

Some achievements in this area have been reached through regional and bilateral accords. For example, there is free movement of natural persons among the five East African Community member states and among ASEAN countries. The United States offers H1B visas for temporary employment of skilled workers. Countries hosting foreign students could allow them to work for one year after they finish their studies, which would particularly benefit young migrants.
Benefits to youth migrants, sending countries and host countries could be enhanced by analysis and strategic planning. To maximize the contribution of youth migration and remittances, governments should give support to young migrants before, during and after migration. Pre-departure programmes could include information and services such as:

- Assistance with employment opportunities and contracts, visa and work permit issues, housing and transport information
- Loans attached to a savings account for the initial costs the migrant has to pay, moving costs and, often, high recruitment fees. (One study found that Bangladeshi workers in a Gulf country paid recruitment fees equal in value to some two years of their expected salaries).
- Regulating recruitment fees. (One study found that Bangladeshi workers in a Gulf country paid recruitment fees equal in value to some two years of their expected salaries).

Post-migration programmes might include information on employment options at home, assistance with preparing a resume or a business plan, development of placement programmes and a central employment website, entrepreneurship training, and making it simple to obtain a loan for resettlement or establishing a new business. The Philippines offers a reintegration programme, including entrepreneurship training and access to credit. SENAMI heads the Ecuadorian government’s migration return programme; a migrant bank is also in the works.11

**KEY MESSAGES**

- Remittances are intrinsically linked with migration and are playing an ever-stronger role in the economies of many developing countries. Remittances, however, are not a panacea; they must be integrated into overall migration management policy and national development strategy; the particular strengths and obstacles related to youth and female migrants should be taken into consideration when managing migration and remittances.

- It has been estimated that a 5 per cent reduction in remittance costs could yield $16 billion in savings. Action is needed to foster appropriate and development-friendly
dialogue, linkages and competition among financial, governmental, regulatory, microfinance, social entrepreneurs, businesses, banks, post offices, money transfer organizations and international agencies.

- Remittances by young and female migrants can have a significant impact on poverty reduction, in the short term, and economic development, in the long term. Thus measures to make remittance transactions more affordable and accessible to all – that is, steps to reduce transaction fees and increase financial inclusion – should focus especially on these populations. The promotion of ICTs to send and receive money, especially in LDCs, constitutes a first step towards increasing remittances' development impacts. There is also a need for wider recognition of qualifications - to permit young migrants to obtain jobs and remuneration commensurate with their skills and education.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Reduce remittance costs, for which the heaviest burden falls upon the poorest. Expand access to and ensure interoperability of remittance transfer services, and promote financial inclusiveness. Partnerships could involve financial, microfinance, and money transfer organizations like private remittance companies, the postal union and telecom operators. Policy-makers can discuss best regulatory practices, taking lessons from East Africa with support from UNCTAD and other international agencies. As each country has its own unique characteristics, policy and regulatory frameworks can be tailored for "best fit".

- Improve remittance flows by: (i) reducing transaction costs; (ii) ensuring safety and security; (iii) offering financial advice and products such as savings and credit to remittance senders and recipients; (iv) providing accessible and affordable transfer channels; (iv) eliminating transaction taxes; (vi) improving transparency, information and competition in the money transfer markets; and (viii) offering innovative products. The postal network could be an important modality in rural areas, especially where other financial services providers are absent.

- Enhance youth migrant remittance possibilities through better access to decent employment by (i) discouraging labour market discrimination, (ii) enforcing minimum
labour standards and labour contracts, (iii) ensuring migrant workers are paid for work done, and (iv) recognizing acquired educational and skill qualifications.

- Facilitate the orderly flow of migrants with pre- and post-migration support programmes. Temporary movement and circular migration, which have particular developmental benefits for youth, could be liberalised at the international, regional, bilateral and unilateral levels. Young migrants can be motivated to return home by public policies complementing their investment potential upon their return, such as access to credit markets, training and skills development, and low-interest rate loans to help cover the costs of migration and resettlement. Liberalization and regulatory cooperation can take place at internationally, regionally, bilaterally or even unilaterally (e.g. the Singapore economic cooperation agreement).

- Develop capacities in affordable and accessible supportive services—finance, telecom, energy, and ICT. This may involve careful opening of key service sectors with large development dividends. These include provision of finance, (remittance transfer, savings, investment and credit), telecommunications, mobile money, infrastructure, transportation and energy services. Competition policy across all sectors is important, as is allowing for links across sectors, as we see with M-PESA linking banking with mobile phones.
NOTES

8 See: http://www.profeco.gob.mx/envio/envio.asp
9 See: http://www.remittanceprices.worldbank.org
10 UNCTAD (2012a), op. Cit.
PROMOTING THE SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION OF CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS IN OECD COUNTRIES*

Chapter 10
A major transition for young people is the shift from a state of economic dependence to becoming economically productive. The transition from school to work is the marker highlighting this change. Young people's medium- and long-term labour market outcomes are significantly affected by their levels of schooling. Young people with secondary or tertiary education, for instance, are increasingly advantaged in the labour market relative to their less educated peers in terms of earnings, job stability and upward mobility. School-to-work transitions differ across countries and are affected in different and important ways by global demographic, social, political and economic transformations.

This chapter focuses on the school-to-work experience of children of immigrants aged 20-to-29 in the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These children are of growing relevance to policy makers in many countries, since they are entering their labour markets in increasing numbers. In many European countries, children of immigrants – boys and girls alike – tend to have lower educational achievement than children of non-immigrant parents, as well as poorer labour-market outcomes. In general, the risk of being marginalised in the labour market is higher for female children of immigrants than for their male counterparts. Concern is most acute in relation to children whose immigrant parents are poorly educated.

Encouraging the successful integration of children of immigrants into the education systems and labour markets of more-developed countries is a win-win proposition: It provides jobs for those seeking to earn their way for the first time and fills a need for labour among the aging populations of more developed countries. Such integration is closely linked to the education level of immigrant parents and their socioeconomic status. Any policy intervention that attempts to improve children's access to schooling and prospects for a successful school-to-work transition must start with their parents' integration into the labour market, through training and other measures that promote access to employment.

*Prepared by Thomas Liebig and Sarah Widmaier, OECD Secretariat. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the OECD. This chapter builds on an earlier paper written by the authors (Liebig, T. and S. Widmaier (2009), "Children of Immigrants in the Labour Markets of EU and OECD Countries: An Overview", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 97, OECD Publishing. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/220823724345]).

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Early childhood education and care starting at the pivotal age of three is another important factor, especially because it increases exposure to a host country’s primary language.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Children of immigrants represent a significant share of the future labour force. In about half of all OECD countries, children of immigrants account for 10 per cent or more of the 20-to-29-year-old age group. They thus represent a significant portion of countries’ future workforce. This group includes both children born in the host country of immigrant parents (the so-called ‘second generation’) and those who emigrated with their parents to the host country before the age of 18 (the ‘1.5 generation’). This group of youth (including both ‘generations’) is largest in Luxembourg and Switzerland, representing 40 per cent and 27 per cent, respectively, of all 20-to-29-year-olds in those countries. In other European OECD countries studied, as well as Canada and the United States, the share is between 11 and 19 per cent (see Figure 10.1).

Fig 10.1. Percentage of the population aged 20 to 29 who are not in school and are the children of immigrants, selected OECD countries, c. 2007

Note: OECD refers to the average of all countries for which full data are available. Figures for children of immigrants who migrated with their parents are not available for Australia and Denmark. Figures for children of immigrants born in the host country are not available for New Zealand and Spain. For a detailed description of variables, see: Liebig and Widmaier (2010), Methodological Annex.

In seven out of 12 OECD countries for which data are available, the 1.5 generation is larger than the group of second generation in the 20-to-29-year age bracket. This is the case in the Nordic countries, Switzerland, Austria, Germany and the United States, reflecting large migrant inflows into these countries during the second half of the 1980s and the 1990s. In contrast, the second-generation population is larger in Canada, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom.

Comparing the situation of the children of immigrants across OECD countries is not a straightforward exercise. Their situation in different countries reflects the diversity of immigrant populations themselves. This diversity is reflected in the education and labour-market outcomes of children of immigrants, which are strongly correlated with those of their parents (Box 10.1).

**Box 10.1. Young migrants and their parents represent a diverse array of nationalities**

Immigrant parents come from a wide range of countries, reflecting the history of migration to OECD member states after World War II. In Austria, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States, 90 per cent or more of the parents of second-generation children aged 20-to-29 come from lower-income countries; only in Switzerland and Luxembourg do parents from lower-income countries constitute a clear minority (32 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively) among this group (Figure 1).

During the era of ‘guest worker recruitment’ in European OECD countries, Turkey was a main source of migrant workers. More than one-third of the children of immigrants who were born in the host countries of Austria, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands had parents from Turkey. In all European OECD countries for which data are available, Turkey is one of the three main countries of origin for parents of these children. Morocco ranks second, accounting for at least 20 per cent of such parents in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. Pakistan is the main country of origin of parents of second-generation children aged 20-to-29 in Norway, and the second most important country of origin in the United Kingdom (after India).

Among foreign-born children, parental country of origin tends to be more diverse. In most OECD countries, a large majority of young immigrants were born in lower-income countries, reflecting the shift in migration flows from these countries over the past two decades. A substantial portion of young immigrants came from successor countries of the former Yugoslavia, reflecting the large humanitarian flows following conflicts in the region. In Austria and Switzerland, young people from the former Yugoslavia account for almost half of all children of immigrants.

The age structure of children of immigrants differs in OECD countries. In those with a long history of immigration, they are represented in all age groups, although often over-represented among younger cohorts. In countries with a shorter history of immigration, such as the southern European OECD countries, children of immigrants are only now starting to enter the labour market in large numbers, at a time where labour-market conditions have become very difficult for all new entrants.
Educational outcomes are influenced by parents' education and status. Parental levels of education and socio-economic status appear to have a strong influence on their children’s educational achievement. The OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), rates students' knowledge and skills in mathematics, science, reading and cross-curricular competencies at age 15 – that is, towards the end of compulsory education. The results show strong links between the skills level of immigrants and the educational attainment of migrant offspring. In OECD countries that have allowed access to immigrants based on their qualifications and the country's labour-market needs (such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand), the average educational achievement level of second-generation youth (prior to controlling for their parents’ socioeconomic background) is about the same as that of children of non-immigrants, or slightly better. However, children of immigrants tend to lag behind in reading skills. At the other end of the spectrum are countries such as Belgium and Germany, where the recruitment of low-skilled immigrant labour has been particularly pronounced in past years.

On average, children of immigrants (both 1.5 and second generations) tend to perform at least as well as children of non-immigrants in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States – all OECD countries that were originally settled as a result of immigration.

The opposite is true in all European OECD countries for which data are available. In these countries, with the exception of the United Kingdom, both male and female children of immigrants tend to have fewer years of education than their non-immigrant peers.

Low levels of education and socio-economic status of parents are the likely determinants of these lower educational outcomes among children of immigrants in European OECD countries. These two factors appear to explain almost all of the educational disadvantages of children of immigrants with European backgrounds, but only explain half of the disadvantages of children of immigrants with non-European backgrounds.5

Gaps in labour-market outcomes reflect education levels. The labour market situation of second-generation youth and those who emigrated at a young age is largely influenced by their educational achievement, but other factors are at play as well.
Across OECD countries for which data are available, the average unemployment rate for children of immigrants is about 1.6 times higher than for children of non-immigrants. This holds true for both the 1.5 and second-generation youth of both genders.

The gaps are particularly large in Belgium and the Netherlands. Employment rates for children born in those countries to immigrant parents are more than 20 per cent lower than those of male and female youth of the same age born to non-immigrant parents. The differences are also stark – on the order of 10 per cent for both men and women – in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway and Sweden. In contrast, little difference is observed in employment rates in Australia, Canada, Switzerland and the United States. In the United Kingdom, the differences between employment rates for male children of immigrants and non-immigrants are also minor (Figure 10.2).

**Fig 10.2. Employment rates of children of immigrants and children of non-migrants, aged 20-29 and not in school by gender, c. 2007**

Note: Figures for children who migrated with their parents are not available for Australia and Denmark. Figures for children born in the host country of immigrant parents are not available for New Zealand and Spain. OECD refers to the average of all countries for which full data are available. For a detailed description of variables, see: Liebig and Widmaier 2010, Methodological Annex.

Source: See Figure 10.1.

Of greatest concern are young people on the margins of the labour market – that is, those who have few years of schooling and are neither studying nor employed or in training. With few exceptions, children of immigrants are more likely to fall into this group, and women are more vulnerable than men, especially young women immigrants. Figure 10.3 demonstrates that female children of immigrants in Europe are more likely than men to be out of school and out of work.
Differences in labour-market outcomes across countries and among specific origin-country groups are substantial and persistent. For example, children of immigrants whose parents migrated to OECD countries from less-developed countries face particularly difficult obstacles. Differences in educational attainment explain about one-third of the employment gap for men and almost half of the gap for women.

Some of the explanations for these gaps between the offspring of immigrants and non-immigrants relate to the supply side of the labour market (that is, individual characteristics of potential employees), while others reflect issues tied to demand in host countries (attitudes and behaviours of those involved in the recruitment process, as well as rules and norms governing the function of labour-market institutions).

**OPPORTUNITIES AND GOOD PRACTICES**

Language skills and early childhood education are key. Mastering the language of the host country represents a critical first step in the educational performance of children of immigrants, and evidence suggests that pre-school education is particularly important in this respect, starting at age three. Facilitating access of 1.5- and second-generation children to childcare facilities at this sensitive stage in their development is key to integration and a basic prerequisite for future performance in education and employment.
Early childhood education and care is important for a number of reasons. First, it facilitates early contact with the host country's primary language, which is often not spoken at home among immigrant families. Second, pre-school education gives children a head start in terms of the cognitive and social skills needed for school. Furthermore, pre-school education represents an opportunity to be in close contact with the people and institutions of the host country, enhancing knowledge about the educational system and social integration, not only among children but also their parents.

Differences in the language spoken at home and socioeconomic background account for a large part of the performance gap between the children of immigrants and non-immigrants. Therefore, language-centred policies, such as early home reading activities and more hours for language learning at school, should be fostered. The earlier the contact with the host country’s language the better the outcomes, since proficiency in the language of instruction is a precondition for learning.

Enrolment in early childhood education and care can also offset disadvantages resulting from an unfavourable socioeconomic background. Measures targeting children around the ages of three or four appear to be most effective in this regard, and even more beneficial to immigrant than non-immigrant children. Pre-school education is a strong determinant of academic achievement, especially for disadvantaged children. In Germany, for example, participation in early childhood education and care increased by more than 55 per cent the chance that a child of immigrants would attend the highest and most challenging track of secondary education. A French study revealed a similar pattern, showing that participation in early childhood education and care programmes at age three has a positive effect on the educational outcomes of children of immigrants.

In 2009 about 70 per cent of the children of immigrants who were 15 years old and living in an OECD country reported having attended pre-school for at least one year (Figure 10.4). Participation rates were highest in Belgium, France and the Netherlands, where more than 90 per cent of such children attended at least one year of pre-school. In Australia and Ireland participation rates were only 40 per cent. On average, children of non-immigrant parents have pre-school education participation rates that are 3 percentage points higher than the children of immigrants. Such gaps are particularly
large in Greece, Italy, Mexico and New Zealand. In a small number of OECD countries (including Canada, Finland, Israel, Slovenia and Switzerland), children of immigrants have higher pre-school participation rates than their non-immigrant counterparts.

**Fig 10.4. Percentage of 15-year-olds reporting that they had attended pre-school for at least one year**

![Graph showing percentage of 15-year-olds reporting pre-school attendance](image)

Source: OECD PISA database, 2009

Policies can help lower barriers to employment. Demand-side barriers to employment can be reduced by putting appropriate policies in place. Indeed, lowering barriers – such as discrimination based on national origin – is a prerequisite for creating equal opportunity societies and fostering sustainable social cohesion.

Convincing evidence of the persistence of discrimination can be seen through field experiments that test the behaviour of employers during the recruitment process. In these studies, fictitious jobseekers with equivalent formal qualifications are paired, but given names signalling that they belong either to the majority population or a
minority group. These and similar studies on discrimination were conducted in many OECD countries; all found that discrimination is at work against jobseekers from minority groups. It is not uncommon for persons with a foreign-sounding name, but otherwise equivalent curriculum vitae (CV) and qualifications, to have to submit five times as many job applications as candidates with more mainstream-sounding names.\textsuperscript{14}

This, and the fact that in some OECD countries differences in labour-market outcomes between children of immigrants and non-immigrants are most pronounced at the high end of the qualification spectrum, indicates that so-called ‘statistical discrimination’ is at play. This occurs when an employer judges an applicant not based on his or her expected individual productivity, but rather on preconceptions about the average productivity of the group to which the person belongs.

**Box 10.2. Latin Americans educated in Spain**

The relatively high level of education among young immigrants from Latin America is no guarantee that they will find work suited to their qualifications. An analysis of how country of origin influenced employment outcomes of young immigrants who completed most of their education in Spain found that not all enjoy the same opportunities. Immigrants born in developing countries face greater barriers in the labour market than those born in developed countries or in Spain itself, although there are significant differences by region of birth. Those born in Latin America have higher labour-market integration rates than those from other developing regions.


Another demand-side barrier for the children of immigrants relates to the fact that, in most countries, vacancies are filled using informal recruitment channels, rather than advertisements or employment agencies.\textsuperscript{15} This is typically the case with respect to apprenticeships, where initial contact with the employer is often established informally. Individual personal networks constitute important assets, but immigrants and their children have less access to networks of people linked to the labour market, particularly with respect to the most rewarding jobs.

Familiarity with labour-market functioning is also crucial to access. This involves knowledge about how to draft a CV and cover letters, identify appropriate job opportunities and respond and react during recruitment interviews. This can be a
problem for the children of immigrants originating from countries where practices and norms, both procedural and cultural, are different from those of their host country. Since information about labour-market functioning is at least in part transmitted via parents or close friends, children of immigrants tend to have a structural disadvantage in this regard.

Although a number of factors can help explain the unfavourable labour-market situation of many children of immigrants, little is known about the relative importance of these factors. Nevertheless, demonstrable ways have been found to foster labour-market integration among children of immigrants, as described in Box 10.3.

Box 10.3. Good practices: Integrating children of immigrants into the labour market

- **Promote parents’ access to employment and training opportunities**
  - Enhance access to employment and training for immigrant parents, to increase their upward mobility and that of their children.

- **Foster early and frequent contact with the host country’s language**
  - Promote participation in early childhood education and care at the critical age of three, ideally in parallel with integration measures for their immigrant mothers.
  - Provide language testing and extensive language support in pre-primary education for those in need.

- **Disseminate information on job openings and the functioning of the labour market, and enhance mentoring and network-building**

- **Help employers overcome their aversion to risk in hiring**
  - Promote enterprise-based training
  - Facilitate temporary employment as a springboard to more stable employment
  - Better prepare the children of immigrants for apprenticeships and support them in apprenticeship searches
  - Promote employment of the children of immigrants in the public sector as a role model for the private sector

- **Tackle labour-market discrimination**
  - Maintain balanced public discourse on migration
  - Create a strong legal framework to prevent discrimination
  - Conduct regular monitoring of discrimination through test studies and communicate findings widely and effectively
  - Employ tools that promote diversity at the workplace

Most programmes seeking to tackle the school-to-work transition are geared to the mainstream, and do not directly target children of immigrants. Nevertheless, the latter
should have the same access to these programmes as other job seekers. This means not only the *right to* equal access (which is generally the case, even for those with a foreign nationality) but also *real* access. Enhancing transparency and information is an important first step in this direction. To assess whether children of immigrants are under-represented in high-quality labour market programmes, some form of monitoring must be in place, and appropriate actions taken if such monitoring reveals under-representation.

While mainstream policies are the rule, some additional measures that are indirectly targeted to the children of immigrants may also be needed. Since discrimination against immigrants appears to be based largely on stereotypes concerning the productivity of a given population group, measures that help them prove their true productivity have proven promising. Mentoring seems particularly beneficial in this regard, and a number of countries have put in place large-scale mentoring programmes with demonstrable success. Depending on the design, such programmes tackle a whole range of obstacles: not only do they help employers and others overcome prejudices, but they also transmit to immigrant workers tacit knowledge about the functioning of the labour market and provide access to formal and informal networks.

With the same objectives in mind, several countries have put forward ‘diversity’ policies, aimed at tackling both explicit and implicit discrimination in access to employment. Occasionally, the lines between diversity policies and affirmative action blur. The U.S. experience with affirmative action indicates that it can be a useful tool, in conjunction with other policies.\(^16\)\(^17\)

Tackle segregation of least-educated immigrants. Ethnic segregation appears to be less detrimental than socioeconomic segregation, but the two types of segregation frequently coincide and interact. Indeed, a significant part of the under-performance of immigrant students seems to be linked to their concentration in disadvantaged schools. But recent OECD analysis of PISA data suggests that ethnic segregation in schools is generally only a problem when it occurs in disadvantaged schools; that is, when it coincides with a concentration of low parental education.\(^18\) Yet, this is a combination that occurs quite often, particularly in European OECD countries. Measures that help to avoid ‘concentrations of disadvantage’ in schools can thus be expected to provide great benefits to children of immigrants.
KEY MESSAGES

- Children of immigrants constitute a substantial and growing share of youth in the labour markets of OECD countries, but their employment levels are often below those of national youth.

- In European OECD countries, in contrast to the U.S. and other countries settled by migration, children of immigrants tend to lag behind their non-immigrant peers in education and employment. Educational and labour-market outcomes for children of immigrants are strongly linked to their parents’ educational attainment and socioeconomic status and to opportunities to access apprenticeships and training.

- Integration of immigrant parents through employment and training is a first step in improving outcomes for their children. For children, early contact with the host country’s language through early childhood education is also key, as are programmes to discourage discrimination by employers.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focus on parents. Policy interventions seeking to improve children’s access to school and the school-to-work transition should include integrating their parents into labour markets through training and other measures to promote access to employment.19

- Promote early childhood education and care. Policies and measures to increase participation by children of migrants in early childhood education are essential, given the considerable evidence pointing to the positive impact of kindergarten and other pre-school activities on their educational outcomes.

- Develop job training opportunities. Policies are needed to encourage educational institutions to actively seek out apprenticeships and other training opportunities in the workplace and encourage children of immigrants to apply. Schools could also be a source of information about the functioning of the labour market for young immigrants.
• Use caution in targeting measures exclusively to the children of immigrants. Wage subsidies have proven to be particularly effective in improving immigrants' access to regular employment in several countries; apprenticeship subsidies could play a similar role among children of immigrants. Intensified job matching and counselling are other tools that may compensate for statistical discrimination and lack of networks. (See Box 2 for an overview of good practices identified by previous OECD studies).

A more detailed analysis of the integration of children of immigrants into the labour markets of OECD countries is available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/220823724345
1 Note, however, that for France, children of foreign-born parents who had French nationality at birth were excluded. The same applies for Belgium. For the Netherlands, the children of parents from Indonesia have been excluded (for a detailed description of variables, see Methodological Annex of: Liebig, T. and S. Widmaier, "Overview - Children of Immigrants in the Labour Markets of OECD and EU Countries", in: OECD (2010), Equal Opportunities? The Labour Market Integration of the Children of Immigrants, OECD Publishing, Paris). These adjustments have been made to exclude the offspring of expatriates who returned from former colonies (for details, see OECD, 2008, Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 2): Labour Market Integration in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Portugal, OECD Publishing, Paris).

2 The term 'second generation' is used in this chapter to describe the native-born offspring of foreign-born parents. Although the term is not entirely clear, and the term "native-born offspring of immigrants" would be preferable, it is used here for the sake of convenience and consistency with the other chapters in this publication.

3 Data for Australia and New Zealand are only partially available, but indicate that the shares in these two countries are likely to be around 20 per cent. Exact data for Spain are not available either; an estimate suggests that children of migrants account for less than 5 per cent of the age group 20-to-29.

4 The size of the population of children of immigrants born in the United Kingdom could be overestimated, since the classification is based on self-declared ethnic origin (for a detailed description of variables, see: Liebig and Widmaier 2010, Methodological Annex).


6 The particularly unfavourable situation of the children of immigrants born in the Netherlands contrasts with the somewhat more favourable assessment in OECD 2008. This is because the children of immigrants born in the host country, referred to in OECD 2008, include those who have only one foreign-born parent. This is a relatively large group in the Netherlands, and also one that has relatively favourable outcomes. The differences demonstrate the importance of having a uniform definition of the target group when comparing the outcomes of the children of immigrants across countries.


10 Ibid.

11 Magnuson et al. (2008), op. cit.


19 A detailed discussion of measures to promote the labour market integration of immigrants who arrived as adults is beyond the scope of this chapter. For good practices that work, see the OECD’s work on "Jobs for Immigrants" (OECD 2007, 2008 and 2012a).
MIGRATION AND TERTIARY EDUCATION*

Chapter 11
Rapid technological advances are changing modern economies, which now depend heavily on the production of ideas rather than tangible goods. Maintaining a highly skilled workforce has become increasingly important for industries seeking to develop or maintain a competitive edge. Rising demand for skilled workers has led to larger numbers of students seeking to obtain tertiary education, many of whom choose to pursue their studies outside their country of origin.

As a result, cross-border education is now included in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) as a tradable commodity. Of the four types of mobility addressed by GATS, this paper focuses on the mobility of students, in the context of youth migration. UNESCO defines ’mobile students’ as those who cross a border to seek education, and works with global, regional and national authorities to ensure that students receive a quality education that will benefit all concerned: the student and both origin and destination countries. Implementing a standard for cross-border education contributes to economic development through human capital formation and the creation of an efficient higher education market. Moreover, students have a right to education, and discussions about cross-border education should place priority on supporting students and giving them the opportunities they need to achieve better livelihoods.

**TRENDS IN CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION**

In 2004 the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that nearly 70 per cent of all new jobs require post-secondary education.¹ The number of students enrolled in tertiary education is increasing in all parts of the world. According to UNESCO’s Global Education Digests (GEDs) the number of students enrolled in tertiary education institutions worldwide nearly doubled between 1991 and 2004—from 68 million students to 132 million. By 2009, even during the financial crisis, enrollment rates continued to rise, reaching 164.5 million.² That same year over 3.3 million students were pursuing a degree outside their country of permanent residence or prior education, representing 2 per cent of all students enrolled in tertiary education institutions (GED 2011). With the emergence of middle classes in countries such as China and India, demand for cross-border higher education is likely to continue rising.


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Students look to cross-border education, first and foremost, as a means to secure better career opportunities. Degrees received in major host countries are perceived as academically superior to those in their home countries, and the cultural experience and acquisition of a foreign language serve to enhance students’ skills and competitiveness. Students may also choose to study in a country where income levels are higher than those of their home country in hopes of remaining, and gaining an advantage for employment from having studied in that country.  

Box 11.1. Tertiary education expanding in the Arab World

Most of the nearly 167,000 internationally mobile young people studying at the tertiary level in Western Asia in 2009 came from within the region. In some countries – such as Lebanon, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – internationally mobile female students outnumber their male counterparts (representing 54, 56 and 52 per cent, respectively, of the total number of students from abroad). The number of young people migrating to study in the region is liable to grow. Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are expanding their tertiary education facilities, by founding or expanding home-grown universities and/or collaboration with universities abroad.

Student migration is important in the “global search for talent”, especially since many students stay in their countries of study to take up job opportunities. Thus these new university hubs are likely to have a major impact on intra-Arab student mobility flows. They open new opportunities for students from the region to study at prestigious tertiary educational institutions without having to travel outside the region. For countries of destination such as Qatar, seeking to upgrade the skills of their migrant workforce, such inflows of students can help to ensure that potential future migrants have relevant skills and knowledge of the country.

However, in the absence of appropriate regional cooperation, this new trend may also exacerbate concerns about ‘brain drain’ of students and staff from poorer countries of the region. The dearth of research and understanding on the effects of student mobility in general, and student mobility within the Arab region in particular, makes it difficult to draw conclusions on this form of mobility and its effects. However, as expansion continues, there is an urgent need to consider the impacts of this trend from a regional perspective to ensure that the benefits are shared.

Source: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, submission to Thematic Report.

While North America and Western Europe have long been the preferred destinations for international students (58.6 per cent), a significant number decide to study in a neighbouring region. In this case, the choice of destination country largely depends on geographic proximity and the cultural and historical affiliation between the countries of origin and destination, as well as cost and the availability of scholarships. Table 11.1 shows destination preferences according to mobile students’ country of origin.
Different patterns of student mobility by region call for region-sensitive policy frameworks when developing guidelines to support and encourage international cooperation in the provision of cross-border higher education.

Data on emerging global shortages of highly educated and skilled personnel indicates that the trend of cross border education and training will increase considerably in coming years. A recent study by the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) forecast that by 2020 the global economy could face 38 million to 40 million fewer workers with tertiary education than employers worldwide will need --13 percent of demand for such workers, along with 45 million too few workers with secondary education --15 percent of total demand. Addressing these imbalances will require concerted, global efforts to raise educational attainment and provide job-specific training. The report projects that advanced economies will need to double the pace of increase in young people earning college degrees and find ways to graduate more students in high demand fields of science, engineering, and other technical fields. Cross border movement of students to educational centres and employment opportunities for these skills is already rising, propelled by market demand and imperatives to raise productivity, and will continue to increase. The MGI forecast also shows that secondary and vocational training must be expanded to provide needed job skills for the many youth who cannot pursue university studies.
Table 11.1. Destination for outbound students by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Arab states</th>
<th>Central and Eastern Europe</th>
<th>Central Asia</th>
<th>East Asia and the Pacific</th>
<th>Latin America and the Caribbean</th>
<th>North America and Western Europe</th>
<th>South and West Asia</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab states</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>100.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>100.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and Caribbean</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>100.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America and Western Europe</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>100.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and West Asia</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>99.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNESCO, Global Education Digest 2011.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

The increasing number of cross-border students has put the recognition of academic and professional qualifications high on the international cooperation agenda. Cooperation across borders is a preliminary step for mutual recognition and quality management in cross-border education. Recognition of qualifications and existence of quality controls is vital to ensuring that students receive the education they seek. In
this regard, UNESCO has promoted regulatory frameworks, codes of conduct and quality guidelines in recent years.

**Credential recognition:** The UNESCO Regional Conventions on Qualifications Recognition are legal agreements aimed at promoting the recognition of academic qualifications for academic purposes. They include six regional conventions and one inter-regional convention (including East, West and Southern Africa, Arab States, Asia and Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and two European conventions, as well as the inter-regional Mediterranean Convention). In total, 134 states have ratified the convention of their region. Recognition allows states to take part in enhancing the mobility of people and the exchange of ideas, knowledge and scientific and technological experience.

**Quality control:** To control the quality of regional regulations, the “Code of Good Practices in the Provision of Transnational Education” was established by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with UNESCO, and adopted at the 2001 Lisbon Convention. The code is designed to protect students from fraudulent degrees or certificates, and to prevent national authorities from devising excessively strict regulations for transnational education.

**Guidelines:** The UNESCO Secretariat and the OECD have worked closely together to develop guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education, particularly in light of a rapidly expanding sector in which new forms of education (campuses abroad, electronic delivery of higher education and for-profit providers) are proliferating. The guidelines address six stakeholders in higher education: governments, education institutions, student bodies, quality assurance and accreditation bodies, academic recognition bodies, and professional bodies. While not legally binding, the guidelines provide member countries with ideas for regulating quality assurance and accreditation systems in accordance with their national context, and thus assist in policy formulation in member countries.

In addition to the UNESCO Regional Conventions, regional regulatory frameworks for recognition of foreign qualifications granting access to education and employment have been worked out in several regions (Table 11.2).
Similar to GATS, some regional arrangements are implemented in the context of trade agreements that allow a country to recognise certifications of one member state, without necessarily granting the same right to all member countries. NAFTA, the MERCOSUR “Protocol on Trade in Services”¹², and the ASEAN framework are included in this type of agreement; thus countries party to these agreements could sign several Mutual Recognition Agreements.

Other sub-regional agreements include the SADC “Protocol on Education and Training”, the SAARC “Technical Committee on Human Resources Development”, and the ECOWAS “General Convention on the Recognition and Equivalence of degrees, diplomas, certificates and other qualifications in Member states”. Some areas have not yet developed a regional accreditation body, as is the case for CARICOM. The European Union has been proactive in building a system for recognition of qualifications, adopting a “European Qualification Framework” and establishing the European Network of Quality Assurance in 2000 to develop common European standards.

Table 11.2. Regional regulatory arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Recognition Agreements</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Arab</th>
<th>Asia and the Pacific</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>America and Caribbean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East African Community (EAC)</td>
<td>Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)</td>
<td></td>
<td>European Union (EU)</td>
<td>Central American Common Market (CACM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Free Trade Association (EFTA)</td>
<td>Andean Community (CAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern African Development Community (SADC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BENELUX</td>
<td>Caribbean Community (CARICOM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Council of Europe (COE)</td>
<td>East African Community (EAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NORDIC</td>
<td>Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community of Independent States (CIS)</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPPORTUNITIES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Existing governmental bodies should be encouraged to develop bilateral or multilateral agreements to facilitate recognition of each country’s qualifications, based on the mutual agreements. It is important to realise that quality assurance and accreditation of cross-border higher education provision involves both sending and receiving countries. There is a need to sustain and strengthen existing regional and international networks and establish networks in regions that do not yet have one. Challenges can be overcome through better coordination among bodies in sending and receiving countries at the regional and global levels. Coordination can be achieved by using platforms to exchange information and good practice, disseminate knowledge, increase understanding of international developments and improve the professional expertise of their staff and quality assessors.

However, national frameworks in many countries still fail to address the challenges of cross-border provision of higher education. Different criteria and terminologies are used, but there are no set standards for effective quality analysis. The diversity and unevenness of national-level quality assurance and accreditation systems creates gaps in the quality assurance of cross-border higher education, leaving some providers outside any framework.

Box 11.2. Malaysia seeks to reverse brain drain

TalentCorp Malaysia and Educity are among several innovative efforts introduced to generate a sustainable source of talent for the country and advance its 2011-2015 national development plan and reverse the brain drain/brain gain situation challenging the country. TalentCorp Malaysia’s ‘Returning to Malaysia’ programme attracts, facilitates and retains aspiring Malaysian returnees, through a package of incentives to encourage talented Malaysians who have been working and living abroad to return home. Considering that there are over 300,000 university-educated Malaysians working abroad, as part of Educity the Government has invested in buildings and infrastructure and partnered with world-class educational institutions, to set up schools and universities so that the same degrees and qualifications as abroad can be attained in Malaysia, thus increasing the chance of graduates staying in the country.

Source: L.L. Lim (2011)

A good example of regional efforts to reorganise national systems in line with global initiatives is the Bologna Process, which began in 1999 with the Bologna declaration,
and led to the creation of the ‘European Higher Education Area’ – a series of agreements reinforcing comparability and quality of higher education. The overall aim is to coordinate national education policies, in order to produce comparable degrees and establish quality assurance mechanisms as well as a credit system for student assessment. Most of the 46 countries of the European region have adopted new higher education legislation and a credit system (European Credit Point Transfer System). Governments in Africa, Asia and Latin America have acknowledged the effectiveness of the Bologna process, and plan to form their own regional networks for higher education.

**ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

Both states that send and receive mobile students can benefit from cross-border education: sending countries by gaining knowledge that can be utilised to promote economic development, and receiving countries by acquiring a productive population possessing a new set of skills. The challenge faced by quality assurance and accreditation systems is to maximize the benefits and limit potential drawbacks of the internationalisation of higher education.

However, in some case national bodies charged with addressing cross-border recognition of higher education qualifications possess only limited knowledge and experience on the issue. The challenge becomes more complicated when cross-border higher education providers deliver qualifications that do not match the criteria offered in their home country. Countries investing in the higher education sector should put in place regulatory frameworks or arrangements with universally accepted criteria, to cover different forms of cross-border higher education in a comprehensive manner.

Other challenges yet to be dealt with are related to transparency in quality control procedures and compliance with the need for easy access to information and customer protection.

The rapid expansion of cross-border higher education has left gaps in quality provision frameworks, and the trend toward commercialisation of the sector has brought on some undesirable and even fraudulent practices, such as degree mills and accreditation mills. Accreditation mills are accrediting agencies that are not recognised by the national education system. At degree mills, providers lack legal
authority to operate. In addition, concerns have been raised about such institutions serving as visa mills, opening the possibility of international student admission as a potential route for irregular migration.\textsuperscript{18} International frameworks still lack mechanisms to fully control these fraudulent practices.

Without proper implementation of relevant frameworks, the risk of students falling victim to misleading guidance and disreputable providers will increase, and low-quality accreditation bodies will lead to qualifications of limited validity.

Dubious quality provision in cross-border education is also a disadvantage for nations receiving mobile students, since these young people represent a potential human capital asset, given their age, skills and eagerness to join the labour force. For example, 90 per cent of Chinese and Indian doctoral students in the U.S. remained there after their studies.\textsuperscript{19} Students who choose to remain in the destination country not only serve as a labour resource, but also contribute to sustaining the population size of the developed economies.

Finally, to ensure a win-win situation, it is crucial to understand the burden faced by young people crossing borders for academic purpose, and take their human rights into consideration.

Mobile students are at risk of rejection in receiving countries.\textsuperscript{20} One of the many factors that contribute to unemployment among these young migrants is the lack of unified definitions for the recognition of tertiary education. Sustainable implementation of credential controls and recognition will help employment of mobile students, but nations should take effective steps to provide more job opportunities to those who finish their studies, and eliminate any discrimination they may encounter in the process.

Although there is a tendency to view international study as an option open to qualified students from all countries, in reality most international students come from relatively few countries and are recruited from among the affluent elite who can afford high tuition costs.\textsuperscript{21} Without better regulation of tertiary education institutions, there is a risk of enhancing the social stratification of students based on their fee-paying capacity. Proper implementation of foreign credential recognition should ease the increasing inequalities among students, as well as regional imbalances. To provide
equal opportunities, all students, including mobile students, must be granted access to social protection and minimum living conditions, through programmes such as student loans, housing services and health insurance. Both sending and receiving countries bear responsibility for respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of mobile students.
KEY MESSAGES

- The number of students migrating abroad is growing rapidly, a trend likely to continue.

- Enhancing quality and harmonising standards of cross-border tertiary and vocational education leads to ‘win-win’ situations for students and employers in origin and destination countries.

- International collaboration is needed for cross-border higher education and technical training, including defining terminologies and unifying criteria for regulatory frameworks, particularly to ensure that qualifications obtained abroad are recognised at home and vice versa.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish or strengthen regional policy frameworks for quality governance of higher education and accreditation of educational and training institutions.

- Adopt comprehensive regulations and standards to manage quality and credentials of different forms of tertiary education, and systematically monitor implementation of credential accreditation and quality assurance in cross-border education policies.

- Establish or strengthen transferability and recognition mechanisms for educational credits and for professional, technical and vocational qualifications.

- Incorporate student bodies as partners in ensuring equal rights and opportunities for mobile students.

- Improve conditions for mobile students through student loans, housing services, health insurance and related programmes.
NOTES

7 Romani (2008), The Politics of Higher Education in the Middle East: Problems a
17 Varghese, Ibid., p. 53.
21 Kritz (2011) op. cit. p.20.
HEALTH, YOUTH MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT *
The travel, living and working conditions for many young migrants can carry exceptional risks for their physical and mental well-being. These conditions include unequal access to healthcare and services, marginalisation and abuse, and are often linked to restrictive immigration and employment policies, economic and social factors, and anti-migrant sentiments in societies. This set of conditions are often referred to as ‘social determinants’ of migrants’ health.

As migration has become a megatrend in the 21st century, societies are more culturally and ethnically diverse than ever before, and characterised by an unprecedented diversity in health needs and profiles. Addressing the health needs of migrants can improve health status and outcomes; facilitate integration; prevent long-term health and social costs; contribute to social and economic development; and, most importantly, protect public health and human rights.¹

World Health Organization (WHO) member states acknowledged this reality by adopting the World Health Assembly Resolution on the Health of Migrants (61.17) in 2008, and recommended the integration of migrants’ health needs into broader frameworks on migration and development.² Yet, despite this resolution and recognition by the development community that “health is central to sustainable development”³ migrant health has received little attention in the migration and development debate. For example, of the six Global Forums on Migration and Development (GFMD) held since 2007, migrants’ health was discussed only in 2010 in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, during discussions on reducing migration-related costs, which led to the recommendation that governments and partners should “assess cost-effective health care models for various types of migration scenarios.” Yet, to date no comprehensive follow-up to this recommendation has taken place.

Similarly, the health of migrants was not on the agenda of the 2006 High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Migration and Development in 2006, nor was it a point of discussion at the HLD in October 2013. Even within the Global Migration Group, migrant health is rarely addressed, although the World Health Organization (WHO) joined the group in 2010 and many GMG agencies carry out significant health programmes.

*Prepared by International Organization for Migration (IOM). Barbara Rijks, Migration Health Program Coordinator at IOM was the primary author.

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The Millennium Development Goals in place until 2015 did not identify migrants as a marginalised, vulnerable group in need of protection. As there are an estimated total of 1 billion people on the move today, living outside their place of origin within countries or across borders and migration is a key livelihood strategy for many families, it is hoped that the post-2015 development framework will recognise migrants as a significant population with development and health needs.

Three key arguments can be made for focusing on the health of migrants:

1. Migrants have a right to health

2. Including migrants in health systems improves public health outcomes

3. Healthy migrants contribute to positive development outcomes.

For example, when migrants lack health insurance, obtaining services can lead to excessive out-of-pocket costs. This discourages migrants from accessing health services in a timely manner, exacerbating conditions that could have been addressed earlier at a reduced cost. The provision of cost-effective primary health care – as opposed to heavy reliance on costly emergency care – improves well-being, avoids loss of productivity and is line with public health and human rights principles.

This chapter focuses on the human, economic and social rights of adolescents and youth (between 15 and 24 years of age), especially their right to health. It argues that the lack of protection and promotion of rights increases the health vulnerabilities of young migrants, especially in the context of irregular migration. Although migrants across the board – young and old, male and female, documented and undocumented, skilled and less skilled – are exposed to health risks, young migrants have particular vulnerabilities, especially as they often find themselves in an irregular situation while migrating adolescents frequently travel without adult protection and support. Some of the factors that render young migrants vulnerable during the migration cycle (pre-departure and at the border, travel and transit, stay in host communities and during return) are described below.
Young Migrants' Right to Health

While there is no international instrument specifically delineating the right to health and health-related rights, several human rights treaties refer to the right to health. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) provides the most comprehensive statement, recognising: “the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.” The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the UN treaty body monitoring implementation of the ICESCR, has stated that nationality must not be used as grounds for discrimination in relation to health care and other rights in the Covenant.5

In its General Comment No. 14, the CESCR interpreted the content of the right to health. To comply with the above-mentioned entitlements and freedoms, states must ensure that health facilities, goods and services are available, accessible, acceptable, of good quality and applicable to all sectors of the population, including migrants.6

Additionally, in 2000 the Committee on the Rights of the Child underlined in its General Comment No. 3 that:

States parties must ensure that services are provided to the maximum extent possible to all children living within their borders, without discrimination, and that they sufficiently take into account differences in gender, age and the social, economic, cultural and political context in which children live. The obligations of States parties under the Convention extend to ensuring that children have sustained and equal access to comprehensive treatment and care, including necessary HIV-related drugs, goods and services on a basis of non-discrimination.

Young people affected by migration are often invisible in policies and systems that should protect and promote children’s rights. Very few countries have social policies and programmes that take into account the conditions and needs of migrant children. Neglect is particularly evident in the case of young migrants in an irregular situation, since national action plans and strategies aimed at reducing social exclusion, child poverty, early school leaving and health inequalities do not identify irregular migrant children as a target group.7
Fulfilling the right to health requires States to adopt and implement evidence-based national health policies that do not discriminate against non-nationals and address the needs of irregular and regular migrants at all stages of the migration process, including pre-departure and return. States should ensure availability and accessibility of quality health facilities, goods and services (including existing health insurance schemes) to migrants on the basis of equality with other nationals.

HEALTH DETERMINANTS OF YOUNG MIGRANTS DURING THE MIGRATION PROCESS

The complexity and diversity of circumstances throughout the various stages of the migration cycle may render young migrants vulnerable to poor physical and mental health outcomes.

**Figure 12.1. How Different Migration Stages Contribute to Migrants’ Health**

- **Pre-departure**
  - Pre-migratory events, particularly traumas, such as war, human rights violations, torture, sexual violence, especially for forced migration flows;
  - Linguistic, cultural and geographic proximity to destination, including health beliefs and behaviours;
  - Epidemiological profile and how it compares to the profile at destination;
  - “Efficiency of health system in providing preventive and curative health care”.

- **Travel**
  - Travel conditions and mode (perilous, lack of basic health necessities), especially for irregular migration flows;
  - Duration of journey;
  - Traumatic events, abuse, (sexual) violence;
  - Alone or mass movement.

- **Return**
  - Level of home community services (possibly destroyed), especially after crises situations: Remaining community ties;
  - Duration of absence;
  - Behavioural and health profile as acquired in host communities.

- **Host community**
  - Migration related policies/health policies;
  - Inclusion or discrimination;
  - Legal status and access to services;
  - Language and cultural values;
  - Separation from family partner;
  - Duration of stay;
  - Culturally, linguistically, and epidemiologically adjusted services;
  - Abuse, (sexual) violence exploitation, working and living conditions.

Cross-cutting aspects
- Age, gender;
- Socioeconomic status;
- Genetic factors.

Source: Adapted from B. Gushulak et. al. 2010 and IOM 2008a.
Pre-Departure and At the Border

Even before young migrants leave their country of origin, their right to health can be impaired and health vulnerabilities increased by common practices related to the obtaining of visa and work permits abroad, such as those occurring during compulsory medical screening.

Many prospective migrant workers undergo medical testing prior to departure. While these examinations could serve as an entry point for accessing preventive care, health education, and information, they often take place without migrants' informed consent or access to results. This practice not only interferes with migrants' rights, but can impede the empowerment and awareness-raising critical for migrants to take responsibility for their own health while abroad. Some migrant women have reported that labour recruitment agents forced them to take long-term contraception to prevent pregnancy during employment. Also, when migrants are declared medically unfit to work (if they test positive for pregnancy, HIV or another precluding condition) there is often no follow-up treatment or referral to relevant services.

It is an important part of migrants' social protection that these screenings comply with international ethical practices, including: informed consent, confidentiality of results, respect for reproductive health rights, and the provision of access to counselling and follow-up treatment and support services. Considering the importance of the result to immigration decisions, grounds for exclusion applied in medical screenings should be based on sound scientific evidence and subject to regular review.

Full realisation of the right to health is closely dependent on the State's obligation to ensure that meaningful information to support decision-making in respect of migration is available and accessible. Providing information to potential migrants in the pre-departure phase, particularly about their rights, is also necessary to empower them against possible abuse and exploitation by actors involved in the migration process.9

For migrants considering irregular migration options, pro-active information campaigns about the dangers of irregular migration should be implemented. These interventions should especially target young migrants, who often have unrealistic, overly positive expectations about the migration process and their intended destination. The inclusion of practical
alternatives to hazardous migration journeys in these information campaigns significantly enhances their effectiveness.

Information sharing and collaboration between countries is necessary in order to develop comprehensive pre-departure orientation trainings, seminars and information materials that give young migrants essential information about health. This information should be tailored to the specific needs of young migrants, but can generally include information about rights, obligations, available health facilities and preventing the transmission of communicable diseases like HIV and TB. It should also include information about recourse channels (e.g. legal aid, shelter and counselling) when labour disputes occur or when migrants find themselves in a precarious situation.

**Migrants on the Move**

The migratory journey itself can directly affect the health of young migrants, especially those in an irregular situation, refugees and displaced persons. Physical and environmental threats, hunger, lack of access to basic services and exposure to violence (including sexual violence) and trauma frequently accompany the movement of migrants, some of whom travel for long periods before reaching a safe haven. This phase of the migration process is associated with high risks of death and morbidity at both land and sea borders.\(^\text{10}\) Women, children and adolescents, trafficked persons and the poor are at especially high risk.\(^\text{11}\)

For example, many young migrants from the Horn of Africa, mostly Ethiopians, increasingly land on Yemeni shores by crossing the Gulf of Aden through ruthless smuggling networks, hoping to improve their fate by eventually reaching the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. As Saudi Arabia has sealed its borders for overland migration, there is a growing humanitarian crisis at Yemen’s northern border town, Haradh. These already vulnerable migrants are further abused, exploited and tortured by international smugglers. In 2012 alone, IOM’s office in Yemen assisted 32,160 migrants in Haradh, of whom 3,842 were under 18 years of age, and 1,312 were women and girls. Of the total group, 5,848 had a health issue. Figure 12.2 demonstrates the vulnerability and range of health needs of these migrants.
Figure 12.2. Main Health Conditions (# cases) of Irregular Migrants Assisted in Yemen, 2012 (total: 5,848)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Pox</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td>962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery &amp; Injuries</td>
<td>3727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dengue</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IOM Yemen Office.

A recent study investigated and analysed the migratory movements of populations from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia and Somalia to different countries in Southern Africa. The migrants (including refugees) were made up of mainly young men between the ages of 18 and 35, but a growing number of similarly aged females were also traveling, sometimes with the men, sometimes by themselves with children. Evidence suggests that unaccompanied minors are also undertaking this journey. The findings confirm that migrants face numerous health risks. Travel in the back of container trucks – a common means of transport through Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia – poses serious health risks to migrants and has caused deaths due to suffocation. Migrants routinely cross forests to enter countries through unofficial borders. These unregulated routes are extremely dangerous because of the rugged nature of the journey and lack of essentials such as water, food and shelter.
along the route. Furthermore, migrants routinely suffer physical violence on these routes.\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{quote}
\textbf{Box 12.1. Travel-Related Health Risks at the Border}

“A 16 year old girl crossed into South Africa from Zimbabwe with her two aunts and four men. When the group was at a farm about 30 kilometres south of Musina they slept in the bush. At dawn they were ambushed by a group of violent infamous gangs called \textit{gumagumas}. As she was running the young girl tripped and fell. One of the \textit{gumagumas} then searched her and took her money. He then proceeded to violently rape her. Her genitalia were bruised. She was infected with a sexually transmitted infection. She cannot sit up straight and can hardly walk. She has missed her period and could be pregnant from the rape. She said she could not go to the hospital for fear of being deported.”

\textit{Source: Médecins Sans Frontières, 2009.}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Migrants in Detention}

In many states, migrants are subject to administrative detention while they wait for a decision on their admission to (or removal from) the host state or for a determination of their asylum claim.\textsuperscript{13} Thus thousands of migrant children are imprisoned in detention centres, some for long periods of time, often without their parents present, leaving them particularly exposed to physical, sexual and psychological abuse\textsuperscript{14} in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A 2008 study commissioned by the European Parliament cautioned that detention is “particularly harmful” for minors and can lead to “psychological disorders,” as they often lack access to education, health care, recreational options and a feeling of safety and trust important for the development of a child. In detention or reception centres throughout Europe numerous children, adolescents and youth have committed suicide, and countless others have harmed themselves. The neglect of physical and mental health needs has been cited as a contributory factor to these tragedies.\textsuperscript{15} Even when minors are detained together with family members, these relatives are often in an unstable psychological state themselves, and hence less able to provide adequate care for the child.
STAY IN HOST COMMUNITIES

The degree of vulnerability in which young migrants find themselves in a host community depends on factors ranging from their legal status to the overall living and working environment. These factors also affect their access to health care services.

Access to Health Services

Legal status is one of the most important determinants of migrants’ access to health services in a country. A child’s status is usually linked to that of his/her parents, so children may find themselves in an irregular situation. A recent report on children with irregular migration status in the UK showed that parents’ anxiety and frustration resulting from the precariousness of their legal status trickle down to the children and affect their mental health and general wellbeing. 16 A study of children in low-income migrant families in the United States has shown that children of those with the most precarious immigration status show the poorest health outcomes, and that families with noncitizen members face barriers, real or perceived, to using health-related programmes. 17

Similarly, many migrant children in an irregular situation are not enrolled in schemes that provide health care – regardless of their parents’ ability to pay – because their parents are reluctant to approach social services due to the risk of being reported to the authorities. 18

Culturally informed and culturally competent health-care service is an important aspect of the acceptability dimension of migrants’ right to health. In the context of youth migration, cultural competency in healthcare settings implies being familiar with the health, social, linguistic, cultural, religious and gender-related issues of young migrants. 19 A culturally competent health care system can help improve health outcomes and quality of care and contribute to the elimination of health disparities.

Ensuring that necessary information is both available and understood by diverse populations is an increasingly important consideration for public health planning and preparedness in countries with large groups of migrants. Availability of health-related information – including on sexual and reproductive health issues such as family planning and sexually transmitted infections – is central to ensuring equal and non-
discriminatory access to health care for specific individuals such as adolescents and youth, women and persons living with HIV.

**Occupational Health and Safety**

Workplace health and safety pose major risks for young migrants. Many young migrants work in high-risk and hazardous sectors – such as mining, agriculture, domestic work and construction – where they are at increased risk of occupational accidents and injuries. Agriculture, construction and mining sectors have the highest rates of workplace injuries and deaths. Many young migrants work in so-called 3D (dirty, dangerous and degrading) jobs subject to hazardous environments in sectors as well as in some countries where labour protection mechanisms have little or no reach.

In addition, an estimated 115 million children under the age of 18 are doing work that poses a physical and psychosocial danger to them. Many of these young people are internal or international migrants. The roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, agreed to at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference in 2010, includes a focus on child migrants: “Governments should consider ways to address the potential vulnerability of children to, in particular the worst forms of child labour, in the context of migratory flows.” (Article 5).

Little data is available on occupational safety and health risks facing migrant workers, and virtually none regarding young migrants. A recent joint IOM-WHO-OHCHR publication “International Migration, Health and Human Rights” cited studies from Austria, Denmark and Sri Lanka documenting migrants’ higher risks of workplace accidents, injuries and occupational diseases. The report highlighted that:

> It is commonly reported that migrants, particularly those in an irregular status, endure dangerous working conditions for fear of drawing attention to themselves and losing their jobs or being deported. Furthermore, migrant workers are often not allowed to form and join trade unions, which may be an additional obstacle to raising concerns about their health and safety in the workplace.

The ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) reaffirms that migrant workers enjoy equal Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)

A recent ILO study of five Asian-Pacific destination countries urges an assessment of workplace standards for migrant workers in destination countries, to ensure that they are in place and being applied. Secondly, it recommends providing practical support to both migrants and their employers to prevent occupational accidents and diseases, noting that there are many simple, low-cost methods to improve safety and health. Thirdly, it urges strengthening trade union support to migrant workers, highlighting that collective bargaining is an essential means of securing adequate OSH protections. The report featured a general recommendation to “Recognize the presence of young migrant workers in the workforce and design and implement OSH arrangements specific to their unique vulnerability and with careful consideration of their physical development.”

**Health Behaviours of Young Migrants**

While young migrants have the same developmental needs common to all young people, their needs can be significantly affected by displacement from their homes and separation from the structure and guidance of their families. The new environments in which they find themselves are often violent, stressful and unhealthy places. As they transition to adulthood, threats to young peoples’ health shift from infectious disease (that could easily be prevented or treated through vaccinations, improved hygiene, and access to antibiotics), to illnesses and injuries that are grounded in their behaviours. Unsafe sexual and reproductive health behaviours in youth, (such as early sexual debut and low rates of condom and contraceptive use) can result in high rates of unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and HIV. Young people who are displaced from their homes and communities may suddenly experience a lack of social support from family, friends, and mentors, as well as increased exposure to violence, coercion and new sources of pressure. These factors can affect their ability to practice safe sexual and reproductive health behaviours, and create risky situations that may lead to unhealthy and potentially fatal choices.
Health behaviour, lifestyles and diet can also change as a result of migration, both for the migrant and women, children and adolescents left behind. Evidence suggests that malnutrition, obesity and high levels of alcohol abuse are prevalent among migrants and migrant families.\textsuperscript{25}

\textbf{Return to the Country of Origin}

Health conditions acquired by young migrants during their stay in host communities may surface upon their return to their home countries. This is often the case for migrants who have suffered from exploitation and abuse in their host communities and may be at risk of deteriorated mental health and other adverse health conditions. Thus, effective reintegration mechanisms that address the health of returning migrants should be introduced by countries of origin.\textsuperscript{26}

Countries of origin should not only be concerned about the health of returning migrants, but must also consider the health of family members left behind. Studies indicate that the physical and mental health of family members, particularly children and adolescents, are often negatively affected by long-term separation.\textsuperscript{27} Paradoxically, it seems that although many parents work abroad to improve the lot of their children, the latter suffer emotional stress and physical health detriments as a result of these absences.

\textbf{CONCLUSION}

Young migrants are exposed to health risks throughout the migration cycle. In particular, those fleeing poverty in their home communities who travel irregularly and unaccompanied can be extremely vulnerable to physical and psychological problems. Young female migrants, who are increasingly traveling independently, also face great risks to both physical and mental health.

Yet the health of young migrants remains poorly understood, since they are often not included in national health surveillance. In addition, lack of standardisation in definitions and health indicators across countries makes it difficult to compare the health situation of young migrants.
National laws and policies relating to young migrants' access to health-care services differ widely; many prevent migrants from accessing national health-care programmes and social services. Young migrants, both documented and undocumented, are regularly omitted from laws and policies providing social protection measures, such as health insurance. Furthermore, in many countries there continues to be a lack of coherence across policies in various sectors, including immigration, labour, trade, education, and health, which can negatively affect young migrants' access and use of health-care services.

Young migrants' health vulnerabilities do not stem only from health sector policies and practices. Restrictive migration policies tend to drive migration underground, and a lack of protection mechanisms – or enforcement – lead to precarious and dangerous working and living conditions, especially for irregular and less-skilled regular migrants. To integrate social protection into the migration cycle, inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms are needed to ensure policy coherence and effective responses at the national level. Many of the challenges are multidisciplinary, affecting actors in the private sector and civil society.

Thus the health vulnerabilities associated with youth migration should be acknowledged, prioritised and addressed by high-level migration and development debates and in global development commitments. This is crucial because of the multiple health vulnerabilities they experience, which affect their human development prospects and the socioeconomic development outcomes for their communities and countries of origin and destination. While global debates increasingly focus on inclusive development, many young migrants around the world primarily experience multifaceted exclusion.
KEY MESSAGES

- Accurate and current data and information on the health of young migrants, including health determinants and access to health services, are an essential prerequisite for developing evidence-based, migrant-inclusive policies and providing acceptable and accessible health services that are youth- and migrant-friendly.

- The issue of young migrants’ health should be addressed in the larger migration and development debate. Both the 2013 High-Level Dialogue and the theme of the 2013-14 Global Forum on Migration and Development acknowledge the need for broad cooperation and inclusive development approaches. Addressing the health of migrants in a coherent manner is a concrete measure that is indispensable for ensuring that both migrants and countries benefit from international migration.

- The health of young migrants should be included in the post-2015 development framework agenda. “Health is important as an end in itself and as an integral part of human well-being, which includes material, psychological, social, cultural, educational, work, environmental, political, and security dimensions.” To ensure that the post-2015 development framework on health is based on principles of health equity and the right to health for all, it should explicitly include a reference to migration-related determinants of health, including for young migrants.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

How exactly should young migrants’ health be addressed in the post-2015 development framework and the migration and development debate? The recommendations below reflect and build on the four key priorities of the World Health Assembly resolution on migrant health:

- **Monitor the health of young migrants.** The Post 2015 development framework should adopt specific, measureable, achievable, relevant and time-bound indicators that will assist States and other actors to set targets and monitor progress on the health of young migrants, and to improve social and economic determinants affecting their health. Such indicators should be designed to achieve young migrants’ access to health education, prevention, diagnosis and treatment services, commensurate with national capabilities.
• **Promote health policies and laws that address health aspects of youth migration.** Social protection for young migrants should be consistently applied throughout the entire migration cycle, in the country of origin prior to departure, during transit, in destination settings, and after eventual return. National public health systems need to commit to identify, reach and ensure inclusion of all migrants, particularly adolescents and youth, including the most disadvantaged such as migrant youth with disabilities. Access to health for all young migrants should be enabled by maintaining firewalls between health services provision and immigration enforcement.

• **Ensure that health services are youth and migrant friendly.** Migrant-inclusive health systems intentionally and systematically incorporate the needs of migrants into planning, policy development, implementation, financing, and evaluation. To effectively include young migrants, services need to be both tailored to their age and be culturally appropriate, with information in relevant languages, making use of young community health workers from migrant communities. Outreach and facilities, including for sexual and reproductive health, need to reach areas where migrants and particularly youth migrants may be concentrated.

• **Encourage multi-sectoral collaboration, multi-country networks and partnerships.** Health ministries and public health institutions should be more directly involved in international migration/development dialogues. Bilateral, regional, and global collaboration and consultative processes, networks and partnerships should be promoted to comprehensively address the health of young migrants.
NOTES


2 The Sixty-first World Health Assembly (2008) adopted Resolution WHA 61.17 on the Health of Migrants calls upon Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) "to promote migrant-sensitive health policies" and "to promote interagency, interregional and international cooperation on migrants' health, with an emphasis on developing partnerships with other organizations and considering the impact of other policies".


4 The most recent UN 2013 estimate of global migrant stock is 235 million (see chapter 2). IOM estimates that some 750 million people have migrated to live elsewhere than their place of origin within the territories of their country of citizenship.

5 CESCR General Comment No. 20 on Non-Discrimination in Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Art. 2, para. 2), E/C.12/GC/20, 2 July 2009 Available from: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/comments.htm


8 ECOSOC (2009), CESCR General Comment No. 20 on Non-Discrimination in Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Art. 2, para. 2), E/C.12/GC/20, 2 July 2009 Available from: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/comments.htm


13 UNGA (2010), Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Anand Grover, A/HRC/14/20/Add.4 3 June 2010.


18 F. Crépeau, C. Rousseau et. al. (2010), "Right and access to healthcare for undocumented children: addressing the gap between international conventions and disparate implementations in North America and Europe", *Social Science and Medicine,* 70(2):329-336.


22 Ibid


INTEGRATING YOUTH AND MIGRATION INTO DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES*

Chapter 13
Youth and migration came in the global spotlight in 1994 at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and again in 1995, with the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth. The potential of youth and young migrants to be agents of social change and economic development is on display in countries around the world; yet, it often remains untapped as they live in precarious conditions, denied access to decent livelihoods and excluded from political processes that directly or indirectly affect their lives and prospects. National and local development strategies provide a critical entry point for including the concerns, perspectives, contributions and ambitions of young migrants into the collective aspirations of a country, region or community.

The most universal development consensus to date, the Millennium Declaration, mentions both youth and migrants – particularly with regard to employment, human rights and promoting tolerance – but the topic of youth migration is absent from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Nonetheless, youth unemployment and its links with migration has been a prominent concern in the context of MDG implementation. The topic also surfaced during preparatory discussions for the Rio+20 Summit in 2012 and the international community’s on-going discussions on migration and development.

Migration, from rural areas to urban centres, from one country to another, is one way for people – and young people in particular – to pursue their aspirations and escape situations where those are stymied. Migration helps people lift themselves and their families out of poverty and improve their human development outcomes, including their life expectancy, health, income and education. For some youth, migration can be a way to escape traditional hierarchies and enhance their social status; for others it is a rite of passage. Even when conditions are difficult, such as for refugees and the internally displaced, evidence suggests that younger migrants tend to be living in urban centres rather than camps, which often leads to better human development outcomes. At the same time, young migrants with less experience often face age-related vulnerabilities in the labour market, including being paid below minimum wage and more prone to losing their jobs, as happened during the global economic crisis in 2008/2009.

*Prepared by Sarah Rosengaertner, Migration and Development Expert at the Poverty Reduction Group of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bureau for Development Policy*
As the 2015 deadline for assessing MDG achievement approaches, and with a lively discussion about the next global development agenda well underway, population dynamics, including the so-called ‘youth bulge’ and internal and international migration, figure among the priorities discussed. Yet, there is still little reflection on the opportunities and challenges that migration presents for young people, their families and societies. This may in time prove short-sighted: with rapid urbanisation, access to technology and information, youth will be increasingly less inclined to content themselves with limited or absent opportunities available where they happen to be born, rather than pursuing their chances abroad.

This chapter reviews how the links between youth and migration are currently framed in national plans, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and how they can be integrated into efforts to mainstream migration into national and local development strategies – as well as, potentially, the post-2015 development agenda. The paper builds on: a review of 50 Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs); lessons learned from the Youth Employment and Migration (YEM) Joint Programmes implemented under the MDG Fund (MDG-F) in 14 countries; the experience of countries that have piloted the Global Migration Group Handbook on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning; and the findings of the 2009 Human Development Report (HDR) entitled “Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development”.

**Mainstreaming migration into development strategies**

In 2010, the Global Migration Group (GMG) launched a practical guidance tool entitled *Handbook on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning*. The handbook was designed to introduce migration practitioners to the process of development planning, and to give development practitioners an idea of how migration could be integrated into the development planning cycle and sector-specific strategies in the areas of employment, health, education etc. The handbook defines migration mainstreaming as “the process of assessing the implications of migration for any action or goals planned in a development and poverty reduction strategy”.

Between 2011 and 2014, four countries – Bangladesh, Jamaica, Moldova and Tunisia – have piloted the practical application of the handbook methodology with support from IOM, UNDP, the GMG and UN country teams. Youth migration and the situation of youth left-behind are of particular concern in Moldova, Jamaica, and Tunisia. Among
the plans in Moldova, for example, are steps to sharply reduce youth emigration and assist migrant households through cash transfers. The Tunisia pilot has sought to enhance the evidence base on the impact of migration on children, youth and women, and to systematically incorporate a gender and age lens into all project activities.

While the mainstreaming pilot initiative has moved into a larger second phase this year, now covering eight countries, and other examples can be found, practical experiences with migration mainstreaming into development planning remain limited. The number of countries that have sought to mainstream a youth migration perspective is likely to be even smaller. Yet, the topic ranks high on the agenda of the intergovernmental process in the Global Forum on Migration and Development and at the 2013 UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. And, more and more countries are setting up dedicated institutions and pursuing targeted strategies on migration and development at the national level.

Several reviews in recent years have used PRSPs as a proxy to assess the extent to which countries have integrated migration into their national development planning. There are limitations to this approach (discussed in more detail by Sward and Black (2009)): A PRSP-based review will inevitably yield only a partial picture, since not all countries prepare PRSPs, and many will have other planning instruments or national strategies that address migration and/or youth issues in a more comprehensive manner. It is also difficult to gauge from the strategies alone whether they have had any impact on policy and implementation. Yet they can serve as a useful basis for analysis, as they are easily accessible for a range of countries in a similar format and they do shed some light on national priorities.

**PRSP REVIEW: IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

This review focuses on 50 PRSPs issued between 2001 and 2012 that explicitly mention a *direct or indirect link between migration and young people*. Of these, half (25) focus mainly on internal migration and one-fourth (12) on international migration. The terms “migration” and “young people” were used broadly, encompassing adolescents and youth and both internal and international migration, as well as forced displacement and human trafficking.
The PRSPs analysed fall broadly into two camps: (1) those that perceive the drivers and impact of youth migration predominantly as a challenge, and highlight the risks and vulnerabilities for young people\textsuperscript{12} and, fewer in number, (2) those that perceive migration as an opportunity and potentially empowering experience for young people, emphasising the potential benefits for communities at origin and destination.\textsuperscript{13}

**Framing youth and migration**

The majority of PRSPs perceive adolescents and youth as a vulnerable population prone to be involved in high-risk behaviours (e.g. drugs, unsafe sex, protest). They generally identify key drivers of youth migration as: demographic factors (the 'youth bulge'); natural disasters; poverty; low incomes and low profitability in the agricultural sector; the absence of alternatives to farming; difficulty accessing social services in rural areas; lack of access to education that would lead to employment; and civil conflict that leaves youth without attractive future prospects.

**Human security and protection**

A significant number of strategies are concerned with forced migration and the need for special attention to the situation of children, adolescents, youth and women in that context. PRSPs suggest that a lack of human security is both a driver of youth migration and the result of forced (and sometimes voluntary) migration. Refugee and internally displaced children and unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking, street children and former child soldiers are identified as particularly vulnerable groups. Girls and young women are a primary group of concern in the context of human trafficking, and several strategies highlight the need to ensure better legal protection, and tighter border controls.

Proposed measures to assist the re-integration of children and youth in the context of forced migration include: legislative and policy reform, provision of shelters, vocational training, education, health and psycho-social support, facilitation of family reunification, legal assistance and public education about children’s rights.
Rural development and urbanisation

A majority of PRSPs are concerned with internal (rural-to-urban) migration, which is largely framed as a problem, rather than an opportunity, for young people. Only Sri Lanka’s PRSP stresses the need for policies that “equip the rural population with the skills and ability to migrate to urban areas, where higher productivity employment opportunities are more abundant.” Most countries view youth migration as having a negative impact on rural areas in demographic, economic and social terms – leading to labour shortages and the loss of productive capacity and innovation.

Consequently, suggested policy responses are focused on providing more opportunities for young workers in rural areas.

Few PRSPs address the question of how young migrants fare once they have left their villages. The Sierra Leone PRSP (2005) observes that many young rural migrants end up unemployed and poor in urban areas, and that the households of recent migrants are especially vulnerable. Yet, the needs of young migrants in terms of physical, social and economic integration into the city and the implications for urban planning (provision of infrastructure, services, disaster risk reduction) are rarely considered.

The chapter on rural youth and migration in this report discusses these challenges and responses to them in more detail.

Social inclusion and cohesion

Several PRSPs do address challenges related to social inclusion and youth migration. The Maldives PRSP (2008) expresses concern about the risk of increased tensions when young graduates arriving in the capital city are unable to find jobs. In Cote d’Ivoire (2009) the return of unemployed young people in the wake of the economic crisis was found to have led to land disputes in their home villages. The PRSP of Nicaragua (2010) refers to a programme to control youth gangs and reintegrate gang members in the context of return migration and deportations of young migrants from destination countries.
Some PRSPs acknowledge the impact of migration on young people left behind. The Georgia PRSP (2003) looks closely at how migration is altering family structures, observing that: “[t]he moral influence of the family on children and young people has weakened”, and links this to an increase in juvenile delinquency, prostitution, trafficking and other social problems. Dominica’s PRSP (2006) observes that migration has led to a rise in the incidence of parentless households, but notes that: “[m]ost of these households are not ... poor, indicating an adequate level of support from overseas.”

Almost no PRSPs reflect on the existence and role of immigrants in the national economy and society, even though South-South migration flows are estimated to be as large as movements from South to North. Cote d’Ivoire (2009) mentions the need to integrate second-and third-generation immigrants in the country, but does not suggest concrete steps for doing so. Vietnam’s PRSP (2006) recognises that housing and social welfare policies need to take account of migrant workers, and “migration policy needs to ensure labour distribution across regions and immigrants’ access to social services”, but does not specifically mention youth.

**Education and employment**

Access to employment figures prominently among the youth migration drivers identified above. PRSPs recognise that countries can broaden options for youth and potentially gain by proactively facilitating international migration for work and study. Yet they are primarily concerned about employment generation at home; most strategies focus on retaining young workers, for example through improved training opportunities or generating more jobs. Proposed measures include reforming education systems to better align education and training with labour market demand, and promoting business skills and entrepreneurship.

Only a handful of countries take a proactive approach to encouraging migration as a desirable option for youth, although several express an intention to enhance the international competitiveness of their youth and to promote training for overseas employment. The only country to directly address the issue of student migration, the Lao PDR PRSP (2008) states: “A policy will be established to encourage households to send their children to study abroad and then return and serve the country.” Other countries are concerned with the return of young migrants and the challenge of ‘brain drain’. Albania, for
example, plans to cooperate with international institutions to “develop programmes that attract students and enable the employment of qualified migrants who return in the country.”

Surprisingly few PRSPs pay attention to student migration, which is on the rise in both to developed and developing countries[^14], and few examine the situation of young migrants once they are on the move; that is, their living and working conditions, access to services and social protection at destination. Exceptions are the PRSPs of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.[^15]

**Poverty reduction**

A few PRSPs mention the link between migration, remittances and poverty reduction, identifying young people both as remittance senders and beneficiaries. The Bolivia PRSP (2001) observes that rural-to-urban “migration is a way of diversifying activities which in turn helps to manage risk and reduce poverty.” Sri Lanka’s PRSP (2002) explicitly acknowledges the contribution of young migrants (both internal and international) to poverty reduction, including “income transfers from rural young females employed in the garment factories located mainly in the Western Province.” Conversely, the PRSP of Bangladesh (2005) finds that “temporary migration offers employment and higher income to the worker, with a positive impact on living standards of his/her family as well as on human resource development of his/her children.”

Several PRSPs mention constraints related to young people’s access to financial services, but there is no reflection on how this might affect the transfer or productive use of remittances. A more in-depth understanding of the remittance-sending patterns of young migrants, as well as their role as recipients of remittances, their spending behaviour and use of financial products and services might be gleaned if more financial transactions were channelled through new technologies.

**Gender**

None of the PRSPs reviewed explicitly reflects on the gender aspects of migration. However, 12 refer to women and girls as a primary group of concern, especially in the context of human trafficking and the need to ensure legal protections. Burkina Faso
(2005) mentions the disproportionate vulnerability of girls and young women to HIV infection, which it sees as exacerbated by internal and external migration. Nigeria (2005) identifies women as a target group for HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns. Other countries point out that women have less access to employment and financial services, which may act as a driver for female migration.

Sri Lanka highlights the positive and negative implications of female migration, particularly young females who send remittances and thereby contribute to securing household incomes and alleviating poverty in rural areas. At the same time, the PRSP expresses concern about negative impacts on girls, such as abuse and teen pregnancies, which are seen as a growing social problem. Yemen’s PRSP (2002) observes that “rural-urban migration leads to [an] increase in the burdens on women, the elderly people and children [in rural areas] in agricultural work”.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In sum, echoing some of the conclusions of earlier PRSP reviews, it can be observed that very few PRSPs make explicit reference to migration, and even fewer do so in connection with young people. Those that do often acknowledge both potential risks and benefits associated with youth migration, but rarely include in-depth analysis or meaningful policy options. Some PRSPs focus solely on vulnerable groups of young migrants and associate mobility with a decline in human development. Others view youth migration as a development opportunity, but generally fail to explore the human development outcomes for young migrants themselves. The latter are, however, crucial to shaping their ability to stay connected and contribute to their communities and countries of origin and destination. Most strategies lack a balanced reflection on both the gains and vulnerabilities that migration can represent for different groups of youth, depending, for example, on their age, gender, level of skills and legal status. The PRSPs reviewed provide no indication as to whether youth and migrants were consulted on the analysis and/or recommendations.

**Integrating youth, migration and development at national and local levels**

With shrinking populations and skills gaps in many industrialised nations and rapid population and economic growth and urbanisation in many countries across the South, questions of youth development and migration are likely to assume greater priority for states in coming decades. The GMG’s mainstreaming methodology offers guidance for
countries that wish to develop a more holistic understanding and integrated approach to youth and migration issues. Indeed, first and foremost the decision to mainstream youth and migration into development planning will hinge on genuine political will or the right political incentives to address and prioritise these issues, which in turn provides a mandate for the development of sector policies from a youth and migration perspective.

The mainstreaming process usually begins with a situation analysis, including an analysis of the political and institutional context and a mapping of relevant stakeholders, their interests, incentives, and capacities. The situation analysis should also include a systematic assessment of the evidence base to understand the context-specific linkages between youth, migration and human development. The approach then calls for identifying priorities and formulating a strategy through a consultative process with a wide range of stakeholders. By embedding this exercise into the national planning process, countries can ensure that their migration and youth related priorities are aligned with the country’s overall development vision and objectives.

Mainstreaming of youth, migration and development through a “whole of government” approach is also highly relevant for many developed countries. Youth and migration challenges are key governance issues for national planning, maintaining viable labour markets, ensuring needed skills, and tackling inequalities and promoting social inclusion in societies with growing proportions of foreign-born in their populations.

**Creating the evidence base**

Data collection and analysis provide an important entry point for exploring the youth dimension of migration and remittances flows, and their impacts on human development indicators. Many countries are currently conducting situation assessments in the form of an ‘Extended Migration Profile’ (EMP).\textsuperscript{17} Introducing youth and gender perspectives into the EMP template could be a first step towards ensuring the systematic application of these lenses across countries and an incentive to invest in data disaggregation by age and sex.

National Human Development Reports (NHDRs) can serve as a more tailored means to enhance the evidence base for advocacy and policy by, for instance, conducting special surveys on migration to gather data not routinely collected.\textsuperscript{18} A ‘Guidance Note on
Mobility and Migration’ is available to support NHDR teams; it proposes an analytical framework based on the migration cycle, looking at both those who move and those who stay behind:

- **Who moves, why, how and where?** Information on migrants should be disaggregated as much as possible, using indicators such as: age, gender, education, household income, location of origin (rural/urban), ethnicity/group affiliation. It should explore motivations for moving (among young people) and conditions under which migration (of the young) occurs, including factors such as: migration channels used and transaction costs incurred, protection of human rights, access to social services and portability of benefits, mobility regimes and the ability to return/circulate. Finally, it should take stock of the major destinations of youth migrants.

- **How do they fare?** Explore the human development outcomes of migrants and their families as measured by: household income, health, education, employment, entrepreneurship/business creation, participation and other relevant factors.

- **What are the impacts of migration?** These can be studied at origin or destination and cover a range of areas, such as (un)employment and labour market participation, entrepreneurship/business creation, fertility, access to services, and crime rates, with a particular focus on the impacts on local youth, including those left behind.

The MDG-F Youth and Employment Joint Programmes have strengthened data collection and analysis capacities at the sub-national level, gathering baseline data through qualitative research and surveys on issues such as: patterns of rural-urban migration, social and health issues facing young migrants, and formal and informal employment opportunities. Regular consultations with key stakeholders and young people also informed programming.
Formulating an integrated approach

Existing legal, policy and institutional frameworks pertaining to youth and migration will vary across countries, as will the degree to which intra-governmental coordination across sectors is systematic and institutionalised. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to mainstreaming migration into development planning. In some countries youth will have already been identified as a group of particular concern and a window of opportunity may exist to systematically integrate migration concerns into a national youth development strategy. In other countries, an initial analysis of migration dynamics and impacts may confirm youth as a major stakeholder in the migration process, suggesting that the most pertinent migration and development linkages to be addressed by a national or local strategy are de facto youth migration and development linkages.

To formulate an overarching vision and strategy that spans different sectors, an institutionalised mechanism that brings together all relevant parts of government, as well as ideally civil society, the private sector and development partners is needed. A central entity in government with a policy coordination mandate, such as the prime minister's office or the planning commission may be best placed to convene such a mechanism. Policy checklists can help ministries and agencies assess the relevance of migration for their sector, asking: How might migration undermine or promote the targets set out for the sector? How might the policies and programmes undertaken in this sector contribute to promoting or hindering youth migration? How might they promote the benefits or reduce the negative impacts of migration for young people? Further, the formulation of specific targets and

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**Box 13.1. Vietnam collects evidence to target youth employment in development planning**

In Viet Nam, to better understand young people and create evidence on their social life, attitudes and aspirations and to inform policy, two comprehensive "Survey Assessments of Vietnamese Youth" were carried out (2003 and 2008), including an emphasis on employment. This evidence helped to inform the country's Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015, which set targets for international labour migration that take into consideration young peoples' needs. The Plan includes measures to promote mutual recognition of skills qualifications and competency standards, so that receiving countries are assured appropriately qualified workers and Vietnam knows that it is training workers in demand.

*Source: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, submission to Thematic Report.*
indicators for all relevant line ministries, departments or agencies can serve to facilitate the appropriation and implementation of an overarching strategy, and the monitoring of progress through the multi-stakeholder mechanism.

**Box 13.2. Jamaica includes youth in the development of national migration and development policy**

The Jamaican Government, as part of its migration mainstreaming pilot project, embarked on a participatory process to formulate a National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development. To support the development of an overarching national vision that spans different sectors, an institutional mechanism was created bringing together all relevant stakeholders from different parts of government and civil society, the private sector and development partners. The policy formulation process included youth both as a substantive policy concern and as a stakeholder group. Thus, one thematic focus of the policy is on ‘Family Migration and Development,’ addressing issues such as access to citizenship and social protection for migrant children; ensuring adequate care and support for children left behind; and strategies for facilitating family reunification.

The draft policy was validated through consultations with different constituencies, including young people. The youth consultation stressed education and training, including social skills, as a top priority for young Jamaicans. Youth were concerned with the lack of opportunities in Jamaica and the consequent focus on emigration, especially among the educated segments of the population. They perceived discrimination and nepotism in the labour market to be standing in the way of young peoples’ access to employment, and recommended institutional support for young entrepreneurs. Youth also suggested that existing information systems be made more youth-friendly, and that information on government and private sector services be communicated through social media platforms.

*Source:* Record of consultation with children and youth groups held on 9 November 2012, Planning Institute of Jamaica.

**Aligning national and local strategies**

Beyond confirming the relevance of youth migration to a broad range of sectors, the findings of the PRSP review underline the urgency of tackling certain migration dynamics, such as the integration and reintegration of youth, for example, at the local level. For this purpose, various national sector strategies will usually need to be brought into one coherent local approach that seeks to ensure access to housing, health, education and transportation, as well as integration into the labour market or entrepreneurship support. However, if local authorities are to be able to undertake their own integrated planning and be responsive to the needs of various population
groups, a certain degree of decentralisation, devolution, and commensurate funding support will be required.

Many successful YEM programmes have used a combined top-down/bottom-up approach, pairing upstream support for prioritising youth in national development frameworks, employment policies and legislation with community-level pilot projects to address inequalities in access to decent work and social protection. An external review of the programmes found that this approach has led to the emergence of a virtuous circle, based on a strengthened knowledge base, indicator development, priority setting, measurable action plans and funding mechanisms “with the lessons learned from demonstration policies and pilot projects on what works and why in localised delivery, then informing the adjustments needed to policies, processes and legal frameworks back upstream at national level.”  

**Box 13.3. Serbia provides tailored labour market inclusion support for youth**

The MDG-F YEM programme in Serbia successfully piloted an integrated service delivery model at the local level, providing targeted assistance for labour market inclusion to disadvantaged youths (those lacking education or training, living in rural areas, or belonging to ethnic minorities). The pilot introduced a case management approach into the delivery of local employment and social services, including a comprehensive needs assessment and clear action planning for each client, and counselling and mentoring by case workers. This approach has been backed by coaching and other institutional capacity development interventions for local service providers and youth offices, and benefited from the establishment of a dedicated funding mechanism (Youth Employment Fund) through which national budget allocations for youth employment have been channelled.


**CONCLUSION: YOUTH, MIGRATION AND THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

A look at the PRSP review undertaken for this paper suggests that there are clear linkages between migration, youth and key development priorities currently under discussion as part of the post-2015 process, including poverty reduction, education and employment, inequalities and social inclusion, and human security. It also shows
that countries are aware of these links, but may not have the data, policies or implementation capacities to effectively address them.

Prioritising youth development and migration in the post-2015 agenda would undoubtedly generate momentum for data collection, policy development, and international cooperation, encouraging national development plans and development cooperation strategies to follow suit. Addressing youth development and migration in the post-2015 agenda discussion should also illuminate the importance of youth migration to sustaining development in industrialized countries of the global North.

Across countries, progress will continue to be built from the bottom-up, by testing what works and why through local pilots that can inform national policies and planning, as well as international cooperation.

The stakes are high: any progress on opening up safe and affordable migration channels, lowering the costs of movement and improving the (re)integration of migrants and their ability to contribute to their countries of origin and destination will almost inevitably benefit youth, their families and communities. Yet, the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 agenda is likely to face obstacles, not least due to the sensitivity of the issue in many domestic political arenas. Political leadership on the topic is hard to come by. Still, countries will feel the pressure as national labour markets, social security, health, education and electoral systems will all be challenged to adapt to more mobile and diverse societies.

The challenge is not just to make migration and youth relevant for the post-2015 agenda; it is also for the post-2015 agenda to speak to the aspirations of youth and the realities of global interconnectedness and mobility in the 21st century.
KEY MESSAGES

- No youth should be confined to the opportunities or lack thereof offered by his or her birth place. Access to information and overarching dynamics such as demographic imbalances, shifting development patterns, rapid urbanisation and persistent inequities are all likely to drive youth migration for the decades to come. Thus it is time to review how countries currently frame this issue and to advocate for a more youth-centred and facilitative approach.

- The post-2015 process provides a window of opportunity for such re-framing, based on an analysis of linkages between youth, migration and emerging development priorities, and by taking stock of lessons learned at national and local levels and building multi-level and multi-stakeholder coalitions for advocacy.

- Integrated strategies on youth, migration and development at national and local levels may best be brought about by taking a mainstreaming approach, including investments in data and research, and a consultative, multi-stakeholder process to identify policy and programming priorities that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of young people. Beyond horizontal coordination across development sectors and government departments, vertical collaboration between different levels of governance is crucial to ensuring effective implementation and programme design, as well as outreach to most in-need groups.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Invest in age- and sex-disaggregated data on migration and build local-level data collection capacities to improve the evidence base regarding: the selectivity of youth migration, the human development outcomes of young migrants, the impacts of youth migration at local and national levels and the situation of young people left behind, especially when they act as caregivers for younger siblings and heads of households.

- Start a youth and migration mainstreaming effort with an analysis of the political and institutional context, including a mapping of key stakeholders. Use data and research for targeted policy advocacy and to guide policy and programme development.

- Consider formulating a national policy framework and plan of action on migration and development to foster a shared understanding of the linkages between migration, youth
and development; raise the issue on the national development agenda; obtain stakeholder ‘buy-in’; and influence the allocation of budgetary resources.

- Establish or strengthen national coordination mechanisms bringing together the government ministries and agencies with responsibilities for planning, development, migration, youth, labour, education and others concerned; as well as relevant international agencies, social partners, local authorities, and concerned civil society, including migrants and diaspora.

- Use the process of data collection, consultative policy development and policy coordination as an opportunity to engage and build trust with bilateral and regional partner countries; and pursue coordination between national and local level governments.

- Adjust policies by learning from local practices, including integrated service delivery models that treat youth and migrants as stakeholders and can respond to the unique profile, vulnerabilities and capabilities of different groups of young people.
NOTES

1 Reference to “full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people” has been largely interpreted as a national-level target to be achieved through domestic employment generation.
2 The Spanish-funded MDG Achievement Fund, designed to support countries to reach MDG goals and targets, explicitly acknowledged the role of migration in strategies for youth and employment. Yet most of the 14 programmes implemented under its “Youth, Employment and Migration” (YEM) window focus on job creation “at home”, to remove a key driver of migration; only a few seek to facilitate mobility. See: http://www.mdgfund.org/content/youthemploymentandmigration
3 At the 2011 Global Forum on Migration and Development, held under Swiss Chairmanship, the ‘Common Space’ joint session of government and civil society delegates focused on the theme of “demographics, youth (un)employment, development and migration”.
4 The 2009 Human Development Report finds this to be the case for India, Jordan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam.
6 The project is implemented by UNDP and IOM with support from other member agencies of the Global Migration Group, including UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women, and financing from the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency.
8 Bangladesh, Ecuador, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Morocco, Serbia, Tunisia
9 These include: Jobbins, Mike, "Migration and development: poverty reduction strategies", Discussion paper prepared for the Civil Society Days of the Global Forum for Migration and Development, Manila, October 2008; and Martin, Susan F., "Policy and institutional coherence at the civil society days of the GFMD", Discussion paper prepared for the Civil Society Days of the Global Forum for Migration and Development, Manila, October 2008
10 Black, Richard and Jon Sward, "Migration, Poverty Reduction Strategies and Human Development." Human Development Research Paper, No. 38, 2009, p. 5-6. The authors point to the often limited timeframe available for their completion, centralised ownership by the ministry of finance or the office of the president or prime minister (who may not prioritize migration issues), and the potentially donor-driven nature of a document that is primarily drafted to access international development finance. However, they also point out that PRSPs are usually drafted in consultation with civil society actors and impact on countries’ budget priorities.
12 Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cote d’Ivoire, Dominica, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Lesotho, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Timor Leste, Togo, Uganda, Yemen.
13 Albania, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Comoros, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nepal, Senegal, Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Vietnam.
15 The Kyrgyz PRSP goes so far as to stipulate as main principles of the state’s migration policy: “(i) strict observation of internationally recognized rights in the field of human rights and freedom, protection, right for labor, migration and place of residence and place of stay selection; (ii) ensuring constitutional guarantees of the state on legal protection and social support of citizens abroad, as well as foreign citizens in the Kyrgyz Republic”.
16 Black and Sward, op. cit.
17 A repository of existing Migration Profiles is available on the GFMD Platform for Partnerships at: http://www.gfmd.org/en/pfp/policy-tools/migration-profiles
18 Migration, domestic and international, is analysed from different perspectives in two regional human development reports (RHDRs), 18 national (NHDRs) and two sub-national human development reports. In four cases (Albania, Armenia, El Salvador and Mexico) migration was the central theme of the NHDRs, while in the other cases migration is mentioned as a cross-cutting issue that impacts on a specific topic relevant to human development in that country or region. Source: Paola Pagliani (2009), “Mobility and Human Development in National and Regional Human Development Reports: A review of National and Regional Human Development Reports on Mobility and Migration”, HDRO.
19 Stakeholders in the MDG-F Joint YEM Programmes at national and local levels have included: ministries in charge of labour and employment, youth and sport, health, economy and planning, enterprise development, agriculture, education and science; municipalities and national statistical institutes; public employment services; employers and workers’ organizations; and civil society organizations. FAO, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS and WHO have also participated.
More migrants will arrive in city centres during the next 40 years than ever before.\(^1\) Policy interventions generally fall into two broad categories, those related to: *entry* (how, where and for how long a migrant enters), and *integration* (the two-way relationship between migrants and local societies). National policies are required to address entry issues, while local governments can take the lead in creating an enabling environment for social, economic and political integration of all migrants, including young people. National policy environments that recognise the importance of local-level integration can greatly facilitate this process.

Efforts to promote integration are now understood to be just as important as entry issues. The (2010) EC-UN ‘Joint Migration and Development Initiative’ (JMDI) Report, which explores the role of local authorities in promoting migration and development, points to the seemingly contradictory challenge of ensuring both meaningful integration and effective circularity. It is widely considered that the more integrated the migrant is, the more he or she can contribute – socially, economically and otherwise – to both origin and destination countries.

Another emerging trend is an increased focus on the role and support of local community representatives in promoting integration and social cohesion through thoughtful urban planning and the effective provision of basic services, including health and education, to newcomers.

Indeed, with few exceptions around the world, cities and regions facilitate access to rights, benefits and services for migrants. This is why, as a 2012 Cities of Migration Report concludes: "Cities are lead actors on the stage of global migration. As the level of government closest to the people, local governments are most directly and immediately impacted by the lives, successes and challenges of immigrants....local governments can succeed where many national governments are challenged."\(^2\) At a meeting convened by the Mayor of New York in April 2013, this view was echoed from personal experience when one mayor stated that his city has implemented its version of immigration reform, while Washington figures out what it plans for the country.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\) Prepared by Dr. Colleen Thouez of the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), with inputs from Dr. Susil Sirivardana, of the South Asian Perspectives Network Association, Sri Lanka.

\(^{2}\) This chapter is part of the book *Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities* Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF
The existence of dedicated migration policy decision-making structures within national governments is a fairly new phenomenon, and opens up opportunities for both local authorities and stakeholders, including civil society organisations (CSOs), to influence the policy debate. Such opportunities for engagement were limited when concern focused almost exclusively on entry-related issues. “State partnerships with CSOs...are known to infuse policy debates with new perspectives and critical on-the-ground knowledge of what migrants need and want.”

Creative, evidence-based policies and programmes put forward by local authorities can make a qualitative difference to the lives of all migrant youth and have a multiplier effect in communities. Such policies and programmes should be sensitive to the particular needs of migrant youth, and facilitate their engagement and dialogue with local authorities. The same is true for linkages with CSOs working in partnership with migrant youth. Over time and through open dialogue, a new social compact can emerge between local government and migrant youth.

This chapter discusses the role of local authorities in migration policy, especially in relation to integration and social cohesion, and how they can work to promote the inclusion of migrant youth. It describes four obstacles that CSOs (such as those representing migrant youth) face when seeking to engage with local authorities, and points to opportunities for overcoming these obstacles, thereby contributing to the creation of more inclusive communities.
“Local authorities are at the forefront in confronting the transformations and the opportunities that migration brings about.”

Decentralisation – defined as the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from central to intermediate and local governments – is a key vehicle for allowing local authorities to efficiently and effectively harness the challenges and opportunities that migration offers. In Europe and North America decentralisation has advanced significantly, however this is not always the case in other regions, particularly in Africa, where the process began later and has not reached the same scale. The level of decentralisation will have an impact on the scope of authority for local government. Despite these differences, local leaders everywhere face similar migration-related challenges.

With no common past shared amongst immigrant groups, local authorities must learn how to shape policies that apply across a divergent populace. Further, since a growing number of cities are heavily populated by immigrants, local authorities must consider how integration policies cut across and equalize the rich diversity of immigrant groups. Some consider that “the best integration policies are urban policies.” A number of cities have adopted an approach in which little or no distinction is made between migrants and original city residents, with an overriding message of “participation over segregation.” The ‘Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL)’ project recommends that community messaging on tolerance be geared towards “telling the story to everyone.” In the same vein, the City of Bremen, Germany, which is working to recruit more minority youth for local civil service jobs, shifted its campaign messaging from targeting under-represented minorities to an approach in which minority youth feel “equal among equals.”

Cities must also be fluid and flexible in adapting policy to changing circumstances. In New York City, for example, migration policies have had to adapt to an ever-changing influx of different migrant population groups. In many European cities as well, circular mobility patterns overshadow traditional immigration patterns. The challenge becomes more complex when attempting to respond to differing needs, especially in an economically fragile climate.
Local authorities must have the tools to assess the most urgent needs of different migrant groups, particularly children and adolescents, through processes that encourage their participation.

The challenges and opportunities faced by local authorities in less-developed regions are magnified by climate and environmental change, rapid population growth and insufficient infrastructure, such as health centres and schools.

### Box 14.2. Access to Rights and Responsibilities

Rural-urban migrants have also received attention from local governments. Shenzhen, China, has 2.1 million registered residents – and 8 million migrant workers. In July 2008 Shenzhen became the first Chinese city to offer “citizenship” to migrants. Residents ages 16 to 60 living in the area for at least 30 days, but registered elsewhere, can obtain 10-year residence certificate “smart cards” that allow them to apply for driving licenses and business visas to visit Hong Kong or Macao. Children of card-holders can attend local public schools, and their families are permitted to apply for low-cost public housing.


**MIGRATION AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES: EMERGING ISSUES**

**Capacity Building Development for Local Authorities**

Capacity development not only entails increasing the technical capabilities of local authorities but also ensuring the efficient provision of basic needs and services. Empirical evidence suggests that decentralised management of social services and public goods provide optimal “value-for-money” in development planning and delivery. Several global actors continue to expand or promote decentralisation and local governance programmes, in line with national poverty-reduction strategies. These agencies point to the accompanying merits of transparency, accountability, resource-efficiency (both human and financial) and, most importantly, the proximity of programme planning and design to actual beneficiary needs.
Nexus of National and Local Policies

Local authorities must work within the broader context of national or federal policy-making. The coherence and interplay between national migration policies and local initiatives to provide services and protection to migrant youth and promote their social inclusion is an area that merits further attention. At a minimum, local governments need the authority and resources to respond appropriately to the needs of migrant youth in the communities under their jurisdiction. Optimally, they should be able to operate in an overall policy environment that favours an inclusive approach. At an LPHM Course organised in October 2013 in light of the growing concerns of marginalised European Muslim youth going to fight in Syria, the close and crucial partnership between federal and local law enforcement and responsible municipal focal points on youth in the City of Antwerp were highlighted as a model for other cities in Europe.

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Box 14.3. Decentralized Cooperation Programme

Over ten years ago, the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) developed, with UN Habitat, the first declaration of local authorities delivered at the UN during the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This declaration led to the establishment of a dedicated UNITAR training programme: the “Decentralized Cooperation Programme” (DCP) whose purpose is to address the capacity-building needs of municipal actors in the fields of social development, economic development and sustainable cities (see: http://www.unitar.org/ldp/) The DCP is carried out in part through UNITAR’s network of training centres for local governments – “Centre internationaux de formation pour acteurs locaux” (CIFAL Centres).

Reflecting a broader trend, CIFAL mayors and their representatives have recently stressed the growing urgency of addressing migration-related challenges in their cities, including: environmental sustainability, integration, employment, education, transportation, social services, health, human security and inter-cultural dialogue. In response, UNITAR launched the “Learning Platform on Human Mobility” (LPHM) in 2012, the first global platform dedicated to training local and regional authorities on migration and human mobility through a blended learning approach. The LPHM is dedicated to providing capacity development on all aspects of mobility, designed specifically for local and regional authorities.

Source: https://www.unitar.org/ldp/strengthening-local-governance
Local Authorities: Well Positioned to Support Migrant Youth

Local authorities are clearly on the front lines in addressing migration challenges, given their mandate and presence “on the ground” and experience in the day-to-day realities of increasingly diverse societies. Although little research is available on the interface between migrant youth associations and government, anecdotal evidence suggests that youth often press for change first through locally-based public institutions.

Migrants often concentrate in localities where fellow countrymen/women reside. As a result, transnational links emerge from communities of migrants living within local host communities. Local authorities can play a role in strengthening “intra-community” social cohesion, including fostering links with migrants’ homelands. Far from undermining inclusion in destination cities, celebrating the origins of migrant groups can support a positive dual identity for the young and facilitate parents’ acceptance of their children’s embrace of more than one culture.13

Youth Migrant Organisations

Youth migrants coalesce for differing reasons, including common nationalities and/or ethnic origins, or as a result of similar challenges – such as their undocumented status and/or barriers to education, employment or social mobility. The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) stresses that: “Youth organizations are important forums for developing skills necessary for effective participation in society, promoting tolerance and increased cooperation and exchanges...”14

In Germany, for example, Turkish migrants or descendants of migrants have coalesced to ensure better access to quality education, and in the United States young migrants from a variety of national origins joined forces to press for federal enactment of the Dream Act, which, through what is now known as “deferred action,” has allowed over a million children born of undocumented parents to remain in the United States, work legally and apply for drivers’ licences and other forms of documentation.15 Under its rigorous provisions, qualifying undocumented youth would be eligible for a six-year conditional path to citizenship, after completing a college degree or two years of military service.
CHALLENGES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES’ ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG MIGRANTS

Although recognition of the role of local authorities in addressing migration challenges is growing, significant obstacles remain in relation to their engagement with CSOs in general, and perhaps specifically with migrant youth associations. Even if local authorities want to reach out in a meaningful way to migrant communities and migrant youth, certain obstacles must be overcome.

**Representation and legitimacy:** Until recently, CSOs (e.g., non-governmental community-based, faith-based, diaspora and advocacy groups) have had a relatively limited role in the migration policy debate. Literature on the role of CSOs in influencing migration policy points particularly to dilemmas related to proper representation and associated legitimacy. Regarding representation, “a critical aspect in establishing successful relationships with migrant associations is the capacity of the associations to represent a wider community, i.e. whether they can be considered as legitimate representatives of community interests.” Size of membership is one criterion, but is not sufficient. Local authorities have developed criteria that can measure the extent to which a migrant association is representative of the wider community. Legitimacy is tied to representation, as well as how well a CSO performs its functions – which should be for the common good, rather than to advance private interests.

**Effective participation:** A second challenge pertains to securing effective participation; that is, ensuring that migrant youth are part of a process, factoring in their unique perspectives. The WPAY points to an overall lack of opportunities for young people to participate in the life of society and contribute to its development: “In addition to their intellectual contribution and ability to mobilize support, they bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account.”

By capturing youth needs and priorities, local leaders can actively include youth agendas in the development of responsive policies that involve and engage these populations, to sustainably build the local communities of tomorrow – irrespective of youth’s citizenship status.

**Access:** A third, related, challenge pertains to the channels that allow, or inhibit, CSOs’ direct access to local authorities. Where local authorities are well-defined, the challenge can be to identify those responsible for migration (and/or migration and development) objectives. Often there is little coordination between national, regional
and municipal officials dealing with migration, and given its multi-sectoral nature, migration may be addressed by a number of agencies or task forces. “A current deficiency identified by local authorities in on-going migration management is the lack of efficient and effective coordination within the administration and with other stakeholders.”

**Limited resources**: A recurring challenge for CSOs is the legislative and financial climate in which they operate. The current state of the global economy makes resource mobilisation particularly difficult, but CSOs have long faced challenges in generating funding support. Some foundations have targeted migrant youth for grants, but few funds are available to migrant youth associations.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGING WITH YOUNG MIGRANTS**

**Forming coalitions of interest**: Migrant youth associations might be able to exert greater influence over decision-making processes if they joined together with other interest groups. In addition to strength in numbers, coalitions facilitate the bundling of priorities. Coalitions of interest amongst different groups that affect or are affected by migration can provide mutual strategic support, information sharing, network building and technical expertise. Such coalitions can link local civil society efforts with international processes and vice-versa. Further, international support for local groups can have a “boomerang effect,” as sustained transnational mobilisation provides the support and pressure needed by local actors, which can in turn lead to improved practice at all governance levels.

**Use of new technologies**: Civil expression, as starkly exemplified during the Arab Spring, continues to reflect the results of social, economic and other policies that neglected for too long the vital role of youth in today’s societal structure. Governments can innovate by using fast-growing technologies (such as social networking) to share information, experiences and good practices. Social media and technology can help give overlooked sectors of society a voice. Since young people are particularly well-versed in using technology, they should receive support in efforts to apply their creative and tech-savvy efforts to effect desired change.

**Platforms for dialogue and access**: One of the main developments in migration policy since its progressive “internationalisation” in the mid-1990s has been the
establishment of platforms for the exchange of views, information and policy making. Globally, the multiplication of this cooperation model (also defined as "informal, network-based governance") reflects both states' recognition that they can benefit from cooperation on migration issues, and their willingness to come together in an informal, non-binding way to do so. For local authorities, a central recommendation is “the establishment and maintenance over time of institutional set-ups that serve as dialogue and coordination frameworks.” At the UN General Assembly High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development on 4 October 2013, the Mayor of Barcelona announced that his City would host the Mayoral Forum on Migration, Mobility and Development on 20 June 2014. In gathering 30 mayors from around the world, the Forum serves to: catalyse policy leaders in cities and regions around the key challenges and opportunities of mobility and development; shape a vision for what is required to carry a “mobility and development” agenda forward for cities and regions; and channel global visibility on the role played by sub-national government in this field.

Such platforms, or “local consultative processes,” should include a platform dedicated to interface with migrant youth associations.

Local authorities and stakeholders, until recently relatively uninvolved [in the migration policy debate], have increased their commitment.... In this sense, the establishment of good lines of communication at the horizontal and vertical level, the exposure to other experiences, and the increasing relevance of migration in social cohesion policy become pivotal elements of local authorities' increased awareness and action.... To [achieve] this aim, local authorities can beneficially promote vertical partnerships within other levels of government and horizontal partnerships with other actors operating at the same level.
KEY MESSAGES

- Cities are the epicentres of human mobility. Local authorities along with local institutions, policies and programmes are in the best position to address important migration-related challenges for adolescents and youth, such as: education, employment, empowerment, access to health services, social cohesion and adapting to change.

- A national policy environment that encourages the integration of migrants will assist local authorities’ to promote inclusive cities and neighbourhoods in which young migrants can actively participate in policy-making and contribute to the development of their arrival communities as well as their communities of origin.

- Local authorities need support from national governments to address the challenges of migration and mobility. While important policy and research networks already exist, national governments should help contribute more resources, and support emerging consultative processes (or expand them to the local level) and ensure the presence of a favourable environment for an inclusive approach toward migrant youth.

- A city’s “body language” is a barometer for inclusion. Local authorities should work to develop neighbourhoods in which young migrants are ensured access to what they need to prosper (adequate housing, viable schools, participation rights, employment opportunities, healthcare, etc.), and where they are not subjected to attitudes or practices aimed at social exclusion.

- Regular, meaningful interface with migrant associations, including those representing youth as well as women’s organizations, will help local authorities to accurately assess specific needs. The scope of migrant youth associations’ influence will depend on their ability to secure legitimacy, achieve effective participation, enjoy direct access to local government channels, and overcome material constraints.

- More comparative research is required on migrant youth associations’ engagement with local authorities (challenges, obstacles, successful initiatives, etc.). Research should also focus on how migrant youth associations can (or do) benefit from building larger coalitions of interest, employing new technologies to achieve their objectives, and engaging with youth through participatory “local consultative processes” (or their equivalent).
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish local assessments, policies, institutions, mechanisms, programmes and actions to facilitate migrant reception and integration, with particular attention to migrant youth and adolescents.

- Ensure that local authorities responsible for designing and implementing policies and programmes related to migration and diversity are clearly identifiable by and accessible to the general public, including migrant youth.

- Provide support to local authorities (by national governments) on migration and mobility.

- Establish consultative processes incorporating local authorities and migrant youth.

- Facilitate and support migrant youth associations, migrant women’s associations and migrant civil society participation.

- Institutionalise collection of migration data on adolescents and migrant youth at the local level and conduct research on migrant youth’s engagement with local authorities.
NOTES

1 Between 2007 and 2050 the world’s cities will have absorbed 3.1 billion people, what Doug Sanders describes as “the largest migration in human history.” Saunders (2010), Arrival City: How the Largest Migration in History is Reshaping our World, New York: Pantheon Books.

2 Good Ideas from Successful Cities Report (September 2012), Cities of Migration Report, Maytree Foundation, citiesofmigration.org, p.12

3 “Convening of Cities for Immigration Integration: Supporting and Engaging Immigrant Communities”, hosted by the Office of the Mayor, City of New York, 25 April 2013.


6 “Migration to Development: Lessons drawn from the experience of local authorities” EC-UN JMDI Final Report, p. 19


8 Ibid, p. 22.


11 Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL) is an eighteen-month-old transnational project funded by the European Union’s Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals (European Integration Fund – EIF) under its Community Actions 2009 programme. See: http://www.compass.ox.ac.uk/research/urbanchange/amicall/#c2211

12 Maytree Foundation, op. cit, pp.34-35.

13 UNITAR (2012) op. cit.: 7

14 DESA, World Programme of Action for Youth 2010, p. 42.

15 Under the new policy, migrants who came to the United States before age 16, have lived here for at least five years, and are in school, are high school graduates or are military veterans in good standing will have the option to remain temporarily. The immigrants must also be 30 or younger and have clean criminal records. NY Times,”Obama to Permit Young Migrants to Remain in US,” http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/16/us/us-to-stop-deporting-some-illegal-immigrants.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

16 Though the focus here is on integration and social cohesion, it is important to note that local authorities work closely with federal authorities on migration and security issues. As stated at the UNITAR July Expert Meeting, local authorities play a vital role in countering radicalization, and in “working to avoid a culture of fear”. The concern in most countries and cities is on extremism (which goes beyond radicalization). Federal authorities “depend” on sub-national government offices to achieve results, and they are increasingly being drawn in to assist. UNITAR (2012) op. cit.: 7


22 http://www.pdsoros.org

23 See Thouez, op. cit. and Bonelescu-Bogdan, op.cit.


28 http://www.unitar.org/ldp/facilitating-policy-dialogue


30 Term borrowed from Elisabeth Collett, MPI Director, Europe.
The many challenges faced by young migrants with regard to realisation of their rights (e.g. to legal protection, health, education, decent work, social protection and to participation) give them a strong stake in policies, programmes and practices that address migration and migrants, as well as in the affairs of the communities where they live.

Embracing young people affected by migration as vital stakeholders in migration policy-making and practice as well as in community governance not only allows them to fulfil their right to participation, but also contributes to achieving more effective, youth-sensitive policies. Young migrants can play a leadership role in raising awareness and changing attitudes and practices about migration and migrants in their communities. Encouraging and supporting young migrants to share their experiences and challenges and to participate in local organizations can make a dynamic contribution to building respectful, inclusive and peaceful societies. Another emerging trend is an increased focus on the role and support of local community representatives in promoting integration and social cohesion through thoughtful urban planning and the effective provision of basic services, including health and education, to newcomers.

Young migrants can – and do – contribute to public policy debate on matters affecting them as well as concerning the communities in which they live. Young migrants’ use of social media and other communication/information technologies to mobilise and make their views known has played a vital role in national migration policy debates, as manifested recently in several countries.1

This chapter highlights the imperatives and challenges of supporting young migrants’ participation in the life and decision-making of the communities where they live and in the policies that affect them. It grounds discussion in the rights undergirding youth and adolescent participation, namely those enumerated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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1 Prepared by Patrick Taran of Global Migration Policy Associates with Alison Raphael, UNICEF editorial consultant, based on inputs from Ravi Karkara of UN-HABITAT and comments from Michael Boampong, UNICEF consultant. Substantive inputs, revisions and insights were provided by Golda El Khoury and Maria Kypriotou of UNESCO and Miriam Poulsson Kramer of UNICEF. The chapter also drew on contributions for this report by Jacqueline Bhabha at Harvard University, Sue Lemesurier of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Leonir Mario Chiarello of the Scalabrini International Migration Network, and Saket Mani, Youth Representative to the United Nations.

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It discusses concepts and definitions of participation, including community, social and political participation, that contextualize migrant youth participation. The chapter provides essential background on the importance of adolescent and youth participation in general.

With this context, it elaborates on specific conditions and challenges impeding migrant youth participation. It highlights principles and guidelines to facilitate strengthening participation by migrant youth. The chapter emphasizes the integral relationship between participation and integration and provides examples of young migrants’ participation in policy-making processes, including initiatives related to migration and development.

The discussion below addresses issues of participation that, in most cases, are relevant to both adolescent \(^2\) and young migrants as defined in this report. \(^3\) The international legal framework enshrines adolescents’ right to participation in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC addresses the rights of all human beings under the age of 18, viewing them as social actors in their own right, capable of forming and expressing opinions, having freedom of thought, conscience and opinion, and being entitled to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and to participate actively in decision-making processes that affect them. \(^4\)

The rights and freedoms pertaining to participation in the CRC are universal and inter-related rights to freedom of expression, freedom of information, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of association, and freedom of peaceful assembly (Box 15.1).

For young migrants 18 or older, very similar rights and freedoms are laid out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights (ICPCR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).
WHAT IS PARTICIPATION?

Participation has been defined as: “the active, informed and voluntary involvement of people in decision-making and the life of their communities (both locally and globally).” This broad, general definition provides a useful anchor for discussion of migrant youth participation.

In broad terms, participation is an essential pillar of viable democratic governance and social cohesion. The importance of participation in policy-making by affected groups is acknowledged in national and international contexts. For example, in addressing health, a critical concern for young migrants, a WHO commission observed that,

“A crucial direction for policy to promote health equity concerns the participation of civil society and the empowerment of affected communities to become active protagonists in shaping their own health. Broad social
participation in shaping policies to advance health equity is justified on ethical and human rights grounds, but also pragmatically. Also, from a strategic point of view, having public ownership [...] is vital to the agenda’s long-term sustainability.

While the term participation is often used in reference to political participation and its association with voting rights and participation in political office, the term has far wider application of particular importance for migrant youth. The reference in the definition cited above to participatory involvement in decision-making and community life at multiple levels, from local to global, is especially relevant for migrant youth.

While classic «political participation» in the electoral arena is widely understood as a right of citizenship, at least for national affairs, participation in community life and decision-making by citizens and migrants/immigrants alike often involves activity associated with political participation, such as advocacy for public policy, participation in community governance processes, and lobbying decision and policy-makers. Certainly this is the case in situations of representative governance, where dialogue, exchange and policy advocacy by constituents with legislators, decision-makers and administrators are expected across levels of government, local to national, and where views of migrant and immigrant communities may be actively sought.

In many societies, participation more broadly comprises engagement in associative groups or organizations -- whether workplace unions, social and sports clubs, hobby or interest groups, faith-based organizations, or community groups. The latter take multiple forms, such as charity or community services helping the poor, children, aged people, addressing illnesses, etc.; or they may be community-issue associations addressing, for example, policy and action on housing, water, sanitation, schooling, and other issues, whether at local or national levels. The arena of associative groups can be considered synonymous with civil society.

The challenges of and guidance for migrant youth participation, whether in policy advocacy and/or civil society activity are discussed below, necessarily in the context of youth participation more broadly.
YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The international community has long recognised that young people constitute a vital human resource for development and social change, economic growth and technological innovation. In 1997 the UN Economic and Social Council envisioned participation as a strategy for making young people’s concerns and experiences an “integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres,” to help ensure that they benefit equally from policy initiatives that affect them.

Participation in decision-making is a key priority of the UN Agenda on Youth. In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, the UN adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), the priorities of which are critical to the discussion on youth migration and development (Box 15.2). WPAY’s focus on globalisation, for instance, underscores the inter-relationship between globalisation and ease of movement of people and capital, reduced transportation costs, and advanced communication technologies that, among other benefits, allow young people to learn of opportunities outside their country of origin.  

When referring to youth participation, the term calls for “work with and by young people, not merely work for them, as beneficiaries, partners and leaders.” Working with young people is crucial, but so is the level of trust, responsibility, and acknowledgement implied. The level of responsibility attributed to them should therefore make their input be considered sufficiently valuable as to be incorporated directly into decision-making policies.
Box 15.2. Full and effective participation of young people in the life of society and in decision-making

Social progress is based on a society’s capacity to incorporate the contribution and responsibility of youth in building and designing its future. In addition to their intellectual contribution and ability to mobilise support, young people bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account.

The World Programme on Youth proposes the following actions to promote effective youth participation that fully apply to migrant youth participation:

- Develop and strengthen opportunities for youth to learn their rights and responsibilities
- Promote participation of young people in decision-making processes related to social, political, developmental and environmental issues, and remove obstacles that affect their full contribution to society
- Encourage youth associations and activities through financial, educational and technical support
- Foster local, national, regional and international cooperation and exchanges between youth organisations
- Strengthen the involvement of young people in international forums, for example by considering the inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegations to the United Nations General Assembly.
- More importantly, efforts should be made to foster exchanges between the youth and a vast majority of relevant institutions, in order to fully and efficiently incorporate young people, including migrant youth, into global discussions.


MIGRANT PARTICIPATION AND INTEGRATION

A landmark EU Commission Communication on Integration in 2007 explicitly recognized participation as one of the key elements facilitating integration of migrants in host societies. The Communication highlighted that: “The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.” The Communication identified a number of areas for migrant participation – all of which apply for young migrants. These include:

- Increase civic, cultural and political participation and foster dialogue to promote active citizenship, including consultation and advisory fora at all levels.
• Foster dialogue and shared experiences between migrant groups and across generations.

• Increase migrant participation in the democratic process, and promote balanced gender representation through awareness raising, information campaigns, capacity building, and addressing barriers to the exercise of voting rights.

• Facilitate participation in mainstream organisations, for instance by supporting volunteer and internship programmes and encouraging organisations to be open to migrant participation.

• Enable participation specifically in developing the country's response to migration.

• Build migrants' associations as sources of advice to newcomers and include their representatives in introduction programmes as trainers and role models.

• Develop the concept of Civic Citizenship for non-citizens which clarifies rights and duties.

• Develop programmes to prepare migrants for acquiring citizenship.

• Promote research and dialogue on identity and citizenship questions.

As illustrated by the areas of participation identified in the EC Communication on integration, discussion of participation often does not distinguish between what are referred to, respectively, as social participation and political participation.

**YOUNG MIGRANTS’ PARTICIPATION**

Opportunities to participate in processes, organizations and decisions that concern them can provide young migrants with vital life-skills and contribute to their self-esteem, social inclusion, sense of responsibility and understanding of decision-making processes, along with imparting other skills useful to their future development. Participation can help to overcome young migrants' feelings of alienation, making them feel valued and accepted in a destination society.

Successful efforts can also promote social cohesion, by undermining negative public perceptions of, and attitudes toward, migrant youth.

Young migrants are fully capable of meaningful participation in the policy arena, if they have access to information and resources, and freedom to express their views.
Further documentation on young immigrants’ participation, including irregular migrants, is needed. Decision-making processes related to migration and other policies affecting migrants will only be robust when the voices of all migrants have been heard.

The opportunity for migrants who are non-citizens to exercise formal political participation roles such as voting in elections and holding political office is increasing in a number of places worldwide. Where this is the case, informing and reaching out to young migrants is essential to engaging their participation.

Nonetheless, this opportunity for democratic participation is not available in many places; in any case, non-citizens cannot vote in national elections. Migrants in undocumented situations are also excluded.

Membership, activity and advocacy in civil society organisations is a main and widely exercised means for youth, including migrant youth, to participate in their community and society. Civil society groups of all kinds, particularly youth groups, community organisations, trade unions, and groups concerned with migration provide spaces to meet peers, define shared interests, organise activities, and engage in collective action and advocacy. Youth organisations are common in many countries, and in others civil society and local community groups incorporate and encourage youth participation. Migrant youth often participate in sports clubs, ethnic community groups, faith-based organisations or youth-specific groups in many countries. Youth are often a mainstay of migrant and diaspora organisations.

Well-documented examples of participation by young people affected by migration in decision-making processes related to migration remain scarce; a gap that should be addressed by research and documentation to expand the evidence base for sound policy-making. One notable example is the experience of young immigrants who strongly advocate for passage of the ’Dream Act’ in the United States. This and other examples of migrant youth participation in community and policy-related activities are cited in boxes 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7 and 15.8 in this chapter.
CHALLENGES TO YOUNG MIGRANTS’ PARTICIPATION

Young migrants become particularly vulnerable when they lose the rich array of interpersonal relationships with peers and family in their country of origin. This happens at a crucial moment of their lives, when these relationships would ordinarily help to shape their personal and social development as they begin the transition to adulthood.

Instead, young migrants may encounter xenophobia and discrimination in destination countries and suffer disadvantages due to lack of fluency in the local language. Undocumented adolescents and youth face special challenges in the area of participation, due to their fear that calling attention to themselves puts them at risk for detention and/or deportation. Adolescent girls often face participation constraints in the form of culturally-defined gender roles and expectations that keep them from speaking up at, or even attending, a meeting or youth club.

Barriers that inhibit young migrants’ participation include:

- **Restrictions in law** that preclude or restrict the participation of migrants or non-citizens in associations, unions or political activity in destination countries.

- Political discourse and/or policy measures that explicitly discourage migrant participation in local community and national policy affairs, including those that affect them directly.

- **Lack of respect for the opinions of young people** and negative perceptions that envision migrant youth as a problem, rather than a resource.

- **Unequal opportunities and resources** for young people to participate in development policy (opportunities are often available only to well-off, well-educated nationals).

- **Discrimination** based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation, disability and other factors, which interacts with discrimination based on nationality and migration status and prevents young migrants from participating or having a say in activities and programs.

- **Lack of preparation and experience**: Some young migrants have never been exposed to participatory environments (in homes, schools, communities or societies) and lack access to appropriate information to help them make informed choices and encourage their involvement. Young migrants from
countries with non-democratic political systems might at first feel uncomfortable about participating in political processes and civil society organizations.

- **Access to institutions**: Young migrants generally lack direct access to institutional structures within governments and in mainstream civil society sectors.

- **Financial barriers**: Very limited resources are made available for supporting organisations working on youth migration and youth participation issues. Funding for training teachers working with young migrants and for language classes is often very scarce.

- **Lack of trust**: Some adults believe that migrant adolescents and youth lack the competency and experience to participate effectively in community affairs or in policy processes. In some countries, social and cultural norms make very difficult for youth to question or even discuss important issues with adults. Participation can in this case become a vehicle for youth to gain acceptance not only as citizens, but also as adults.

- **Lack of time**: For disadvantaged young people who study and work, day-to-day activities have priority over participatory and consultation processes; this is especially true in the case of young migrants, who often have more immediate concerns than participation, such as language acquisition, housing, income and integration.
Box 15.3. Adolescents in a new country

A study of the situation of Iraqi adolescents living in Jordan offers perspectives on the multiple barriers to participation in a new country that apply to many young migrants and refugees in many places around the world.

Isolation and loss of social networks:
- "Now we don't visit anyone, and no-one visits us. It is not like in Iraq." (Girl, 11-14 age group)
- "Outside of the house I have no friends. (Girl, 18)
- "I come back from school and I do my homework but I don't have friends. I stay at home and sleep and watch TV." (Boy, 14)
- "We want to be closer to Jordanians [youth] and ask them questions and be friends. We are living here and sooner or later we have to understand each other." (Boy, 17)

Discrimination:
- "The people treat each other in a different way. At school and in the street, people tell me I am a stranger here." (Girl, 12)
- "The main problem is that people talk badly about us. The kids become gangs and they are against us...Sometimes Jordanians ask us 'Why are you here? This is not your country'. They put pressure on us and don't accept us." (Boy, 16)
- "Taxi drivers do not use the meter for us. When he [taxi driver] hears us speaking Iraqi and if I ask him to start the meter, he says 'get out of the car', or he charges more." (Girl, 15)

Education:
- "The difficulty I have here is at school. They always put Iraqis at the back of the line for books and there is never enough. They tell me to go and buy the books, but I can't afford it." (Girl, 14)
- "We all have the same problem. The class does not fit our age group. The teachers make fun of us.” (Boy aged between 11-17)
- "I don't like my school because they keep telling us we are...crowding their schools.”(Girl, 16)

Poverty:
- "We go to Mecca Mall. We just look. We can't afford to buy anything.” (Girl, 14)
- "There are no men in the household. My brothers are very young. We have a lot of trouble now. Now we have no money.”(Girl, 15)

Employment:
- "My family are goldsmiths. The government won't allow my father or me to work here.” (Boy, 16)
- "All I want is my father to have a job. I don't want him to have no money. (Boy, 15)

These adolescents – like countless others trying to cope in a destination country – have legitimate needs, concerns and grievances, but nowhere to express them. If appropriate forums were available, they could propose ways to overcome the forms of exclusion they experience and to enhance their participation and contributions. Given the chance to speak out on migration policy, these Iraqi adolescents might, for example, suggest changes aimed at achieving equal treatment in schools, access to employment, inclusion in social protection/poverty-reduction programmes, and steps to overcome negative attitudes toward migrants. It is important to support places and spaces where young migrants can find their voice, recognise the importance of their unique perspectives, and articulate proposals for meeting needs and resolving problems.

More generally, policies, programmes and services for youth and adolescent migrants will be neither appropriate nor effective unless those most concerned are involved in needs assessments, design and delivery. Dialogue with and among civil society organisations, including youth migrant associations, national government, and local administrations is a crucial means of incorporating participation of youth and adolescent migrants in processes of design, definition, implementation, and monitoring of policies and programs. Ultimately, partnership between civil society organisations, government officials and international organisations will be key to finding integrated and systemic solutions for youth’s needs, and to guarantee sustainability in policies, programs and services to youth migrants.

The challenge is to convince local and national decision-makers of the potential and benefits – both to migrant youth and larger societies – of involving adolescents and youth in migration policy dialogue, planning, execution and monitoring, as well as in the legislative and executive components of governance. Currently, youth participation in policy processes is the exception rather than the rule, especially for migrant youth. Few governments or other institutions have developed national strategic frameworks or action plans to promote meaningful youth participation; fewer still encourage involvement by young migrants either in public policy discussion or in civil society. Greater commitment and political will on the part of decision-makers at all levels is required to achieve meaningful adolescent and youth participation in migration and development policy planning.
The challenge of migrant youth participation is not only an issue confronting government institutions. A frequently perceived exclusion to migrant youth participation is the inaccessibility of host community organizations to migrants. Unions, social groups, religious congregations, sports clubs and other civil society groups and organizations are often reported to be unwelcoming, even hostile to migrant or ‘foreigner’ participation. Civil society organisations, trade unions and local community groups need to ensure that migrant youth and adolescents are welcomed, encouraged to participate in activities, and recruited for membership.

An important participation issue meriting further exploration is the tension in so-called diaspora organizing between focussing on issues in the home country and giving adequate attention to concerns of treatment and policy in the country and locality where migrants reside.

GUIDELINES FOR YOUNG MIGRANTS’ PARTICIPATION

Over the past 10-to-15 years, guidelines for young peoples’ participation relevant for migrant youth in a variety of contexts have been developed. A comprehensive contribution by UNICEF in 2010 outlines the steps required to ensure safe and meaningful participation by those under 18 in a variety of contexts. A handbook prepared by the UK’s development arm includes numerous examples of participation by young people in the policy arena. These guidelines are especially pertinent to encouraging migrant youth and adolescent participation. In brief, key principles are:

- Involvement/participation must be voluntary and representative of all young people.
- Goals, purpose and methods must be transparent, clearly explained to participants, and responsive and relevant to those participating,
- Young participants must be offered a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment in which to express their views, using proven participatory methodologies.
- Participation should be on-going, not a once-only, token effort.
- Selection/recruitment criteria should be very transparent and ensure a fair representation or cross-section of all young people including migrants, independent of academic or other qualifications.
These principles apply to encouraging participation by all young migrants – especially the need for a safe environment that unconditionally ensures, for example, that participation will not expose an adolescent girl to negative repercussions of any kind or an undocumented young person to apprehension by police or migration authorities.

The breadth and representation sought by selection or recruitment criteria depends on whether an organization, activity or other participatory initiative is migrant-specific. However, migrant- and/or migrant youth-specific initiatives will benefit by explicitly seeking and ensuring broad participation across migrant/immigrant communities. Other participation or organizing efforts also need to explicitly seek inclusion of the migrant and/or migrant youth in their area and/or issue of concern. Without specific, targeted outreach and inclusion measures, migrant youth participation cannot be expected to happen spontaneously.

Some migrant community and diaspora groups specifically focus outreach and activities on young migrants, acknowledging that incorporating them is crucial to reaching a large part of their constituencies. In Europe, several networks addressing migration issues actively encourage migrant youth participation. The European Minority Youth Network,¹² established following Council of Europe-convened youth consultations in 1997, today involves immigrant and immigrant-origin youth groups in numerous countries across the region.

Awareness of the importance of gathering young people’s opinions and involving them in advocacy work has increased, as reflected in the creation of forums for youth activism in several countries around the world – from Brazil to Nigeria, from the U.S. to Israel.¹³ Yet most strategies focus on domestic political processes from which non-citizens are likely to be excluded.

A notable exception is the European Youth Forum, which takes a more global approach, striving: “...to influence national and international youth policies by advocating for policies that would protect youth’s political and social rights. It fights for higher youth employment levels in Europe, for comprehensive social protection for youth, and against social exclusion among young people.”¹⁴ Involving young people throughout Europe, the Youth Forum also works to: “develop intercultural links through discussions on common strategies with regional youth organizations from Asia to Latin America.”¹⁵ A forum such as this could serve as an excellent vehicle for involving
migrant adolescents and youth in discussions about rights, employment, social protection and social exclusion in the European context. It can also serve as an example for organizing local, national, and regional forums elsewhere around the world.

Research is needed in most places to determine whether existing organisations seek in any way to reach out to young migrants. If not, efforts should be made to encourage their full inclusion in all initiatives addressed at young people so that their needs can be addressed. It is crucial to foster inclusive social networks through school projects and other type of collective activities, not only between migrants and locals, but also between migrants from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

PARTICIPATION IN MIGRATION POLICY

Young people’s contributions to dialogues and activities shaping and implementing migration-related and integration policies often include sharing intimate knowledge of the day-to-day reality and challenges of living as a migrant, and offering suggestions for improvement. Migrant youth and adolescents can also deliver constructive feedback on the effectiveness of existing migration policies and programmes -- Are they working? Should they be revised, eliminated, scaled up?

To participate effectively, they need information to help them formulate useful ideas and contribute to policy dialogue, programme execution, or monitoring and evaluation. The end result can be a win-win for all concerned: young migrants feel valued and have a better understanding of policy processes in their country of destination, while policy-makers and administrators are better informed about the issues requiring their attention.

To facilitate their ability to participate meaningfully in migration policy discussions, young migrants and other youth affected by migration (such as those left behind by migrating parents or young returnees) require the right tools and opportunities, in particular:

- **Background on current migration policy in the country where they are living.**
- **Information about the status of current reform proposals (if any) and about public opinion.**
• Understanding of the process by which policy is formulated and decided, to gauge how they can be heard by a wider audience, including policymakers.

Teaching young people about national and local political processes is normally a function of schools. However, a large percentage of migrant adolescents and youth do not attend (or complete) secondary school. Thus specific strategies must be devised to prepare migrant youth for involvement in their communities and in the policy process, such as through community organisations, non-formal education institutions, NGOs / CSOs, or targeted local government initiatives.

When seeking to create opportunities for migrant adolescents to become involved in a migration policy event or forum, it is critical to consider:

• How to ensure equal participation of boys and girls and young migrants living with disabilities, to ensure that all types of concerns are addressed?
• How to structure the event to ensure that adolescents have a genuine, proactive and significant role?
• How to ensure that policy options are open-ended (rather than limited to a fixed set of choices)?
• How best to focus on the elements of the policy discussion most relevant to young people?16
• How to ensure that young migrants interact with local youth, not only to foster mutual understanding and deepen social networks, but also to increase the legitimacy of the solutions found amongst nationals?

Another factor to be considered is the process by which the outcome of the policy event is communicated to policy-makers and other stakeholders. Age must also be taken into account; different expectations and strategies must be employed for different age ranges. When participants are under 18 years of age, specific guidelines must be followed in order to fulfil CRC principles.17 Once these determinations and adjustments for age have been made, the key principles of meaningful youth participation outlined above and the action lines summarized in Box 15.2 should be incorporated into the process.
TYPES OF PARTICIPATION

Three types of participation with adolescents and/or youth can be identified: consultative, collaborative, and youth-led.18

1. **Consultative** youth participation is initiated, led and managed by qualified, experienced professionals, usually as an effort to better understand the situation young people face and ensure wider dissemination of their inputs. As a rule, young participants do not exercise control of the agenda or the outcome. In the case of migrant youth, consultative participation could, for example, be initiated by a local government with the aim of determining the need for social protection measures, employment, or health and education services. The methodology might involve surveys or engaging migrant youth to reach out to others in their community. Migrant or left-behind young people could also be invited to participate in local, regional or national forums on youth and migration.

2. **Collaborative** youth participation gives young people the opportunity to actively engage in the decision-making process at all or some stages. It can be characterised as:

   - Adult-initiated, but in partnership with youth, empowering youth to influence or challenge both allowing for increasing levels of self-directed action by youth over a period of time.
3. **Youth-led participation** occurs when young people have significant control over the policy space; for example, to initiate proposals and activities, as well as to organise themselves. Characteristics include:
   - Issues of concern have been identified and defined by youth themselves
   - Adults serve as facilitators, rather than leaders
   - Young people fully control and lead the process.

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### Box 15.4. Examples of collaborative participation

To promote youth employment and address migration issues facing youth, the National Youth Commission of the Philippines convened government agencies and youth leaders and representatives to develop the ‘National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth Employment and Migration’ for the Philippines. Over 100 youth leaders and representatives, government officials, workers and employers groups, academics, and civil society organisations came together in a 'youth employment forum' that served as a platform for dialogue on the results of the NAP and for sharing good practices.


The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies’ (IFRC) ‘Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change’ (YABC) programme promotes appreciation for and tolerance of diversity and seeks to empower young people to take leadership roles. IFRC supports the programme in partnership with youth. For example, YABC youth in North Africa organised a football match involving mixed teams of young migrants and youth from local communities, to encourage team-based cooperation rather than dividing teams between migrants and ‘locals’. Through the intercultural dialogue that followed, participants spoke openly about their respective stereotypes and prejudices.

*Source:* IFRC submission to Thematic Report.
Youth-led participation tends to be the more democratic and empowering type; approaches initiated, led and/or managed by older adults inevitably limit, consciously or not, the self-empowerment, autonomy and full participation of youth, especially in the crucial learning-by-doing experiences of organising, analysing, acting and advocating.

**Box 15.5. Example of youth-led participation: the Ragusa Declaration**

In July 2010 Arabic and European youth representatives participated in a migration and development conference in Ragusa, Italy. Participants were members of European, Italian and Arab Youth Leagues, and had support from the League of Arab States and the Council of Europe. With this support, the young representatives gathered in Ragusa took the lead, issuing a strong statement and a series of recommendations, many of which echo the key messages stressed in different chapters of this report.

The 'Ragusa Declaration on Youth, Migration and Development' reflects the insights and concerns expressed by these young people affected by migration, both migrants from Tunis and other parts of the Arab world and Italian youth. Together they issued more than 25 recommendations addressed at national policy-makers and the international community, the first of which stresses the need for considering young people as “partners in development.”

PROMOTING RESPECT AND SOCIAL COHESION

In addition to direct involvement in policy-making and community issues, youth can also have a direct impact by influencing public perceptions of migrants and migration, generating positive but realistic perceptions, and encouraging changes in values and behaviour. They can, in effect, give migration a human face – speaking to groups small or large and explaining the factors that caused them to migrate, their hopes, the difficulties faced during the migration process, and the challenges and opportunities encountered in their country of destination. This participation can take place in gatherings of civic associations, local governments, faith-based or community groups, as well as through community, social or mainstream media. In addition to sensitising the audience of nationals, these experiences help young migrants to learn more about the concerns of the host community, contributing to a broader learning process related

Box 15.6. Youth-led participation: mobilization of young undocumented migrants in the USA

Another example of youth-led participation is the national mobilisation of young, undocumented migrants in the United States to bring public attention to their plight and press for passage of the "Dream Act". By going public with their stories and advocating for themselves, these young people contributed to combating stereotypes of irregular migrants as criminals* and to countering a climate of hostility, discrimination and xenophobia. While the «Dream Act» proposal was not enacted by the United States Congress, US President Obama signed an Executive Order for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in June 2012 providing for temporary residence and work permits to young migrants under certain conditions.** The visible national mobilization of undocumented migrant adolescents and youth certainly contributed to the Obama Administration's decision to issue this Executive Order. A researcher observed that: "young migrants are challenging the boundaries of citizenship [...] even when they are not citizens," and "reconfiguring, organizing and re-energizing US democracy through their use of new information technologies."***

Sources:
* Julia Preston, op cit. (endnote 1)
** The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Executive Order authorized granting of temporary residence and work permits to young migrants of no more than 30 years old who entered the US before age 16, had lived there for at least five years, were in school, high-school graduates or military veterans in good standing, and had no criminal record.
to social policies, particularly migration and integration policies. This ‘public relations’ activity can and should be initiated by civil society organizations, local governments, and community groups.

However, proactive support by host community organizations, service agencies and local authorities is often crucial to engaging participation of migrant youth and adolescents. As Saket Mani, Youth Representative to the United Nations, highlights,

«The principle of youth participation is central to any service or youth policy framework that aims to enhance the lives of young people. Providing the necessary skills and experience is an important step in providing opportunities for migrant young people. Youth from migrant backgrounds bring with them a diversity of understanding about participation from a variety of cultural contexts. Many young migrants have lost a sense of belonging to a community, and consequently different mechanisms are required in order to involve them in participatory processes. Initiatives should be relevant and targeted to the individual experiences of young migrants, focusing on issues of most concern to them. This could involve: supporting a culture of understanding of the challenges faced by young migrants, including by investing in specialized teachers; allocating resources to innovative and interactive activities that allow youth to learn about different cultures in non-formal education settings; creating spaces for dialogue between policy-makers and young migrants; including migration in school curricula; and promoting positive multicultural encounters».19
Another initiative that local and/or national governments can and should take is putting in place or improving existing pre-departure programmes in countries of origin and post-arrival orientation programmes in destination countries to better inform and prepare young migrants to actively participate in destination countries. Such programmes, particularly in destination countries, provide opportunities from the start to build bridges between migrants and host community organizations.

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**Box 15.7. Discrimination and Violence Against Migrant Youth**

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has identified discrimination and violence as two of the key challenges faced by migrants, and focuses much of its migration work on promoting respect for diversity, non-violence and social inclusion of all migrants. To improve public perceptions of migrants, IFRC supports national Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies to bring together migrant youth and adults and non-migrants in “Positive Images” projects underway in 11 countries. In Denmark, for example, Positive Images supports New Times magazine, which includes articles about social integration and human rights and is produced jointly by youth and adult migrants and asylum-seekers. The Danish Red Cross uses New Times as a resource for raising awareness on migration issues among school-age youth, including links to a website offering news and a debate forum to which young people contribute, making innovative use of technology to increase the impact of efforts to improve public perceptions of migrants.

*Source:* [http://newtimes.dk/nt/](http://newtimes.dk/nt/)
When youth lead or are effectively involved in community affairs, migration policy, or development initiatives, the result can be changes in public perceptions, so that youth are seen as assets, rather than as part of the problem. This in turn leads to greater social cohesion, strengthening connections between groups of people, and enabling individual youth to fully participate, contribute to, and benefit from, the society in which they reside. It helps to level the playing field between migrants and nationals, enabling migrant youth to take on the many roles that young people play in social and economic development: as active agents in their own lives; innovators; early adopters to communications, social media and other technologies; inter-cultural ambassadors; peer-to-peer facilitators; community mobilisers; agents of behaviour change; and advocates for people at risk.

### Box 15.8. Promoting Inclusion and Social Cohesion

The Scalabrini International Migration Network works with migrant youth on five continents, promoting intercultural programmes between young nationals and youth migrants to “facilitate their coexistence with local communities and to promote a culture of inclusiveness.” Whether participation takes the form of peer education, preparing soup for a soup kitchen, or engaging in sports, migrant youth participation helps to demystify notions of who migrants are, overcoming stereotypes, and promoting inclusion.

Whether participation takes the form of peer education, preparing soup for a soup kitchen, or engaging in sports, migrant youth participation helps to demystify notions of who migrants are, overcoming stereotypes, and promoting inclusion.
KEY MESSAGES

- Migrant youth and adolescent participation in the life and decision-making of communities where they live is crucial to their engagement as community members.

- Migrant youth and adolescent participation derives from and realizes universal human rights to expression, information, conscience, association and peaceful assembly.

- Migrant youth and adolescent participation is crucial to their integration in destination countries and to maintaining social cohesion.

- Migrant youth’s and adolescents’ access to and engagement in community groups, civil society organisations, unions, youth groups, and sports and cultural organisations is essential to their participation in community life in their country of residence; all such organisations should welcome, support and promote migrant youth participation.

- Inclusive participation by migrant adolescents and youth in shaping and implementing migration – and other – policies affecting them is critical to taking account of their views, needs, challenges, experiences and recommendations.

- Young migrants’ participation yields vital insights for migration policy-making, improves effective implementation, and strengthens sustainability of interventions.

- Including migrant youth in all steps of policy processes, including implementation and monitoring, helps ensure that their needs and recommendations are not ignored.

- Governments can enhance adolescent and youth capacity, well-being, and enthusiasm for meaningful participation by ensuring that young migrants enjoy their rights to participation, health, education and other key services.
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage migrant youth participation in civil society organisations, unions and community groups; support creation and recognition of migrant, diaspora and migrant youth organisations.

- Facilitate construction of solid networks, cooperation, and joint projects between young locals and young migrants.

- Involve a wide range of government and non-governmental stakeholders, including youth organisations and networks, in planning and carrying out participation activities with young migrants.

- Include migrant adolescents and youth in policy-making processes, follow through on their suggestions and recommendations, and ensure their continued participation from beginning to end of the process.

- Promote institutional arrangements to strengthen the capacity of young people affected by migration to participate at local, national and international levels.

- Create new opportunities for meaningful participation by adolescents and youth in migration and development research, debate, planning, policy and programme execution.

- Put in place specific pre-departure programmes in countries of origin and post-arrival orientation programmes in destination countries to better inform and prepare young migrants to actively participate in destination countries.

- Enhance data collection and sharing of good practices and promising examples of participation by young migrants in organisations and in migration policy-making processes, to enhance the evidence base for sound policy and promote policy innovation.
NOTES

3 See UN General Assembly, Resolution A/40/256, 6 May 1985, para. 19. In 1985, the UN celebrated the first International Year of Youth. On its tenth anniversary, the General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth, setting a policy framework and guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth. Since then, all UN statistical services have used as a reference the age cohort of 15-24 years to collect global statistics on youth.
4 Article 12 of the CRC states that: "States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.” As subsequently noted, Articles 13, 14 and 15 articulate other rights and freedoms essential to participation. A very useful implementation/resource guide on Article 12 was prepared by Gerison Lansdown for UNICEF and Save the Children in 2011: Every Child’s Right to Be Heard. More on youth participation on development issues is discussed in: UN, Youth Participation in Development: Summary Guidelines for Development Partners, New York, 2011 and DFID, Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Partners and Policymakers, SPW/DFID/CSO Youth Working Group, London, 2010.
5 DFID (2010), op cit.
7 Ibid.
9 UNICEF (2010), Children as Advocates: Strengthening Children's and Young People’s Participation in Advocacy Fora, Adolescent Development and Participation Unit, New York; United Nations/
12 See European Minority Youth Network website at: http://www.network.ngo.lv/website
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Bragg, op.cit.
17 For example, adolescents can provide useful testimony for policy-making committees, whilst older youth could hold a youth seat on a board involved in the legislative process. Specific guidelines for participation by those under the age of 18 are spelled out in UNICEF’s 2010 Children as Advocates publication (see endnote 10).
18 Lansdown, op cit.
19 Saket Mani, Children & Youth Participation in Migration & Development, written contribution provided for this publication, 2013.
Within the debates on the consequences of climatic and ecological change, international attention has become increasingly focussed on the links between environmental change and human migration. Several international organisations such as UNHCR, UNFCCC, IOM and UNICEF are addressing this issue. Furthermore, a series of research initiatives focusing on the link between environmental change and migration has been set up in recent years. These include projects such as Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios (EACH FOR),\(^1\) the Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change project\(^2\) and “Where the rain falls”.\(^3\)

First of all, the studies mentioned come to the conclusion that in the majority of cases, it is not only environmental change in the form of rapid-onset events (storms, flood events, etc.) or gradual processes of ecological change (soil erosion, sea-level rise, etc.) that cause people to migrate. It is rather a complex set of interrelated environmental, socio-economic, cultural, political and demographic factors that influences or drives migration decisions.

This leads to a severe identification problem: there are no uniform criteria or variables indicating that the effects of environmental change may be deemed to be so strong that related human migration processes actually can be considered environmentally induced. Accordingly, the complexity of the interlinkages between environmental change and migration makes it necessary to develop definitions and categories, which are universally accepted.\(^4\) Furthermore, there is still a huge demand for advancing the knowledge base concerning the interactions between environmental change, migration and its potential consequences. This is particularly valid for the affectedness and specific vulnerability of children, adolescents and youth as well as other population segments (e.g. women, elders) in this context.\(^5\)

Nonetheless, some tendencies concerning the relationship between environmental change, migration and youth on a global scale may be derived from the results of the Foresight initiative and other research projects or databases:

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\(^1\)Prepared by Dr. Benjamin Schraven, Department Environmental Policy and Management of Natural Resources, German Development Institute.

\(^2\)This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF”
• **Migration as a pure survival strategy plays a subordinate role** According to estimates by the International Displacement Monitoring Centre⁶ and the International Disaster Database⁷, in recent years in most cases less than 20 per cent of the total population affected by sudden-onset natural disasters worldwide were temporarily or permanently displaced by these⁸.

• **It is not only about migration away from ecologically vulnerable areas** Immigration to these areas is also problematic and increasing. This is especially the case for urban and peri-urban slums and shanty towns as well as urban areas prone to flood events⁹.

• **Migration in the context of ecological change mainly happens within national borders or sub-regions** So far, international migration patterns on larger scales (e.g. from Sub-Saharan-Africa to Europe) are hardly influenced by environmental change¹⁰.

• **Migration as a reaction to environmental change is potentially an important adaptation or coping strategy** In areas particularly affected by environmental degradation or by great climatic variation, many smallholder households often draw on migration strategies. This does not usually involve the migration of whole households but rather the migration of single household members. Migrants support the remaining household members by sending money and/or material goods in order to help the latter better cope with the effects of droughts or soil erosion. This mainly takes place for a limited period of time¹¹.

• **“Trapped” populations** Those who are unable to move since they do not have the necessary financial and non-financial resources or opportunities often live under harsher conditions than many migrants.

• **Youth play a key role in the context of environmental change and migration** Most of the countries affected by patterns of ecological change are also characterised by a youth bulge. Accordingly, children and adolescents are a key segment of the trapped population¹². On the other hand, people under 30 usually also form a majority of migrants moving in response to difficult environmental conditions. That means that children, adolescents and youths are not only among the most vulnerable in the context of ecological change and migration but they are also the ones who are predominantly responsible for assisting their families in adapting to the effects of environmental degradation and climate change¹³.
PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS: CHALLENGES AND UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

What about legal protection?

The importance of legal protection and a rights-based approach for ‘environmental migrants’ is often emphasised — in particular for migrants who forcibly leave their homes due to environmental hazards. Although not many migration processes are solely related to environmental events, there is certainly forced migration to which environmental hazards have contributed significantly. But there is no international legal instrument from which protective rights for environmentally forced migrant groups could be derived. A series of publications discussing legal prospects come to the conclusion that there are points of contact for the protection of forced migrants in the context of environmental change in several areas of law (human rights, refugee law, environmental law, etc.). But seen separately these areas of law do not offer any sufficient legal protection.

In the literature, some options to improve the legal situation for environmentally forced migrants are frequently discussed. One often mentioned option is an extension of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees by integrating environmental factors. In its current form, environmental factors are not mentioned and accordingly do not legitimise legal recognition as a refugee. But an extension of the Geneva Convention would have fundamental shortcomings: first, a renegotiation could weaken the status of refugees who are currently still protected by it since many countries are interested in very restrictive immigration and asylum policies. In addition, people migrating in the context of environmental change are mostly internal migrants to whom the Convention does not apply. The basically applicable Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement do not have any internationally legal obligation as they are “soft law”. Another possibility concerning the enhancement of legal protection is the creation of a separate international convention for environmental migrants. However, the result of what would most likely be a lengthy negotiation and ratification process for such a convention would be highly uncertain. But the Nansen Initiative, which – based on regional consultations - intends to establish a protection agenda for those who have been internationally displaced by environmental change, is certainly an important first step when it comes to legal protection in the context of environmental change and migration.
Unfortunately, the debate about legal protection for ‘environmental migrants’ – largely leaves out voluntary forms of migration. ‘Unforced’ migrants - and in particular children, adolescents and youth – often live in very difficult situations in terms of socio-economic circumstances and legal protection. Young migrants are particularly affected by labour exploitation, abuse, crime, violence and human rights violations. Respective legal conventions on international labour law or concerning children’s rights are unfortunately of a rather weak status. Nevertheless, the discussion about legal protection mechanisms urgently needs to incorporate these aspects.

**Who is addressing environmental migration at the international level?**

Due to the multi-dimensional nature of interlinkages between youth, environmental change and migration, it is obvious that not only the international UN and non-UN institutions dealing with issues related to migration should be addressing emerging problems in this context. It would be necessary that a full range of international organisations working in the areas of sustainable development, environmental and climate protection, humanitarian aid as well as children- and youth-related issues should be involved in shaping international strategies and guidelines on the nexus between environmental change, migration and youth.

But with regard to migration in the context of environmental change there is a problem of coherence: although the improvement of socio-economic and legal conditions of vulnerable populations and migrants is highly relevant to some organisations such as IOM, UNHCR, UNDP, UNEP and – self-evidently with a strong focus on children, adolescents and youth - UNICEF, the problem plays a more subordinate role in other international organisations, fora and committees. Furthermore, various institutions and organisations have differing concepts, approaches and strategies in relation to the topic.

Nevertheless, it was an important sign that the issue of migration was taken up during the international climate negotiations in 2010 in Cancún. In § 14(f) of the Cancún Agreement, the international community basically - but rather vaguely - accepted the obligation to take measures to increase knowledge, coordination and international cooperation efforts to address the relationship between environmental change and migration. But whether the issue will soon be more than a minor aspect in international negotiations remains quite unclear. It is also mostly uncertain what
international organisation or institution could create more coherence with regard to the matter of migration and vulnerable populations like youth in the context of global ecological change.

**What is happening at the national level?**

Without doubt, regional and national actors have a key role to play in coping with the problem of environmental change and migration. However, migration and asylum policies of many industrialised countries have become ever more restrictive in recent years and decades. That is why many governments are reluctant to discuss environmental migration issues which could affect their countries (e.g. permanent admissions for environmentally displaced people or resettlement/relocation policies). Likewise, the governments of many developing countries are generally in favour of policies aimed at stemming migration. Whereas the positive links between migration and development are certainly recognised around the globe, the political focus in this regard is usually restricted to international migration and aspects such as financial remittances between destination and home countries. Internal and intra-regional migration is mainly perceived as something with negative socio-economic consequences such as urban sprawl or conflicts. Just like many international migrants, internal migrants often live in socially and economically marginal situations with limited opportunities for political participation. This also applies to those populations which are heavily affected by environmental change, not to mention youth and other vulnerable demographic groups - although the potential role of youth in climate change adaptation in general is increasingly considered.

Analyses of national adaptation strategies and programmes in least-developed countries show that in the majority of these programmes, migration in the context of environmental and climatic change is usually considered as a phenomenon that is important to contain or prevent via implementing local adaptation or development projects. Only a few least-developed countries underline the positive and adaptive potential of migration in their strategies.

Moreover, only a minority of developing countries contemplate resettling persons from areas that are affected by severe processes of ecological degradation. The majority of these are small Pacific island states. Taking into consideration the direct threat to their existence from sea-level rise, this certainly does not come as a surprise.
Recommendations

Due to the complex and multi-dimensional links between environmental factors, human mobility and their consequences in particular for children, adolescents and youths, recommendations, which focus solely on either environmental or adaptation policies or migration policies do not make much sense. In view of the challenges and unanswered questions with regard to legal protection, the international and national levels and ranges of action, the following policy recommendations can be formulated:

- **Enhance the knowledge base** Although Foresight and other initiatives have significantly advanced the knowledge base on the relationship between environmental change and migration, further empirical research needs to be conducted – particularly in order to better understand the role of vulnerable population groups such as children, adolescents and youth.

- **Strengthen Protection and ‘intertwine’ existing legal instruments** Instead of considering the creation of a distinct convention on environmental migrants or the extension of the Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees, efforts to strengthen and draw closer together the existing legal instruments and conventions in the areas of human rights (especially children’s rights), migration law, labour law, environmental and refugee law for the benefit of all, and in particular young migrants affected by ecological, are more promising.

- **Institutionalise international cooperation for migration** To create more coherence and establish international policy standards in the areas of environmental change and migration as well as other migration issues, an international coordination unit for migration should be set up. This would have to build bridges between governments, the United Nations as well as non-UN organisations that work in the areas of migration, development, youth and humanitarian aid.

- **Support young migrants** Migration can be an important form of adaptation. But instead of focussing only on strategies to prevent migration, a supporting and proactive management of migration that considers the positive effects and aspects of migration would be desirable. For example, the infrastructure for financial remittances in many countries needs to be improved and information portals that inform young migrants about job opportunities could be important features of such a migration management strategy.

- **Improve rural and urban living conditions** On the one hand, it is desirable to provide greater support for adaptation-oriented rural/smallholder-oriented development
projects - at least to address so far “trapped” households and their often young members. On the other hand, not only migrants, but also children and other family members left behind benefit from an improvement in public services, infrastructure and working conditions in the cities through (potentially) higher remittances.

- Let migrants, youth and other population groups affected by environmental change participate in planning processes The above strategies and concepts can only be successful if migrants and their networks, as well as youth and other population groups affected by environmental change, can be (better) involved in political decision-making and planning processes.
NOTES

6 www.internal-displacement.org
7 www.emdat.be
8 Own calculation. See also: Schraven B. 2012. Environmental Change and Migration: Perspectives for Future Action. German Development Institute, Briefing Paper 15.
11 Foresight (2011) op cit, note 2; Warner et al. (2012) op cit, note 3; EACH-FOR (2009) op cit, note 1
13 See also: Barlett, S. (2008) op cit, note 9
16 www.nanseninitiative.org/
18 Schraven (2012) op cit, note 7
YOUTH, ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND MIGRATION*

Chapter 16
Today’s young people are feeling the effects of environmental change, and today’s leaders must design policies aimed at minimising its impact on future generations. Adolescents and youth currently navigate the impacts of environmental change through a myriad of alternatives, including internal and international migration.

As changes in the environment compel millions of people to adopt new livelihood strategies, how do these changes affect the development prospects of adolescents and youth? In this context, is migration an option? If migration is a possibility, how can policy-makers best support and manage all forms of migration? Is it possible to make migration a part of adaptation and sustainable development strategies? How can other stakeholders enable young people to become empowered actors in the environmental migration process?

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AS MIGRATION TRIGGER

Both sudden and gradual environmental change influence the propensity to migrate; however due to the multi-causal nature of migration it is difficult to isolate and measure the environmental factors that contribute to a decision to migrate. A recent survey suggests that 12 per cent of the world’s adult population think that they will need to move because of severe environmental problems.¹ Very little is known, however, about the role of environmental triggers in adolescent and youth migration, due to the complexities associated with the decision to migrate.

### Box 16.1. Working Definition of Environmental Migration

Neither an internationally accepted definition for persons moving for environmental reasons, nor a legal instrument dealing specifically with this issue has yet been developed. To fill this gap, IOM has put forward a working definition of “environmental migrant” in an attempt to capture the complexity of the issue:

“Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their territory or abroad.”


¹Prepared by Dina Ionesco of the International Organization for Migration (in collaboration with Daniel Salmon and Sarah Tischler) and Ann Pawliczko of the UN Population Fund.

This chapter is part of the book “Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities” Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF
Climate change negotiations in Cancun (2010) and Durban (2011) led to the inclusion of human mobility issues in the official text of agreements reached in relation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC). A Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Committees and National Action Plans for least-developed countries were addressed during these meetings. Youth will be directly affected by how these steps are implemented and funded. Since September 2009 youth has had a voice in the climate negotiations via the youth constituency called YOUNGO, which hosts events and participates in high-level panels. The presence of youth representatives in climate change negotiations should help to ensure that this constituency is recognised, and that its views are fully integrated into the discussions.

**DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE LEAD TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF MIGRATION**

Migration in the context of environmental change takes diverse forms. Different types of environmental change, in particular gradual-onset vs. sudden-onset events, can lead to different forms of human mobility.

**Box 16.2. Categorizing Climate-Related Migration**

Four main questions can help to categorise migration in the context of environmental change:

1. Is migration voluntary or forced?
2. Is migration permanent or temporary (forms of circular or seasonal migration, permanent resettlement and relocation)?
3. Is migration internal, regional or international (are international borders crossed)?
4. Is migration seen as a failure or as an adaptation strategy?


Examples of sudden-onset climate events include:

- Monsoon floods
- Typhoons
- Lake outburst floods
- Hurricanes
- Fires

Such events compel individuals to rapidly flee their community in search of security; they disrupt livelihoods and can take a heavy toll on human life. In such cases, migration can be a survival strategy, especially in the event of acute natural disasters. Such displacements
represent a form of *forced migration* and can lead populations, including adolescents and youth, to cross borders and confront social and other protection gaps. Increased awareness about disaster risk-reduction strategies that help populations prepare for natural disasters can contribute to preventing displacement.

Examples of gradual-climate onset events include:

- Desertification
- Rise in sea level
- Salinization of agricultural land
- Water scarcity
- Food insecurity

Gradual-onset events slowly erode livelihoods. Over the long run, gradual environmental change – though less visible – tends to have a greater impact on migration than natural disasters. Over the last 30 years, twice as many people have been affected by droughts as by storms (1.6 billion compared with around 718 million).³ It has been estimated that that up to 10 million people who migrated (or were displaced) over the last two decades in Africa moved mainly as a result of environmental degradation and desertification.⁴ Gradual onset-induced population movements tend to be temporary or circular in nature; for example, some migration related to weather patterns is seasonal, as is the case for pastoralists.

Migration caused by environmental change is frequently internal or intra-regional. The British Foresight Report found that most migration in the context of environmental change takes place within countries, and that “as many people are likely move into areas of environmental risk as migrate from them”.⁵ The report calls for linking internal migration in the context of environmental change to urban planning and local development strategies.

Few clear examples of forced or voluntary migration related to environmental change are available; often the decision to migrate can be considered as a choice, albeit tied to constraints. The multi-causal nature of migration also makes it difficult to identify clear cases of environmental migration, because of the many social, cultural, demographic, political and economic factors that may also be at play. For those who lack resources and networks, migration is not an option. These populations are vulnerable to the impact of environmental change on livelihoods, as well as to natural
disasters, and usually must remain in their communities of origin facing significant risks.

The many different forms of migration in the context of environmental change are highlighted here to stress that migration should not be viewed simply as failure to adapt. Migration can also be part of adaptation, (for example, when it removes pressure from heavily degraded areas), and can enhance income diversification, via remittances. Understanding migration as an adaptation strategy implies a need for policies that: (a) facilitate migration in environmentally degraded areas and (b) channel migrant’s investments and financial transfers back to local sustainable development projects.

**WHY FOCUS ON YOUTH?**

Empirical studies generally conclude that the impacts of climate and environmental change will be important determinants of migratory behaviour and have the potential to permanently alter current migration streams. High fertility and rapid population growth in some developing countries with large youth populations create further pressures to emigrate (see box 16.3). Environmental change can create new push factors or exacerbate existing ones.

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**Box 16.3. Environment/Migration/Demography Nexus in Africa**

Africa’s population increased from 230 million in 1950 to over a billion in 2012, and is expected to reach 2 billion by 2050. As a result, more people will be contributing to environmental degradation, particularly given urbanization trends and the resulting growth of slum areas. Growing populations also mean that larger numbers of people in Africa will be subject to the impacts of climate change and may choose or be compelled to migrate in response.

One facet of Africa’s growing population worth noting is its composition. While numbers are rising in all age groups in most countries due to past high fertility levels, most of the population is below the age of 35. Most fall into the 15-to-24 youth cohort, which is largely excluded and marginalised from development activities, and characterised by high levels of unemployment and a strong propensity to migrate both internally and internationally.

Across the continent, population growth has been a major cause of environmental degradation, as manifested in increased deforestation, soil erosion, and depletion of natural resources. In Malawi, for instance, fuel-wood provides 93 per cent of the energy source for the population, putting enormous pressure on the forest cover, which will only increase as the population grows. Similar trends are experienced across the continent, straining all forms of natural resources.

*Source: Economic Commission for Africa, submission to Thematic Report.*
Focusing on young people, both adolescents and youth, as a particular age and social group is of importance. Age and related socio-economic issues call for specific provisions concerning young people, migration and environmental change. Particular areas of concern related to youth include protection needs (unaccompanied minors, separated families, young people migrating alone) and the options available to youth (are they empowered to make the decision to migrate, do they migrate alone or as dependants, or are they left behind?). Protection and assistance to affected mobile populations, reducing vulnerabilities, and long-term management of risks – along with efforts to minimise forced migration – all directly concern youth populations affected by environmental change (see Box 16.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 16.4. Relationship between Adolescents and Youth, Migration and Environmental Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• In the context of environmental change, migration can either aggravate young peoples’ challenges (enhanced vulnerability on the migration route, moving to unsustainable locations, family separation etc.) or increase their opportunities (escape the effects of a natural disasters, diversify livelihoods, improve access to education, health and work opportunities).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The rights and protection needs of adolescents and youth migrating due to environmental change require attention. Shared responsibility and respect for human rights are central to managing migration, including environmental migration. Human rights-based strategies and multi-pronged legal approaches offer a way forward in protecting and assisting environmental migrants.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental change can impact other important push and pull factors influencing youth migration (employment, access to education and health services etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As environmental change often aggravates poverty, it can erode young people’s capacities to migrate, thereby limiting their personal development opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Young people need resources (information, education, networks etc.) to address the challenges posed by environmental change, and should have access to different options, which will shape their motivation and strategies. Migration can also be part of the alternatives offered to young people affected by environmental change, and thus can be part of adaptation strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Youth involvement is part of the response to environmental change. Raising awareness, involving and empowering young people is at the heart of the response to environmental change. It is also a significant component of the management of migration in the context of environmental change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focusing on the inter-linkages between environmental change, migration and youth calls attention to the post-natural disaster phase: recovery and reconstruction. Both protecting and building sustainable livelihood solutions for young people are of importance at this stage, in relation to return, relocation or resettlement. Environmental change is a process that exacerbates some of the most pressing human rights issues, whether adolescents and youth are migrating as independents,
dependants, or being left behind. Specific protection issues apply to unaccompanied children, separated children and young migrants and marginalised young male and female migrants.

**Box 16.5. Challenges for Girls and Young Women**

Girls and young women often find themselves facing particular risks when migration is compelled by environmental change or disasters. Adolescent girls escaping either the ravages of sudden disasters or the permanent disappearance of their home environment from climate change consequences face risks due both to their youth and to the dominant power relations and predatory sexual behaviour of males in many cultures. As happens in other emergency situations, such as flight from conflict, they suffer danger of rape, have little or no access to education or to preventive and responsive health measures that are critical and unique to them, especially as adolescents. The lack of organisation and protection in many IDP and refugee camps pose particular dangers and difficulty for girls. A 2009 IOM study of families fleeing flooding of the Mekong Delta confirmed the particular vulnerability of youth “especially girls” to human trafficking.

Both girls and boys as well as adolescents displaced by environmental factors face exclusion or marginalization from meaningful participation in policy and practical decisions over their own lives. Those displaced by slow-onset climate change rendering their home environments permanently uninhabitable are likely to have few options to return whereas those temporarily fleeing storm induced flooding or destruction may be able to go home again. Relief and development responses to either case require participatory inclusion of adolescents and youth - equally for girls and boys - in the decision-making on policy as well as practical measures. The responses also need to include specific measures to provide young females with appropriate preventative and responsive health care and to prevent sexual harassment and abuse.


**YOUTH MIGRATION AS AN ADAPTATION STRATEGY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Both internal and international migration phenomena are considered in this section. There are common considerations, as well as differences according to the nature of the migration process: when considering international migration, policy responses extend beyond individual states’ strategies and are influenced by bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements or the lack thereof. Major challenges include mobilising resources and building capacities to manage environmental migration.
For populations coping with environmental stresses, labour mobility can represent an adaptation strategy. However, migration as adaptation has suffered several setbacks. For example, none of the initial 14 National Adaptation Programmes for Action (NAPAs) consider migration as a possible response. NAPAs generally seek “to adapt agricultural practices, management of pastoral lands, infrastructure such as dykes and coastal barriers, fishing patterns and other strategies to reduce pressures on fragile eco-systems, thereby allowing populations to remain in place”.

A review of 38 NAPAs submitted to the UNFCCC in October 2008 showed that while many countries acknowledged that climate change may affect migration patterns, the majority still regarded adaptation more as a mechanism to reduce migration, rather than manage it for the benefit of all stakeholders. There is still much work to be done to mainstream migration into NAPAs and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

Migration in the context of adaptation to environmental change implies two different approaches: on the one hand it means offering alternative livelihoods in environmentally degraded areas that allow populations to remain. This implies, for instance, engaging youth in innovative green economy activities, in particular entrepreneurship that can offer alternative employment opportunities. This sector is emerging in many places, and is potentially profitable and capable of generating employment opportunities for young people. Examples of businesses in the environmental sector include the production of recycled goods, composting and ecotourism. Jobs can be created to address emerging environmental issues such as wild fires, soil salinization, disappearance of mangroves, deforestation, floods and sea rise, which all threaten the development of affected localities and, combined with poverty and lack of jobs, are triggers for migration. Migration as an adaptation strategy, especially in response to gradual-onset environment-related events means that moving away from environmentally degraded areas can be a choice; migration can provide new livelihoods via the migration to new places; the right policies can facilitate these movements.

RETURNS ON HUMAN, SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL CAPITAL

Migration as a legitimate adaptation strategy is particularly attractive in the early stages of environmental degradation. It can reduce risk to lives and livelihoods and reliance on depleted resources. For instance, migration can enable communities to diversify resources through the productive use of remittances. Countries struggling to
devise strategies to better manage resources – in particular those with young populations – can consider migration as a potential mechanism to improve food security and water availability. While the social costs of migration should not be underestimated, migration can benefit countries (or areas) of origin through human, financial and social returns. The return and circular mobility of human and financial capital can play a major role in strengthening the capacities of households and communities suffering from environmental degradation, thereby improving the lives and opportunities of young people. In 2013 it is projected that migrants will send home around US$404 billion. During the economic crisis, the significance and magnitude of remittances as a source of external financing for development has been unmatched.

Facilitating migration as a response to environmental change requires proactive policy making and direct support to vulnerable communities before migration becomes a matter of survival, rather than an autonomous choice. The ability of adolescents and youth to adapt, migrate and learn new skills represents an important plus for development strategies. The environmental change and migration nexus implies managing youth mobility as part of sustainable development solutions. Migration can be one of the alternatives offered to young people affected by environmental change; youth involvement is critical to shaping an effective response to the challenge of environmental change.

**KEY MESSAGES**

- Environmental factors, of both sudden and gradual onset, directly and indirectly influence the propensity to migrate. Migration can be a successful adaptation strategy for adolescents and youth that also benefits environmentally degraded areas.

- Shared responsibility and respect for human rights are central to managing migration, including environmental migration. Human rights-based strategies and multi-pronged legal approaches offer a way forward in protecting and assisting environmental migrants.

- Youth involvement is part of the response to environmental change. Raising awareness, involving and empowering young people is at the heart of the response to environmental change. It also represents a significant component of managing
migration in the context of environmental change.

- A proactive migration management approach that includes youth is necessary to address the full migration cycle and mitigate the potentially adverse environmental impacts of unmanaged mobility.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Improve knowledge about adolescent and youth migration and its linkages to environmental change; gather data disaggregated by gender, age and other key factors.

- Ensure that young people have the means (information, education, resources, networks etc.) to address the challenges posed by environmental change, and access to different options, in the context of well-informed and carefully managed migration.

- Incorporate adolescent- and youth-related issues into a comprehensive migration management agenda that takes environmental change into account, to reduce the potential negative impacts of environmental change; particularly forced migration.

- Identify principles and mechanisms to address the rights and protection needs of adolescents and youth migrating due to environmental change.

- Frame migration and the climate change/environmental degradation nexus within the development agenda; facilitate youth migration, arrange student schemes and temporary and circular labour migration programmes on a bilateral basis to support young people affected by environmental degradation and natural disasters.
NOTES

1 Findings of the Gallup World Poll Survey (Gallup World Poll: the Many Faces of Global Migration, IOM Migration Research Series, n° 43, 2011) was conducted in 150 countries surveying more than 750,000 adults (typically aged 15 and older).
2 See: http://youthclimate.org/about_youth_climate/youngo-unfccc
3 International Emergencies Disaster Database (EM-DAT).
4 Grégoire G. de Kalbermatten (2008), "Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought as Push Factors of Forced Migrations", presentation at UNCCD.
6 International Dialogue on Migration IDM 18, Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Migration 2011, IOM
Climate change has the potential to uproot large numbers of people. In many cases these movements will represent part of a positive adaptation strategy for families seeking improved livelihoods and habitat. In other cases it will take the form of displacement resulting from acute natural hazards or competition-related conflict, while in still others people will be relocated from areas that are no longer able to sustain human life. Often the most willing to take risks to better themselves, youth are likely to be at the vanguard of those migrating in anticipation of further environmental decline in their communities. While much of this migration is likely to be internal, from rural to urban areas, an unknown – but likely significant – portion of young people will migrate internationally.

The impacts on youth and the communities to which they migrate will vary significantly depending on the circumstances in which these movements take place. With the aging of populations in many highly developed countries, some youth will fill jobs in important economic sectors. Some will be able to take advantage of work programmes and migrate legally, but others will find the front door of legal immigration closed and will attempt to migrate outside legal channels. Those who migrate because events foreclose other options may face protracted periods of displacement. Still others will move as part of planned relocation programmes that resettle them in distant lands.

Migration can have both positive and negative impacts on youth. As greater risk-takers, youth may precede other members of their households to new communities or countries and establish themselves before bringing others to join them. In some cases, they will prosper and be able to help others to adapt to rapidly changing environments. When they are able to migrate legally, the benefits are likely to be greater. When youth migrate irregularly, the experience will likely be less beneficial for all – except smugglers and exploitative employers. In these cases, a combination of protection measures and opportunities to gain legal status in their destination country can make their experience more beneficial.

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This chapter is part of the book *Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities* Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF*
For adolescents and youth who find themselves in protracted situations of displacement – growing up in camps or impoverished urban settings with little access to education, livelihoods, or stable environments, or trafficked into sexual or labour exploitation – the impact of climate change will be highly negative. Finding solutions that render adolescents, youth and their families less vulnerable to long-term displacement and trafficking should be a priority for the international community.

POPULATION CHANGE, CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

The interactions between population change, climate change and migration are complex. New population trends will have impacts on climate change and on the likelihood of migration. Moreover, different populations will be differentially affected by climate change and will either choose, or be forced, to migrate or to adapt to climate change.

The Foresight Project refers to five principal drivers of migration: political, economic, social, environmental and demographic, with each influencing the others and, in turn, influencing the scale and characteristics of migration. Demographic drivers “include the size and structure of populations in source areas, together with the prevalence of diseases that affect morbidity and mortality.”

Age structure, not just overall population size, is important to understand the drivers of migration. It is in this context that adolescents and youth play an important role. As noted elsewhere in this report around 27 million youth live outside the country in which they were born. Many of these young people are in developing countries, while many of the world’s jobs are in developed countries. Demographic factors intersect with economic ones when there is high unemployment or underemployment in source countries and unmet demand for workers in destination countries. The Foresight Report concludes: “young populations tend to be a source of migrants, whereas ageing populations in many European (and even Asian) countries may create a demand for migration.”

Environmental drivers may compound the situation when such factors as prolonged droughts, rising sea levels and coastal erosion further reduce employment opportunities for youth. Little research has been devoted to the impact of climate change on youth employment. The State of the World’s Population 2009 Youth
Supplement, which takes an anecdotal approach, provides some instructive insights through profiles of several young people facing the results of climate change in different parts of the world.\(^3\) They represent dual sides of the climate change and youth nexus. Some are especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to occupations that are common to youth worldwide. Others demonstrate youth resilience and willingness to experiment with new approaches and strategies. For all, migration from the effects of climate change represents both risk and opportunity.

Small island developing states are emblematic of this tension. The high rates of adolescent and youth migration from these states in the Pacific are harbingers of patterns that may well be intensified by climate change. “Data for Pacific Islands show much higher net losses starting as early as late teen ages, with one-third of female youth cohorts and close to 40 per cent of males 25-29 emigrating from Samoa (and a similar situation occurs in Tonga and Cook Island), 20 per cent and 25 per cent of respectively female and male Marshallese aged 20-24, and between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of 20-to-34-year-olds leaving Fiji.”\(^4\)

**Box 17.1. Climate change in Asia and the Pacific**

The population in the three Pacific sub-regions (Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia) and the overall Pacific population will increase over the next decades. Young people will represent a large and mobile group, while the effects of climate change will also be increasingly felt, especially sea-level rise and increased incidence of cyclones. Thus having access to migration opportunities will be of increasing significance for these populations, in a region already dependent on remittances.


The Foresight Report notes, however, that these very situations may leave large numbers of people unable to migrate due to lack of resources and may, in fact, produce a ‘trapped population’ that is unable to get out of harm’s way. Many adolescents and youth emigrate because they possess the educational and financial resources to do so, while the ‘trapped’ population may well be older individuals of both sexes who remain behind to take care of young children, or who lack the resources needed to migrate. These communities will resemble those already found in areas with prolonged high rates of internal and international labour migration.
OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND GOOD PRACTICES

The scenarios presented above have implications for several areas of policy making: adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies to address emigration pressures, immigration policies in potential destination countries and development policies. In each case, the migration ramifications of climate change for youth represent both opportunities and challenges.

**Adaptation and disaster risk reduction**

Adaptation and disaster risk reduction can involve either: (a) steps to reduce the need for individuals to migrate to get out of harm's way, or (b) migration as an adaptation or risk-reduction strategy, which allows a community or household to cope with changes and, perhaps, reduce risk for others. Adaptation refers to “initiatives and measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects.” Adaptation refers to “initiatives and measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects.” Disaster risk reduction involves “systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.”

The Copenhagen Accord adopted at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2009 highlighted the importance of adaptation strategies:

Adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and the potential impacts of response measures is a challenge faced by all countries. Enhanced action and international cooperation on adaptation is urgently required to ensure the implementation of the Convention by enabling and supporting the implementation of adaptation actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing countries, especially in those that are particularly vulnerable; especially least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa. We agree that developed countries shall provide adequate, predictable and sustainable financial resources, technology and capacity-building to support the implementation of adaptation action in developing countries.
National adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) are, to date, the principal mechanisms through which low-income developing countries identify adaptation needs and programmes.

Adaptation strategies related to migration fall into two major categories. First, and more commonly, governments view adaptation as a way to reduce migration pressures through risk-reduction measures that allow people to remain where they are, such as: modifying agricultural practices, management of pastoral lands, infrastructure such as dykes and coastal barriers, fishing patterns and other strategies to reduce pressures on fragile eco-systems. Bangladesh, for example, in its NAPA seeks to combat salinisation, to slow the “social consequences of mass-scale migration to cities.” Other approaches focus on early warning and emergency preparedness to reduce displacement from natural disasters associated with climate change.

Second, migration is seen as an adaptation strategy in and of itself. Some countries view migration as a way to reduce population pressures in places with fragile eco-systems; others recognise that resettlement of some populations may be inevitable, but should be accomplished with proper planning. In still other cases, migrants already living outside of vulnerable areas are seen as potential resources to help communities adapt and respond to climate change. Just as migrants are contributing to the development of their countries of origin, adaptation strategies envision that the Diaspora may have the technical knowledge and financial resources to help communities cope with the effects of climate change.

**International migration policies**

Immigration laws in most destination countries are not conducive to receiving environmental migrants, unless they enter through existing admission categories. Typically, destination countries admit persons to fill job openings or to reunify with family members. Employment-based admissions are usually based on labour market needs in the receiving country, not the situation in the sending country. Family admissions are usually restricted to persons with immediate relatives (spouses, children, parents, etc.) in the destination country.

Humanitarian admissions are generally limited to refugees and asylum seekers; that is, those who fit the definition in the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees:
persons with a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Most environmental migrants will be unlikely to meet these legal definitions.

Some countries have established special policies that permit individuals whose countries have experienced natural disasters or other severe upheavals to remain, at least temporarily, without fear of deportation. The United States, for example, enacted legislation in 1990 to provide temporary protected status to persons “in the United States who are temporarily unable to safely return to their home country because of on-going armed conflict, an environmental disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions.” However this status only applies to persons already in the U.S.; it was not designed as a response to an unfolding crisis in which people seek admission from outside the country.

Sweden and Finland include environmental migrants within their immigration policies. Sweden includes within its asylum system persons who do not qualify for refugee status, but have a need for protection, including from an “environmental disaster.” Decisions are made on an individual basis, and may sometimes include permanent solutions. Similarly, in the Finnish Aliens Act, “aliens residing in the country are issued with a residence permit on the basis of a need for protection if...they cannot return because of an armed conflict or environmental disaster.”

A number of countries offer exceptions for persons whose countries of origin have experienced significant disruption because of natural disasters, such as occurred following the 2004 tsunami. Several governments announced similar plans after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. However, no international law compels, or even encourages, other governments to adopt similar policies.

Similarly, no legislation or policies address the migration of persons from slow-onset climate changes that may, in the future, destroy habitats or livelihoods. For the most part, movements from gradual-onset climate change and other environmental factors that limit economic opportunities are treated in the same manner as economically motivated migration, usually resulting in mandatory return or deportation.
The paucity of immigration policies appropriate for environmentally induced migration has particular relevance for three groups of adolescents and youth: irregular migrants, trafficked adolescents and youth, and those in situations of protracted displacement.

**Irregular youth migration:** Climate change exacerbates the conditions that already cause many children and youth to migrate without official authorisation. These problems will no doubt increase in scope and difficulty, given the lack of policies addressing the complex links between environmental change and migration.

**Trafficked adolescents and youth:** Among the many climate-related displacement scenarios are emergency movements from frequent and intense acute natural hazards and conflict related to competition for scarce resources. Each scenario heightens vulnerability to trafficking for adolescents and youth, particularly when these events strip away economic opportunities and trigger breakdowns of law and order. While all affected persons are vulnerable to trafficking when they lose their means of livelihood and community protection, those who have already been displaced by conflict or natural hazards are particularly at risk. Displacement strips away economic opportunities, terminates dependable employment and educational opportunities, induces extreme forms of isolation and poverty, and destroys social structures. Many displaced persons struggle to survive with inadequate shelter, little or no access to food, basic healthcare, hygiene or protection. These conditions leave young people disoriented and less able to resist exploitation as they desperately search for a means of survival.

Although trafficking during conflict related to competition for scarce resources takes many forms, the trafficking of children, adolescents and youth into armed groups and the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation are two of the most common. Climate change may well increase the number and frequency of crisis events, leading to a need for more effective policies and programmes to address trafficking in these contexts. Current strategies focus on the 4Ps. These approaches need to pay special attention to the trafficking of adolescents and youth in the context of climate change, including those on the move to seek economic opportunities in anticipation of, or response to, environmental impacts, or, even more urgently, those displaced by climate-related natural disasters and conflict.
**Adolescents, youth and protracted displacement:** Young people displaced by climate change for extended periods face further challenges. Experiences in refugee and displaced persons camps – where stays average 17 years – are indicative. Many refugees are born in and experience their entire childhood or adolescence as displaced persons, with limited access to education, training or employment opportunities. Those displaced across international borders will lack work authorisation; if they find work, it is often in the informal economy or under exploitative conditions, with no legal recourse or protections. Since education at the primary and secondary levels may not be available to them, especially if they lack legal status, these youths’ prospects for economic advancement are bleak. In camp settings, their physical mobility is often restricted as well. International aid organisations, rather than parents, are seen as the principal providers of food, shelter, clothing and other items. One article describes ‘angry young men’ with no male role models to provide guidance on how to follow productive paths. Not surprisingly, young people may resort to alcohol, drugs and violence.

**Repatiation, Integration, Resettlement**

Traditionally, there are three solutions available for refugees and internationally displaced persons: repatriation to countries of origin, integration into countries of refuge and resettlement to third countries. Repatriation generally requires a change in the conditions that caused the displacement; in the case of climate change-induced displacement, this may be impossible due to extensive destruction of habitat. Integration in countries of asylum often proves difficult for refugee adolescents and youth and other displaced populations. Many climate-displaced will have gone to under-developed neighbouring countries that may suffer the same impacts of climate change as their country of origin. Moreover, fearing that integration of the displaced will reduce international assistance and lead to competition between the displaced and locals for jobs, neighbouring countries may be unwilling to permit settlement outside of established camps. Destination countries may continue to restrict access to employment and local services with the expectation that the international community should support the displaced.
However, local integration can benefit both the displaced and host communities. The Hon. Lawrence K. Masha, MP Minister for Home Affairs, The United Republic of Tanzania, described the thinking behind his country’s offer of citizenship to Burundian refugees:

With refugees, partnerships can entail taking a community-based approach; with host governments it can encompass joint problem analysis and the implementation of programmes that benefit both refugees and host populations; with development actors it requires persistence and advocacy to ensure refugees and refugee-hosting areas are both taken into account on development agendas; and with the international community (governmental and non-governmental) it involves joining forces to ensure that responsibilities and burdens are shared.”

Adolescents and youth are both the principal beneficiaries and principal contributors to such a win-win situation, as they are the breadwinners of the future.

Third-country resettlement is the other option available to resolve protracted displacements, and may well be the option of choice for those who face relocation from countries inundated by rising sea levels. However, the limited number of slots currently available for resettlement of refugees raises questions about whether such relocation will be forthcoming in large enough numbers. In 2011 alone UNHCR estimates that 172,300 persons needed resettlement. Although some 25 countries participate in the resettlement programme, only 80,000 resettlement slots are available worldwide.

CONCLUSION

Research on the interconnections between climate change, international migration and youth is in its infancy. Few empirical studies have identified the precise impacts of climate change on youth and still fewer have made linkages to the literature on migration and youth. Given the complex range of factors that influence migration, and the recognition that environmental factors are seldom determinative in migration, filling this information gap is essential. Policymakers seldom want to hear that more research is needed on an emergent issue, but it would be foolhardy to lead with anything else in the case of climate change, migration and youth.
KEY MESSAGES

- Adolescents and youth tend to be among the most mobile populations. They are often risk-takers who are resilient in the face of change. To the extent that climate change impedes economic opportunities and exacerbates un- and under-employment among adolescents and youth, migration is likely to be a key adaptation strategy.

- Proactive approaches are needed. Support for disaster risk reduction and conflict-mediation strategies, while strengthening capacities for humanitarian response, can also help prevent climate-driven migration. Governments that fail to take action now to reduce risks to youth from acute crises will be called upon to help later, when the problem will be much more difficult to address. Special attention should be paid to the negative impacts of protracted displacement on youth.

- Current laws, policies and institutional arrangements are inadequate to deal with complex human mobility. Guiding principles are needed today to shape thinking about how to manage potential larger-scale relocation in the future. It is particularly important to strengthen systems for disaster response in challenging political and security environments. Youth will be disproportionately affected as potential victims and perpetrators of violence.

- Protection for people displaced by climate change consequences remains a huge gap. Migration laws in most countries are not conducive to receiving, providing protection, or realizing human rights for environmental migrants. Most environmental migrants will be unlikely to meet legal definitions or other conditions for employment-based admissions, family admissions or humanitarian admissions to destination countries. However, several countries have established policies to include some environmental migrants in immigration policies, labour admissions or temporary protection.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Help youth migrate in safety and dignity. When migration is the best, or only, adaptation strategy, effective policy responses can help to ensure that movements are orderly and safe. Policies should seek to avert situations where youth are forced to move (distress migration) or to move during emergencies. Special attention should be paid to providing alternatives to irregular migration and, when the impacts of climate change preclude return to countries of origin, the focus should be on permanent admissions.
• Provide protection. A concerted international effort is needed to identify a framework of principles and measures for access to safe haven and protection of rights of persons displaced by climate change/environmental degradation.

• Involve the Diaspora in designing and funding adaptation strategies that enable youth to cope more effectively with climate change. Just as the important role of Diasporas in promoting development has only recently been recognised, their role in adaptation deserves greater attention.

• Participatory policy planning. Involve affected communities in policy planning and implementation of human mobility solutions. Recognise that youth can be effective partners in addressing climate change-induced migration, and ensure their involvement in consultations about their future. In some cases this may mean site identification for relocation projects, in others it may mean development of alternative livelihoods or agricultural practices to ease migration pressures.
NOTES


2 Ibid, p. 45.


6 UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (2009), "Terminology on disaster risk reduction”.


10 New Zealand’s Pacific Access Category (PAC) is sometimes described as climate change and migration legislation. Under PAC, 75 people from Tuvalu, 75 from Kiribati, and 250 from Tonga (islands subject to rising sea levels) may immigrate to New Zealand each year. However, the programme is based on employment, not environmental, factors. The immigrants must be between 18-45 years old, have English skills and an offer of employment in New Zealand, meet minimum income requirements, undergo a health check and have no history of illegal entrance. The programme is not intended to provide access to those who may be most vulnerable to climate change-induced displacement—such as the elderly or the infirm.

11 The 4 Ps are: prevention of trafficking; protection of trafficked persons; prosecution and effective penalties for those who traffic; and partnerships among the public and private institutions that hold potential for curbing trafficking activities, reducing vulnerability to trafficking and protecting those who have been trafficked.

MIGRATION AND YOUTH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES*

Conclusion
The chapters of this report present a comprehensive picture of the situation that millions of young people face as migrants, potential migrants, or as sons and daughters of migrant parents. Overall, the report shows that international youth migration presents opportunities, risks and challenges.

Migration widens youth opportunities by expanding educational and employment horizons and allowing young people to acquire and use new technologies and skills. It often permits them to secure employment and thus to contribute to development both in the country of destination and in their country of origin.

Young migrants encounter a wide variety of risks, exclusions and rights’ violations en route to and in destination countries, including exploitation, gender-based violence and trafficking as well as xenophobia and discriminatory attitudes, practices and actions that marginalise and exclude them from school, internships, jobs, access to healthcare, housing, social protection and cultural life.

With the right policies in place, migration can become an empowering experience that helps young people to develop the assets and skills they need to succeed. Thus enabled, young migrants will contribute significantly to economic and social development and well-being in their countries of origin, destination and transit.

AN AGENDA FOR MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

A general conclusion is that governments should establish a comprehensive migration governance agenda that explicitly incorporates youth migration into national development and other relevant policies, institutions, and practical measures. Targeted policies and actions focused on youth migration, and which take into consideration the specific needs and contributions of both young women and men, should be developed at the local as well as national levels, and be reinforced by global governance mechanisms developed within a human rights-based institutional framework for migration. Hence, the contributions presented in this report highlight practical ways of protecting, supporting and empowering migrant youth.
The foundation of any policy addressing youth migration must be anchored in respect for the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their status, and based on general principles of social protection. States that have not yet done so are urged to ratify and effectively implement the relevant international human rights instruments and international labour standards.

All concerned stakeholders, especially social partners, civil society organisations and young migrants themselves, both women and men, should be involved in designing and implementing migration policies and measures. Key to the engagement of migrant youth and adolescents and adolescents is enabling and facilitating their participation in civil society organisations, particularly youth groups, unions, and community organisations, in accordance with their capacities.

To help ensure that migration is an informed choice, rather than a necessity, policies designed to improve the outcomes of youth migration need to address the root causes of migration in countries of origin, incorporating policies specifically targeted to young children and adolescents, girls and young women, and vulnerable populations, including those left behind when family members migrate. Policies and measures are needed to strengthen rural and pro-poor development, address structural poverty and gender inequality by investing in rural infrastructure and agriculture, and to expand access to land and property, education, apprenticeships, decent work opportunities and financial services for young men and young women.

Stakeholders in countries of origin, transit and destination should work in partnership to enhance regular migration channels and reform restrictive migration policies.

LESSONS FOR ACTION

A primary lesson in this report is the necessity of investing in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data –disaggregated by age and sex—as well as research on youth migrant stock and migration flows and on the conditions and needs experienced by young migrants. Strengthening the evidence base also includes qualitative research. Data collection and analysis will facilitate more accurate, timely and accessible information and provide for evidence-based policy-making and informed public debate.
• There is a critical need for enhanced mechanisms to ensure that displaced adolescents and youth asylum seekers are identified, screened and provided access to international protection.

• Immigration detention of asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons is inherently undesirable, especially for young people and unaccompanied or separated children.

Efforts to extend and expand decent work, workplace labour protections and respect for contractual obligations for young migrants are especially important to realising their own welfare as well as their contributions to economic and social development in both destination and origin countries.

Moreover, policies that promote social inclusion, extend coverage and portability of social security, ensure the provision of social services and offer opportunities for successful transition from school to work for adolescent and youth migrants should be adopted and implemented. Specific and deliberate policies are required to maximise beneficial aspects of migration for adolescent and young women while minimising potential harms.

An inclusive approach calls for overcoming xenophobia and discrimination in the larger society, educating the public and social service providers about the value of cultural diversity and the special needs of migrant youth, and ensuring that any data obtained by service providers including on migration status remains confidential.

Ensuring protection for young asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons and unaccompanied minors remains a major challenge, urging protection sensitive border control, differentiated procedures, alternatives to detention, and provision of non-discriminatory access to essential services and national protection systems.

In the face of looming global shortages of persons with needed tertiary education, qualifications and vocational and technical skills, efforts to improve access to skills training and education are fundamental, including cross-border higher education. In addition, international standards for and recognition of educational attainment, skills qualifications and work experience are urgently needed.
Health is a vital policy concern, not least to ensure public health in host communities and the ability of young and adolescent migrants to live healthy lives and work productively. Deliberate public health policy and interventions are required to reach adolescent and young men and women migrants, to provide culturally and gender appropriate health information and services, and to obtain relevant data.

Environmental degradation and climate change affect youth displacement and migration and lead to large-scale displacement of families and communities. They especially impact women who are highly dependent on local natural resources. Young men and women have to be empowered to mitigate the effects of environmental degradation, lead innovation in the “green economy” and contribute to sustainable development through knowledge and skills. New migration policies that take the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation into account are needed.

**THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY CHALLENGE**

Few countries have taken the steps needed to mainstream youth migration issues into their national governance and particularly development policies. The report underlines that new policies and programmes need to be incorporated into larger, multi-level development planning efforts, to ensure efficiency and sustainability. A major challenge is that, too often, especially in developing countries, young people face knowledge, skills and education gaps that make them unemployable both at home and abroad.

This report argues that policy measures addressing international migration by adolescents and youth should be an essential part of a global approach that promotes sharing the benefits of development and globalisation among nations and generations, and righting economic and democratic inequities. Given the magnitude of the risks, challenges and opportunities highlighted in the report, a focus on youth migration is critical to the post-2015 UN development framework, as underlined in the GMG Position Paper on Integrating Migration in the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. Achieving this objective calls for a distinct set of measurable goals and targets related to: poverty eradication; rights protection; access to quality education, health, housing, food and productive employment and decent work for all; gender equality; and environmental protection and climate change adaptation/mitigation. Such goals and targets would require measurement indicators disaggregated by age and gender and
including migrants and the foreign born. Another promising option is the inclusion of migration as part of a renewed Global Partnership goal. Such a partnership would magnify the impact of human mobility as an enabler of development.

The following Key Messages and Policy Recommendations provide a detailed summary of the findings, analytical conclusions and recommendations drawn from the respective chapters.
MIGRATION AND YOUTH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES*

Key Messages and Policy Recommendations

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KEY MESSAGES


Migration offers young women and men opportunities to obtain productive and decent employment, improve socio-economic status, learn new skills, and increase human and financial capital. Youth migration is set to increase, giving young people a tremendous potential for enhancing and sustaining development, productivity, and economic stability worldwide. Young people often face limited opportunities for decent work; some confront political circumstances, social situations or life conditions that compel them to leave their country of origin. Others migrate to reunite with their families, get married or pursue opportunities for tertiary education abroad. At the same time, young people are in demand for employment at all skill levels in destination countries.

2. Little concrete data and research are available on youth migrants.

Available global migration data provides mainly statistics on stocks, revealing little about migrants’ age, sex, education or other important factors. Good governance policy and practice require a stronger evidence base on migration by collecting and disseminating detailed data disaggregated by age and sex, country of birth, country of previous residence, country of citizenship, education, occupation, employment status, qualifications and skill level. Relevant information concerning for example health, education, and social protection conditions, migration status and work and residence permit situations, as well as changes in nationality and migrant parentage of youth – will help design and implement effective policies for youth migrants. Qualitative as well as quantitative research is needed. Many governments lack adequate capacity to collect, analyse and make use of this data, which is required to design and implement effective policy and practice.

This chapter is part of the book ‘Migration and Youth: Challenges and Opportunities’ Edited by Jeronimo Cortina, Patrick Taran and Alison Raphael on behalf of the Global Migration Group © 2014 UNICEF’
3. Migrant youth face risks compounded by their age, gender, migration status, and cultural identity. Policies must address specific conditions, risks and vulnerabilities of young migrants, taking into account their resilience and adaptability.

Young migrants are generally resilient, ambitious and adaptable, and are sought after by employers. However, while migrant youth commonly face social exclusion, disruption of family, and absence of social protection, young women and girl migrants are more at risk of abuse, discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual violence. Youth migrants belonging to specific ethnic or cultural groups, as well as youth with disabilities, face particular difficulties. Available data show that youth, particularly migrant youth, are more likely to experience unemployment, lack of access to decent work, exploitative working conditions, inadequate access to skills and vocational training, and social marginalisation and exclusion. Development benefits, protection, employment, and social participation and inclusion can be achieved with policy approaches and frameworks addressing specific age-groups, education and skill levels, and gender differences that effectively meet young migrants’ diverse needs, experiences, challenges and opportunities.

4. The international human and labour rights normative framework applies to all migrants regardless of status, including adolescents and youth.

Protection and respect for, and fulfilment of, the human rights of all young migrants forms a solid foundation for effective migration and development policies. Restrictions on, and outright violations of, the human rights of young migrants (including those in irregular situations) have significant detrimental effects, making them particularly vulnerable to discrimination, social exclusion, violence, abuse and exploitation as they transition from childhood to adulthood. The impact of these rights restrictions and violations on young migrants is largely unexplored, but is clearly associated with, inter alia, mental health and psycho-social development challenges that are not only harmful in the short term, at a critical stage of individual development, but severely curtail the long-term opportunities and benefits that migration can represent for these young people and their communities. A rights-based, age-sensitive and equity-focused approach to migration and development is essential to ensuring the realisation of the rights of all women and men in the context of migration and to unleashing the positive potential of youth migration. At the same time, the age- and gender-specific vulnerabilities faced by young migrants should be recognised and
addressed through legislative and policy reform, and young people should be empowered to claim their rights.

5. **Facilitating equitable access to social protection enhances young migrants’ well-being and developmental contributions.**

Social protection is a critical tool for addressing economic and social risks yet young migrants often face restricted access to, or exclusion from, social protection and social security. Adolescent and youth migrants need to be covered by existing social protection mechanisms, without territoriality, nationality and legal status barriers, that are responsive to specific needs of young migrant women and girls. Governments have primary responsibility for ensuring effective access to social security. Significant steps to extend social protection can be taken unilaterally by countries. Social dialogue plays a key role in formulating and implementing social security policies. ILO Conventions and Recommendations provide comprehensive legal and policy guidance for extending social protection to young migrants. The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) provides a framework for universal protection. Strategies to extend social protection should progressively ensure higher levels of social security to adolescent and youth migrants. Important progress has been achieved by multilateral social security frameworks complementing free circulation regimes in regional economic communities.

6. **Gender equality must be considered in policy and practice affecting young women migrants.**

The achievement of gender equality is a fundamental condition for the full enjoyment of human rights by young women and men. Young women are an important part of the migration phenomenon, and often face multiple forms of discrimination—as women, young people and migrants, as well as on ethnic or racial grounds. Migration is an opportunity and enriching experience for many young women. However, for others, it is a source of vulnerability, violence and disruption. Specific policies are required to maximise beneficial aspects of migration for young women while minimising potential harms. Key areas for attention are detailed throughout this report: collecting and disseminating sex- and age-disaggregated data; promoting their economic and social empowerment; ensuring protection of the rights, safety and security of young female migrants in legislation, administration and practice; enabling active participation in decisions affecting them and in youth and civil society organisations; increasing access to primary and reproductive health care services; increasing access to decent work, education and skills training; providing
information about the migration experience and their rights; ensuring that young women migrants have and retain documents proving their identity and age; and preventing trafficking while ensuring protection of victims. It is crucial to recognise and promote the role and contribution of female migrants in the development process as agents of change: in their lives, in the lives of their families, and in societies of origin, transit and destination.

7. There is critical need to ensure protection for adolescents and youth – including unaccompanied and separated children – seeking asylum.

Children and adolescents have the right to seek asylum. Child-specific forms and manifestations of persecution make a child-sensitive refugee status determination crucial. Child Protection systems in countries of origin, transit and destination - are key for the protection of children and adolescents in migratory flows. Immigration detention of asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons is inherently undesirable, especially for young people and unaccompanied or separated children. Given harm caused and detrimental long term impact, alternatives to detention are needed. Regularized migration alternatives that include effective family reunification and ensure access of refugee youth to employment opportunities are essential to reduce irregular migration and risks of trafficking. Regional approaches are advised to address the drivers and challenges faced by youth and adolescent refugees and asylum-seekers

8. Ensuring decent work fosters the development benefits of migration as well as protection and inclusion of young migrant workers.

Labour migration push-pull factors are intensifying: high unemployment and absence of opportunities push youth to migrate, while the pull of demand for labour and skills mobility is permanent, structural and growing, driven by technological changes, evolving markets, and spreading demographic transitions. However, many migrant youth face abuse, exploitation, absence of labour protection, and employment discrimination in destination countries, as well as unemployment and exclusion. Key challenges for governance are obtaining full rights protection and decent work, including through effective labour inspection, social inclusion for all young migrants, and obtaining freer circulation of persons in regional economic integration communities.
9. Decent work, economic growth and sustainable development that increase opportunities and social mobility for youth are critical to ensuring that migration is a matter of informed choice rather than necessity.

Youth in many countries, particularly in rural areas, are compelled to migrate by deficits of decent employment opportunities; limited access to credit, resources and markets; and lack of appeal or sustainability of traditional work. Migration that takes place as a result of informed choice is likely to reap positive development benefits. Making the option to remain in one’s country of birth viable can reduce irregular migration and enhance local development. This entails: creating and facilitating opportunities for decent work for youth, as well as access to financial services, credit and markets; improving the quality of education and health services; and promoting meaningful participation by young migrants in decisions that affect their lives.

10. Remittances by young migrants play an ever-stronger role in the economies of many developing countries, but they are not a panacea to overcome development challenges.

Remittances are the part of personal earnings that migrants send home, usually to family members, to meet basic needs such as nutrition, housing, clothing, health care and schooling. Remittances by young migrants can have a significant impact on poverty reduction and human capital development. Measures that make remittance transactions more affordable and accessible to young migrants can enhance their development impact. Facilitating access, economy and ease of use of formal transfer channels will reduce incentives to use less reliable, informal channels. Promotion of communications technologies for transmitting remittances constitutes a first step towards increasing their development impact.

11. Children of migrants constitute a substantial and growing share of youth in many countries.

However, these children’s educational achievement and access to employment often lag behind non-immigrant-origin peers. Integration of migrant parents through employment and training, promotion of early childhood education in multicultural settings, and development of job-training opportunities are remedies that have proven successful in some OECD countries.
12. **Enhancing quality and harmonising standards of cross-border tertiary and vocational education leads to ‘win-win’ situations for students and employers in origin and destination countries.**

The number of students migrating abroad is growing rapidly, a trend likely to continue. International collaboration is needed for cross-border higher education and technical training, including defining terminologies and unifying criteria for regulatory frameworks, particularly to ensure that qualifications obtained abroad are recognised at home and vice versa. International dialogue and collaboration are essential to defining standards that can be mutually recognised.

13. **Certain health risks are elevated for youth migrants, and further heightened by other risks associated with migration.**

Health is a vital asset for young migrants, critical to their productive employment as well as to the public health of host communities. Migrants often face heightened risks to their health due to conditions during transit and on arrival. These conditions are exacerbated when migrants lack access to health education, prevention, diagnostic and treatment services. Gender factors often increase health-related risks. Deliberate, targeted outreach by public health systems to young migrants is essential. Accurate data on the health of young migrants, as well as access to culturally appropriate health services and health-related information, including on sexual and reproductive health and available services, are cornerstones of comprehensive policies tailored to specific age-groups.

14. **Mainstreaming migration into development planning and overall governance is critical to achieving coherent and effective policies and practices.**

Migration is a key factor influencing sustainable development in countries worldwide. It affects economic, social, political, administrative and other aspects of governance in migrant origin, transit and destination countries. Migration therefore directly or indirectly demands a place on the agenda of a broad range of government ministries and agencies, from national to local levels. Mainstreaming migration into development planning and other relevant policy areas in a ‘whole-of-government’ approach recognises the implications of migration for any action planned as part of a development and/or poverty-reduction strategy. The large proportion of young people among today’s migration flows and their significant presence
among migrant stocks demands fully incorporating their specific situations, needs and opportunities in all migration-related laws and policies.

15. Cities are epicentres of human mobility: local authorities are well placed to address issues faced by young migrants.

Local authorities and policies are crucial to ensuring migrant youth’s access to employment, housing, schools, health care and participation, as well as to preventing exclusion. National policies that encourage integration and inclusion support local authorities to promote inclusive cities and neighbourhoods, and thus migrants’ – particularly young women and men migrants’ – contributions to development. Interface with migrant organisations is essential; migrant youth and women’s associations will benefit from support in their efforts to obtain legitimacy and effective participation in, and access to, local government.

16. Fostering migrant youth and adolescent participation in their destination communities and in policy-making that concerns them is crucial to protecting their rights, to integration and to social cohesion.

Migrant youth and adolescent participation realizes their universal human rights to expression, information, conscience, association and peaceful assembly. Migrant youth and adolescent engagement in community groups, unions, youth associations and other civil society organisations is essential to their participation in community life; all such organisations should facilitate migrant youth participation. Inclusive participation by migrant adolescents and youth in shaping and implementing migration and other policies affecting them is critical to taking account of their views, needs, experiences and recommendations; young migrants’ participation in all steps including implementation and monitoring yields vital insights for policy-making, improves effective implementation and strengthens sustainability of interventions. Governments can enhance meaningful participation by ensuring that young migrants enjoy their rights to participation.

17. Environmental change, both sudden and gradual, directly and indirectly influences the propensity to migrate; these factors and resulting displacement are expected to increase in the coming years and will particularly impact youth.

Migration can be a successful adaptation strategy for young people when they are actively involved in the institutional responses to environmental change. Raising awareness and involving and empowering young people is at the heart of the response to environmental
change. It also represents a significant component of governing migration in the context of environmental change. However, research and data on the complex environmental degradation/climate change nexus is lacking. There is no protection framework for environment/climate change-displaced persons and existing laws, policies and institutional arrangements are inadequate to address this specific type of human mobility.

18. International migration, with particular attention to adolescent and youth migrants, needs to be a fundamental part of the post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

The social, economic, fiscal and political implications of evolving demographic changes – with developed countries facing ageing populations and declining workforces while many less-developed countries experience ‘youth bulges’ – make migration a major development challenge and opportunity. As such, it needs to be an explicit and important component of the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. The October 2013 GMG position paper on Integrating Migration in the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda highlighted inter-agency consensus that the human rights (including labour rights) and well-being of migrants should be addressed through appropriately disaggregated indicators. There is also agreement that an essential foundation for addressing migration and development is a human rights-based normative framework that guarantees rights as well as equal access and opportunity, and involves shared responsibilities between countries of origin, transit and destination. Incorporating youth migration implies goals, targets and disaggregated indicators defined in consultation with young migrants in cases where migration is relevant to the achievement of specific development goals.
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recognise and commit to addressing issues of youth migration

   • Governments, parliaments, policy-makers, social partners and civil society should explicitly consider youth migration in their work.

   • Commit to establishing laws, policies, programmes and practices that ensure respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of all adolescent and youth migrants, and that take into account the different needs and contributions of female and male migrants.

2. Strengthen the evidence base on youth migration

   • 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.

   • Build the capacity of governments, their specialised institutions, and cooperating partners to obtain and apply this data and other relevant information on health, education, social protection, migration status and migrant parentage to relevant policies and programmes.

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

   • Identify, disseminate and replicate relevant good practices.

3. Enact national and local legislation on youth migration

   • Enact national and local legislation related to migration policy and practice, grounded in the rule of law and based on relevant international human rights standards, including labour rights, to reinforce governance that prevents discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation and exclusion regarding young and adolescent female and male migrants.
• Review and revise, as necessary, existing migration legislation, policies, regulations and practices to ensure that they are rights-based and age- and gender-sensitive.

• Develop and implement – in consultation with local authorities and relevant government departments and civil society, including young migrants – specific national and local migration policy frameworks (legislation, action plans, institutional structures and practical steps) to effectively address the risks, conditions, needs and potential of young migrants, and allocate sufficient human and material resources for their implementation.

• Provide training to authorities (particularly civil registry, public and private service providers, and police, military, border and judicial system personnel), as well as to other social actors who interact with young migrants, on appropriate, respectful and gender-sensitive behaviour towards young migrants and their family members.

4. **Apply a human rights-based, age-sensitive, and equity-focused approach to youth migration and development**

• Ratify, implement and monitor all international human rights and labour conventions relevant to youth migration.

• Evaluate and reform legislation and policy to remove legal and practical barriers to the fulfilment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of young people in the context of migration, regardless of migration status.

• Make full use of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a tool for advancing the rights of adolescents and youth impacted by migration. Migrants under 18 years of age must enjoy the special protections afforded to them by child rights frameworks, including implementation of the guiding principles of the CRC.

• The special protections enshrined in the CRC should not cease when adolescents turn 18 years of age, but instead be adapted to support young migrants as they transition from childhood to adulthood.
Empower migrant adolescents and youth to defend, access and enjoy their rights, in particular by ensuring access to justice regardless of status (including competent legal representation and remedies for complaint and redress), and by building the capacity of youth-led organisations.

Ensure that irregular entry and stay are not classified as criminal offences in national laws, and separate service provision from immigration enforcement.

Enhance regular migration channels for work and family reunification, and make available permanent mechanisms to access long-term regular migration status.

Adopt or reform regional and national laws, policies and practices – accompanied by appropriate capacity-building to facilitate enforcement – to ensure respect for the principle that categorically prohibits immigration-related detention of non-criminal adolescent migrants under 18 years of age.¹⁹

Provide suitable alternatives to detention for adolescents, and for their families when accompanied.

Prioritise adolescents and youth in the context of migration, in particular those undocumented, in legislation and policies to prevent violence, racism, xenophobia and discrimination, as well as in assistance to survivors.

5. **Extend social protection measures to incorporate young migrants**

- Ratify and implement relevant international conventions on the right to social security, equality of treatment and portability of social security for non-nationals.

- Implement the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation to cover youth migrants and their families where they reside, as well as in their home country. Provide effective access to universal social protection rights for all adolescent and youth migrants.

- Conclude bilateral, regional and/or multilateral agreements that provide equality of treatment in respect of social security as well as access to, preservation of and portability of entitlements for migrant workers.
• Adopt unilateral measures to extend social protection coverage to all migrants, including citizens living abroad and non-nationals present in national territories. Ensure access to, at a minimum, basic social protection for adolescents and youth, including young female migrants, in countries of origin and destination.

• Ensure that social protection measures covering migrants apply to adolescents and children and to temporary and seasonal migration schemes.

• Implement existing regional frameworks on social security coverage and portability, while ensuring their applicability to adolescent and youth migrants.

6. Protect adolescent and young women migrants with gender-responsive measures

• In public and private institutions, eliminate discriminatory policies, regulations and practices, and put in place gender-sensitive policies, regulations and practices to ensure full participation, protection, and economic and social empowerment of young and adolescent female migrants.

• Establish specific measures to tackle gender inequality as a driver of, or a barrier to, migration; repeal laws and discourage practices that discriminate against girls and women.

• Enact and enforce laws that protect against early marriage, gender-based violence, including sexual violence, and trafficking; enact family legislation that specifies the equal rights of female family members left behind, including equal access to property and land; and enact laws to empower young women economically and socially.

• Prepare adolescents and youth, especially girls and young women, for migration by providing information about their rights and what to expect in the country of destination, and by ensuring that they have and retain access to birth certificates, passports, and other forms of identification.
7. Ensure Protection for Refugee, Asylum-Seeker and Stateless Youth and Adolescents

- Ensure protection-sensitive border control systems and ensure protection of adolescents through child-friendly procedures including best interests' assessments.

- Include alternatives to detention in national legal frameworks and practice, providing alternative care for unaccompanied and separated children and adolescents.

- Provide essential services and non-discriminatory access to comprehensive child protection mechanisms, including young people's access to justice. Support family tracing mechanisms and ensure access to legal documentation.

- Develop legislation and law enforcement against trafficking in human beings, ensuring prosecution of perpetrators and witness protection including adolescents and youth.

- Develop targeted capacity building and training programs for guardians, social workers, border guards and other officials working with adolescents and youth.

- Ensure safe and voluntary return while safeguarding the principle of non-refoulement,

- Implement regularized migration alternatives, including effective family unification procedures. Ensure access of refugee youth to regular labour migration schemes.

8. Establish decent work provisions applicable to all young migrants

- Ensure national adoption, and application to all migrants, of labour standards and decent work conditions in line with international labour standards.

- Enhance implementation of legal and policy frameworks for free circulation of persons in regional economic communities.
• Provide for labour inspection in the sectors and workplaces where migrants, particularly youth and adolescents, are employed.

• Ensure application of non-discrimination and equality of treatment and opportunity in employment and training for all young migrants.

• Obtain specific data on migrant youth employment, including distribution and characteristics, working conditions, and educational attainment.

• Mainstream youth employment, with attention to migrants, into national development plans, poverty-reduction initiatives, and Decent Work Country Programmes.

9. **Provide youth in rural areas with alternatives to outmigration**

• Create and facilitate opportunities for decent work and access to credit and markets for young people where they reside, to ensure that migration is an informed choice, not a necessity.

• Promote investment in rural infrastructure and agriculture to provide conditions that make remaining in place viable and sustainable.

• Expand access to education, apprenticeships, finance, and employment opportunities for young women and men in rural areas, including young migrants with disabilities, ensuring respect for individual needs and situations.

10. **Facilitate remittances and lower their costs for young migrants**

• Strengthen formal remittance channels and reduce transaction costs.

• Facilitate young migrants’ access to financial services.

• Promote the use of new technologies oriented towards young users through government action, in cooperation with youth and the private sector.
11. Include children of immigrants in integration policy

- Promote the integration of children of immigrants in communities and labour markets by establishing targeted education and apprenticeship programmes.
- Expand early childhood education opportunities and facilities in immigrant communities.
- Develop on-the-job training opportunities targeted to children of immigrants, as well as to migrant youth.
- Enhance the integration of migrant parents through training and employment.

12. Facilitate mobility for higher education

- Establish or strengthen regional policy frameworks for quality governance of higher education and accreditation of educational and training institutions.
- Adopt comprehensive regulations and standards to manage quality and credentials of different forms of tertiary education, and systematically monitor implementation of credential accreditation and quality assurance in cross-border education policies.
- Establish or strengthen transferability and recognition mechanisms for educational credits and for professional, technical and vocational qualifications.
- Incorporate student bodies as partners in ensuring equal rights and opportunities for mobile students.
- Improve conditions for mobile students through student loans, housing services, health insurance and related programmes.

13. Ensure that health services reach young migrants

- Establish national public health system commitments and plans to identify, reach and ensure the inclusion of all migrants, particularly adolescents, youth and disadvantaged groups, such as migrant youth with disabilities.
• Specifically ensure young migrants’ access to health education, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment services, commensurate with national capabilities.

• Extend gender-sensitive health service outreach or facilities, including for sexual and reproductive health, to areas where migrants, particularly youth migrants, may be concentrated, and take steps to overcome language and cultural barriers to service access, including through training of health service personnel.

• Ensure access to health by migrants in irregular situations by maintaining firewalls between health services provision and immigration enforcement.

14. Mainstream youth migration into migration governance, national policy-making, and development planning

• Include youth migration issues in all relevant aspects of government, particularly development plans and policies

• Establish a comprehensive migration governance agenda that incorporates youth migration into national policies and reflects full respect for international human rights.

• Conduct impact assessments on the implications of migration for any planned development action.

15. Involve local authorities in youth migration governance

• Establish local assessments, policies, institutions, mechanisms, programmes and actions to facilitate migrant reception and integration, with particular attention to migrant youth.

• Designate local authorities responsible for migration policies and programmes, and ensure that they are accessible to migrant youth.

• Provide national government support to local authorities on migration and mobility; establish consultative processes incorporating local authorities and young migrants.

• Facilitate and support migrant youth associations, migrant women’s associations,
and migrant civil society participation.

- Institutionalise the collection of data on youth migration at the local level and conduct comparative research on migrant youth’s engagement with local authorities, including coalition-building, new technologies, and local consultative processes.

16. Promote meaningful participation of migrant adolescents and youth

- Encourage migrant youth participation in civil society organisations, unions and community groups; support creation and recognition of migrant, diaspora and migrant youth organisations.

- Facilitate construction of solid networks, cooperation, and joint projects between young locals and young migrants.

- Involve a wide range of government and non-governmental stakeholders, including youth organisations and networks, in planning and carrying out participation activities with young migrants.

- Include migrant adolescents and youth in policy-making processes, follow through on their suggestions and recommendations, and ensure their continued participation from beginning to end of the process.

- Promote institutional arrangements to strengthen the capacity of young people affected by migration to participate at local, national and international levels.

- Create new opportunities for meaningful participation by adolescents and youth in migration and development research, debate, planning, policy and programme execution.

- Put in place specific pre-departure programmes in countries of origin and post-arrival orientation programmes in destination countries to better inform and prepare young migrants to actively participate in destination countries.

- Enhance data collection and sharing of good practices and promising examples of participation by young migrants in organisations and in migration policy-making processes, to enhance the evidence base for sound policy and promote policy innovation.
17. Address environment linkages to youth migration

- Improve knowledge about linkages between youth migration and climate change/environmental degradation.

- Identify a framework of principles and measures for the protection of persons displaced by climate change/environmental degradation.

- Develop institutional cooperation addressing the migration-climate change/environmental degradation nexus.

- Incorporate climate change/environmental degradation-induced displacement into comprehensive migration governance agendas.

- Frame migration and the climate change/environmental degradation nexus within the post-2015 United Nations Development agenda.

- Involve affected communities and diasporas in participatory policy planning and implementation.

- Ensure that young people have the means (information, education, resources, skills, networks, etc.) to address the challenges posed by environmental change.

18. Incorporate youth migration in the global development agenda

- Fully integrate international migration, including youth migration, into the post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda.

- Explicitly take into consideration the challenges and opportunities inherent in adolescent and youth migration when setting goals, targets and disaggregated indicators for the post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda.

NOTES

   The Symposium was organized ahead of the Informal Thematic Debate of the UN General Assembly on International Migration and Development and during the International Year of Youth.
5. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child as “every human being below the age of 18 years” (CRC Article 1). Children may be granted certain rights and responsibilities at different ages by national legislation; however, there is international consensus on the legal definition of a child stemming from the CRC.
6. Adolescence is defined as the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. Therefore, it is very individual and there is no scientific or legal consensus on a specific age definition. The United Nations uses the age cohort 10-19 when referring to adolescence. However, individuals may experience some of the key physiological and psychological changes from an age earlier than 10, and later than 19 years. The upper boundary of adolescence is often raised to 21 or 25 years of age in contexts dealing with physical, social and mental health and development, with reference to on-going development during these years. Adolescence itself is not usually defined in legislation, through definitions are often linked to national laws setting the age of majority and legal ages for additional rights and responsibilities associated with adulthood.

16. This chapter uses the term immigrants to identify migrant populations that have immigrated to, and generally settled permanently in, destination countries.

17. A non-exhaustive list of these instruments includes: the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the ILO Migration and Employment Conventions (Revised) No. 97 and the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention No. 143 on Migrant Workers; the Domestic Workers Convention No. 189, as well as other relevant ILO conventions and all core international human rights instruments, namely the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

18. These are: the best interests of the child; non-discrimination; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to participate and be heard.

19. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has categorically stated that “children should not be criminalized or subject to punitive measures because of their or their parents’ migration status. The detention of a child constitutes a child rights violation and always contravenes the principle of the best interests of the child. […] States should […] completely cease the detention of children.” See: Committee on the Rights of the Child, Report of the 2012 Day of General Discussion. The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration, paragraph 78. Available at: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/discussion2012ReportDGDCchildrenAndMigration2012.pdf